

State News for NSPE Members



Drinking Water, Public Health, and Safety

A Portsmouth mother of two is highlighted in a new feature article on chemical contamination in drinking water, published by [Chemical & Engineering News](#). While many people are calling for stricter regulation of PFAS levels in drinking water, “the EPA must pass through a complex set of steps established in law to regulate contaminants in drinking water. And powerful lobbies that face cleanup liability, including the chemical industry, oppose regulation of PFAS as a group.”

Report Details Bridge’s Repair Needs

Manchester-based Hoyle, Tanner & Associates Inc. recently presented a long list of engineering details necessary to rehabilitate the Anna Hunt Marsh and Charles Dana bridges between Hinsdale and Brattleboro, reports the [Brattleboro Reformer](#). Replacement of the lower truss chords on both bridges will be the costliest part of the project. Other needed repairs, according to the article: “repairing or replacing damaged truss verticals and diagonals, the rehabilitation of the bridges’ truss gusset plates, the rehabilitation or replacement of bridge bearings, the replacement of expansion joints and the bridge rails, the removal of a sidewalk, repairs to abutments and wingwalls, the installation of removable bollards or gates on each side of the river, and the replacement of the bridge deck.”

Pipeline Project Appears Dead

A proposed natural gas pipeline from the Lebanon Landfill to downtown Hanover appears dead, according to the [Valley News](#). Liberty Utilities failed to meet the March 5 deadline for having a working pipeline, and it also failed to file for an extension with the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission. The article says, “Upper Valley residents spent years campaigning against the proposed pipeline, arguing natural gas contributes to climate change and that the ‘fracking’ process used to extract the fuel is harmful to the environment.”

We Want to Hear from You!

Do you know of engineering news in New Hampshire that would be great for this newsletter? Maybe it’s a project you or your firm is working on, or perhaps you read some interesting engineering news in your local newspaper. Or maybe you know of a fellow PE or student who deserves a little recognition. If so, we want to hear from you. Email your ideas to pemagazine@nspe.org.

NSPE Urges Veto of Structural Engineering Bill

In a letter to Georgia Governor Brian Kemp, NSPE encouraged the veto of a bill to establish a separate licensing system for structural engineers.

President-Elect Tricia Hatley, P.E., F.NSPE, wrote that creating a new licensing system for structural engineering does not improve the public health, safety, or welfare. “Instead, it muddies the water, creating confusion and requiring regulatory authorities to make arbitrary distinctions to define structural engineering,” she added. “Rather than reducing regulatory burdens, the change would add a new layer, requiring one engineer to obtain multiple licenses in order to do work that, previously, required only one.”

Instead of creating a separate licensing system, NSPE recommends a certification process that occurs after the professional engineering license has already been obtained. “This system would allow for the SE designation, if required or requested by potential employers or RFPs, without drawing the same, hard line between structural and other types of engineering,” Hatley wrote.

[Read the full letter.](#)

Take Action on Federal Infrastructure Bills

You have an important opportunity to add your voice to the debate around pending infrastructure legislation.

The first two bills are the House and Senate's surface transportation infrastructure reauthorization bills—The INVEST in America Act ([H.R. 2](#)) and the America's Transportation Infrastructure Act of 2019 ([S. 2302](#)). This is an opportunity to communicate to members of Congress the importance and value of having PEs involved in engineering decisions to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

[Take action on surface transportation reauthorization!](#)

The third bill, the SMART Infrastructure Act ([H.R. 4687](#)), would take decision-making authority away from professional engineers and instead give it to state and local authorities, allowing them to select “appropriate” construction materials. The bill would establish that these entities would have the flexibility to select appropriate construction materials that meet the performance requirements of the contract and enhance the service life, sustainability, and resiliency of the project.

NSPE opposes this bill because its enactment would prevent PEs from making the final decision on the appropriate construction materials for a project. Additionally, it establishes a federal interagency task force charged with deciding whether state and local procurement practices have artificial barriers to competition for new and innovative materials and recommending actions that can be taken to remove barriers. Their decisions could put the public at risk should these new and innovative materials present unforeseen harms to the public.

[Voice your opposition to H.R. 4687!](#)

Celebrate PE Day!

NSPE is celebrating licensed professional engineers with the [fifth annual Professional Engineers Day](#) on Wednesday, **August 5**. Join the Society in raising awareness about what it means to be a PE and showing appreciation for the work they do every day.

In lieu of in-district meetings with legislators, like those conducted last year, NSPE members will be able to participate in a series of panel discussions. The discussions will include members of Congress and/or their staff, who will share information on pending legislation that impacts the engineering profession. NSPE members will have opportunities to ask questions and to take action on the bills that are discussed by the panel.



PE Day falls within the week of the Virtual **PECon** (August 3–7). As a highlight of PE Day, NTSB Chairman Robert Sumwalt III, will discuss [“The Role and Responsibility of Professional Engineers in Ensuring Safety of Our Nation’s Infrastructure.”](#) His presentation will touch on the NTSB’s recommendation for eliminating the PE license exemption for public utility work, and the requirement for a professional engineer’s seal on public utility engineering drawings, stemming from the tragic pipeline explosions and fires in the Merrimack Valley of Massachusetts.



SUMWALT

IBM’s Global Chief Technology Officer Ben Amaba, is also featured as a keynote speaker and will cover the [professional engineer’s role](#) in artificial intelligence and technology.



AMABA

[Register for the Virtual PECon.](#)

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