

LA Licensing Board Responds to Tire Engineers Case

The Louisiana Professional Engineering and Land Surveying Board has taken notice of a recent court case involving an automotive services company's use of the term "engineer" and the prohibition of its use by companies not licensed to perform engineering in Mississippi. The board has decided to take a different course of action with the company, which has stores located in Louisiana.

When Express Oil Change LLC changed the name of its tire sale and service center to Tire Engineers in 2015, the Mississippi Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Surveyors notified the company of the violation of state law, which prohibits use of the term "engineer" in a commercial identification, title, or name, unless the individual or company is licensed to perform engineering services. This led to a lawsuit filed by Express Oil Change with a court process ending in February when an [appeals court ruled](#) that a district court erred in its ruling in favor of the Mississippi licensing board's claim that the company violated state law.

LAPELS received comments objecting to the companies use of "engineer" in the stores located in Louisiana. The board determined that requiring the company to add language specifying that it was an automotive services store to its signage was an adequate response to concerns, according to the May issue of *Louisiana Engineer & Surveying*.

Legislation Addresses Licensing Board Disciplinary Actions

A bill passed in the Louisiana Legislature in June addresses the timelines for disciplinary action notifications and exempts the Louisiana Professional Engineering and Land Surveying Board from holding disciplinary hearings within a specific timeframe.

Current state law requires that when a complaint is filed with an occupational licensing board or commission, the board should notify a licensee specifically named in a complaint in writing within six months or be barred from further actions on the complaint. The law also requires that a hearing be held within six months of the notice of the hearing. The legislation (H.B. 196) exempts LAPELS and the Louisiana State Board of Architectural Examiners from the current timeline for hearings.

What's the Status of Bridges in Louisiana?

A recent American Road & Transportation Builders Association report provides a snapshot of the status of bridges in the US. The association compiled [state profiles and rankings](#) from the Federal Highway Administration's 2018 National Bridge Inventory Data (released in March 2019).

The profile highlights the following about bridges in Louisiana

- Of the 12,899 bridges in the state, 13% (1,678) are classified as structurally deficient (one of the key elements is in poor or worse conditions). This is an uptick from the 1,609 bridges classified as structurally deficient in 2014.
- Forty-six of the structurally deficient bridges are on the interstate highway system.
- More than 2,080 bridges are posted for load, which may restrict the size and weight of vehicles crossing the structure.
- The state has identified needed repairs on 3,347 bridges at an estimated cost of \$7.5 billion. This is compared to 3,411 bridges that needed repair work in 2014.

Complete the Engineering Team With NICET Certification

In the late 1950s, as the US came to rely more heavily on machines and automation, technically skilled workers who could support the work of engineers were in high demand. In 1961, NSPE rose to the challenge by forming an organization to certify technicians and technologists.



But even though technicians have been an integral part of the engineering team and NSPE since then, that organization—the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies—is not always understood by PEs. A well-attended, NSPE-sponsored webinar on May 29 provided the full picture.

During the webinar, “ [Quality and Safety Through a Qualified Engineering Team](#) ,” NICET Communications Director Chip Hollis detailed the institute's operations and the technician's role on the team. NICET was founded to recognize the qualifications of technicians. Its focus, Hollis explained, helps ensure a qualified engineering workforce, certifying both engineering technicians and technologists in areas such as construction materials testing, transportation construction inspection, electrical power, fire protection, and security systems.

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On **June 26** at 2 p.m., the webinar [The Saint Joseph Water Crisis – Lessons Learned in the Age of Deteriorating Water Infrastructure](#) will focus on a water crisis in Saint Joseph, Louisiana, which lends many lessons related to the difficulties faced by small and large water systems in rural environments. In this session, David A. Martin, P.E., will present an overview of the state of the town's water system prior to and after construction, as well as an overview of the new treatment process and applicability to other aquifer systems. Additionally, participants will be presented with the lessons learned during the crisis, including regulatory involvement, use of multiple funding sources, early owner procurement of long lead time equipment, and alternate project delivery.

Don't Miss...

- [Exemptions to Engineering Licensure Laws](#). NSPE has updated this report, with information current as of May 2019. It is free for members.
- [Take Action on Licensure Exemption Bills](#). It's imperative that lawmakers hear from their professional engineering constituents who [support bills](#) in the US House and Senate targeting licensure exemptions in public utility pipeline work.
- [PECON at a Glance](#). Take a look at the lineup of activities and educational sessions taking place at the 2019 Professional Engineers Conference in Kansas City.

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