Louisiana Gets Federal Assistance to Tackle 'Orphan' Oil Well Problem

The federal government is establishing an office dedicated to cleaning up abandoned oil and gas sites, a move that Louisiana officials say will likely speed the process of tackling the state's growing 'orphan' well problem, The Advocate reports.

The US Interior Department announced last week that the new Orphan Wells Program Office would ensure the "effective, accountable and efficient" spending of $4.7 billion the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act aims to pour into the plugging of abandoned wells.

The rusty remnants of the oil and gas industry's boom years litter the state. The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources has documented about 4,600 orphan wells, but the total number is likely larger and growing by the day as small and mid-sized companies shut down and the industry shifts its focus to cheaper fossil fuel sources outside the state. Read more.

Louisiana Agency Unveils New Coastal Plan

Officials with the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority are forging ahead with a new coastal master plan for 2023, and are now moving into a public comment phase through March, The Center Square reports.

CPRA officials discussed progress with the plan during a recent meeting before the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board in Baton Rouge. The 2023 plan builds on the previous master plan's efforts to reduce storm surge-based flood risk, provide habitats to support an array of commercial and recreational activities, and support infrastructure critical to the working coast over the next five decades. The annual plan presented to the state legislature this year will surpass last year's plan with an estimated $25 billion in restoration projects. Read more.
State Licensing Board Meeting

The Louisiana Professional Engineering and Land Surveying Board will hold its next meeting on Monday, January 23. Access meeting information here.

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the NSPE Advocacy Center.

NSPECon23 Call for Presentations

Share your expertise with professional engineers during NSPECon23 in Louisville, Kentucky, August 2-4. Presentation proposals are being accepted on a submissions site until January 25. The sessions will focus on three topics: amplify your leadership human skills; stay informed about issues and trends impacting the profession; and invest in your career.

Accepted presenters will receive:

- The unparalleled opportunity to give back to the professional engineer community at a nationally recognized conference.
- Recognition on the conference website with a headshot photo, biography, and session description.
- A customized press release announcing your participation and contribution to the conference to share with your employer and/or clients.
- Assistance with (and guidelines for) promoting your session on social media outlets.
- Follow-up survey results and comments related to your presentation.

Get Ready for Engineers Week: Creating the Future!

Engineers Week (February 19–25, 2023) is dedicated to ensuring a diverse and well-educated future engineering workforce. The latest theme for Engineers Week seeks to inspire the next
generation by celebrating all the way engineers are
Creating the Future! A free **Countdown to Engineers Week webinar** will take place on **Wednesday, January 18**, at 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. (ET). **Register and attend the webinar** to receive an Engineers Week planning guide and starter pack.

**Access more information and resources.**

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**New Board of Ethical Review Cases**

The NSPE **Board of Ethical Review** (BER) annually provides advisory opinions to provide guidance on ethical dilemmas. The Board of Ethical Review (BER) has **released a new set of cases** on various topics including on conflict of interest, duty to report, and professional qualifications.

Check out a BER case focused on the PE role in protecting the public health, safety, and welfare.

**Facts:** City passes an ordinance requiring a sprinkler system in residences with less than eight feet between them and makes the ordinance effective as to all construction which has not yet received an occupancy permit. This means that projects under construction must have a sprinkler system added. Engineer A, who happens to have both structural and fire protection credentials, is hired by Homeowner to design a retaining wall system to stabilize a rear yard. Homeowner allowed Engineer A to store equipment in the integral garage. Engineer A observes that the builder routed the piping for the retrofitted sprinkler system through the unheated garage, exposing the pipes to freezing temperatures.

**Questions:** What are Engineer A’s obligations?

**Access the full case to read the BER’s discussion and conclusion.**
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