

State News for NSPE Members

Plastics and the Public Health, Safety, Welfare

The Army Corps of Engineers said it intends to suspend a permit for the construction of a \$9.4 billion plastics complex along the lower Mississippi River in St. James Parish, [reports Pro Publica](#). “Last year, an analysis by ProPublica and The Times-Picayune and The Advocate, conducted with an expert in air modeling, estimated that in the community across the river from the plant, hundreds of residents will face double the toxic levels of cancer-causing chemicals than they currently do,” the article says. “One mile east in the predominantly Black community of St. James, those levels could more than triple.”

In a motion filed in federal court, the Corps it needed to reevaluate part of its [analysis](#) under the Clean Water Act. The act, according to the article, requires an analysis of all environmental impacts, including air pollution.

Offshore Wind Takes a Step Forward

Governor Edwards recently presented his strategies for lowering greenhouse gas emissions, including offshore wind energy, [reports WorkBoat.com](#). Edwards has asked the US Bureau of Ocean Energy Management for help setting up a task force that will coordinate commercial offshore wind leasing proposals for the federal waters off Louisiana’s coast. Several Louisiana companies have worked on the first commercial offshore wind farm in the U.S., built off Rhode Island.

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](#).

PEs, Technicians, and Teamwork

Construction projects come with numerous roles and responsibilities that must be carried out with skill and efficiency to achieve success. For professional engineers, perhaps the most critical relationship is with the project’s engineering technicians.

In a recent [NSPE webinar](#) on PEs, technicians, and the engineering team, Shannon Looney, P.E., F.NSPE, called the contributions of skilled technicians “invaluable.” As the senior project manager for the Glenn E. Mitchell and Company Inc. in Knoxville, Tennessee, Looney specializes in concrete construction. He relies heavily on the data collected by technicians—“the technicians with their hands on the ground that work directly with the labor force and is able to tell us the data we need...to make real-time decisions on important aspects of production.”

The webinar covers many aspects of the PE-technician dynamic and the factors that make a strong team. In addition to Looney, the webinar panel included Kent Dvorak, P.E., of Terracon’s Salt Lake City office; John Quidley, SET, president and senior quality consultant with Caliber Consulting Services LLC; and Kenny Johnson Jr., P.G., with expertise in the geotechnical and materials testing industry.

The webinar, “Put Me in, Coach! The Engineering Team from Concept to Completion,” can be [accessed online for free](#).

Georgia Adopts Structural PE Requirement

Beginning January 1, a professional engineer who designs, signs, and seals plans for “designated structures” in Georgia must be licensed as a structural engineer. Legislation signed into law in August, creates a professional structural engineer licensing process, which includes a requirement that a licensure applicant take the 16-hour PE Structural exam.

The process [establishes several paths](#) for current licensees to be grandfathered into obtaining an SE license, which is supplemental to the PE license. An individual licensed in Georgia will have to submit an affidavit form and pay fees to the [State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors](#) from November 1 to December 31, 2020 to participate in this grandfather process.

In June, NSPE and the Georgia Society of Professional Engineers expressed concerns that a SE license requirement would create an additional layer of bureaucracy, requiring an engineer who is qualified to practice in more than one area to obtain multiple licenses.

NSPE believes that fragmenting the professional engineering license into discipline-specific title or practice acts weakens rather than strengthens the integrity of the license. The Society advocates for an alternative structural engineering certification that could be obtained after earning a PE license to offer more flexibility and without drawing a hard line between structural and other engineering disciplines.

Officer Nominations Open

Nominations are now open for the positions of NSPE 2021–22 vice president and 2021–23 treasurer. The individual nominated for vice president will advance to president-elect in 2022–23 and president in 2023–24. The deadline for submitting nomination packages for either position is **January 11, 2021**.

Please share this information with those you believe should be considered for the next leaders in our Society. Additional details can be found in the [Leadership Toolbox](#). If you have any questions, email the NSPE Executive Office at executive@nspe.org.

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