Louisiana Voters Support Professional Licensing

Louisiana citizens believe that professional licensing is essential to protecting the public, according to a survey released by the Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL), a coalition that includes NSPE. ARPL sought out the opinions of Louisiana voters because of recent legislative pushes to reduce or eliminate professional licensure.

The survey results reveal widespread public support for maintaining rigorous professional licensing standards for professions that have a clear impact on public health, safety, and welfare.

- 91% of voters believe it is important that licensing systems keep consumers and the public safe by establishing standards for professions that impact public health and safety.
- 91% of voters believe it is important that licensing systems ensure that competent, qualified professionals are servicing the public.
- 90% of voters say licensing is important to them because it helps consumers identify qualified professionals and access information about the professionals they hire.
- 89% of Louisiana voters would be 'concerned' if Louisiana eliminated minimum qualifications for engineers, architects, landscape architects, surveyors, and CPAs—including 77% of the public who would be 'very concerned' if such legislation passed.

System Restoration Bonds to Enable Faster Reconnection After Storms

Entergy Louisiana will raise $3.1 billion in bonds to enable faster reconnection for customers after severe storms. The system restoration bonds will be secured by charges to ratepayers in the Louisiana Public Service Commission's jurisdiction, according to the Asset Securitization Report.
The funds will support certain system restoration costs related to damages caused by hurricanes Laura, Delta and Zeta in 2020, and Winter Storm Uri in 2021, according to Moody's Investors Service. Funds will also be used to establish a special Hurricane Ida escrow for storm damage, and re-establish a regular storm damage reserve escrow for the company's operations. More than 40,000 people lost power for days after Uri.

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**Louisiana Refineries Release Dangerous Levels of Benzene**

Four oil refineries in Louisiana, along with six others that have air pollution monitors in the US, were found to be releasing benzene at levels that could pose a long-term health threat to surrounding communities, according to industry data compiled by the Environmental Integrity Project.

Benzene, a gaseous compound that evaporates from gasoline and other petroleum products, is known to cause a variety of health problems that include anemia, nervous system damage, suppression of immune systems, and leukemia.

EPA adopted new federal regulations in 2012 that require petroleum refineries to monitor benzene concentrations along their fence lines and report the results to the government every three months. If the monitoring data identify annual average benzene concentrations above the "action level" after excluding background and offsite concentrations, refineries are required to conduct a root-cause analysis to identify and clean up the emission sources.

The EIP study found dangerously high levels of the gas had been detected at the fence lines of Louisiana refineries Valero St Charles Norco, Chalmette Refining, and Countrymark Refining and Logistics. Read more.

*Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](https://www.nspe.org/advocacy).*

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**Register Now for NSPECon 2022 Reimagined**
Engineers from all disciplines are invited to register for the 2022 NSPE Professional Engineers Conference (NSPECon 2022) in Philadelphia, August 1-3. Invited speakers will address sustainability, emerging technology, the post-covid workplace and even, construction on the moon. Whether you are a licensed professional engineer, aspire to be one or, would like to learn more about a career as a qualified and ethically accountable professional, you are invited to join this multi-discipline community to engage with colleagues and hear more about relevant engineering topics.

Prospective conference sponsors and exhibitors will see newly created opportunities to highlight their companies and organizations throughout the conference. Sponsors can welcome attendees to the “Feel the Philly Love” opening reception, support a conference education track featuring seven unique sessions, or demonstrate how their solutions help clients overcome specific challenges by exhibiting.

On the final day of the conference, attendees can celebrate PE Day in person and raise awareness about the importance of PEs as qualified and ethical professionals. Before you go, make certain you are geared up with PE Day logo wear to show your pride on-site.

2022 QBS Award Nominations Open

ACEC and NSPE are seeking nominations for the QBS Awards program, which recognizes public and private entities that make exemplary use of the qualifications-based selection process at the federal, state, and local levels.

Award winners serve as examples of how well the QBS process works, and they help ACEC and NSPE promote the practice of QBS in jurisdictions that do not use, or underuse, QBS to procure engineering services. A maximum of one QBS Award may be presented to the federal government sector, the state government sector (includes all governmental units under the state level), and nongovernment sector.
Nominations may originate from an ACEC member organization, an NSPE state society, a public or private entity, or an individual in the public or private sector. Self-nomination is not permitted.

Nominations and supporting materials are due by Friday, June 17 (COB). Access the nomination form and instructions.

**Scholarships Open for Applications**

The Swadesh and Om P. Popli, P.E., P.L.S. Scholarship and the William R. Kimel, P.E., Engineering Scholarship are accepting applications from students pursuing engineering degrees in the fall. The application deadline is **June 15**.

The **Swadesh and Om P. Popli, P.E., P.L.S. Scholarship** is a multi-year scholarship that will provide $5,000 each year of the recipient’s four-year education. Applicants must be a female high school senior from an underrepresented ethnic minority (African American, Hispanic, Native American, or Pacific Islander) pursuing a degree in civil, electrical, or mechanical engineering at an ABET-accredited program.

The **William R. Kimel, P.E., Engineering Scholarship** is a $2,500 scholarship awarded annually to an undergraduate student who is a resident of either Kansas or Missouri and enrolled as a junior in an ABET-accredited engineering program in a college or university in either Kansas or Missouri.

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