

State News for NSPE Members

Virtual Meeting Recap: Common Issues and Design Consideration for Lift Stations

NSPE-NV members participated in a free virtual luncheon meeting on the topic “Common Issues and Design Considerations for Lift Stations” on August 18. The meeting featured presenters Johnny Alhwayek and Tim Newell.



Johnny Alhwayek has over 11 years of experience in the broad field of civil engineering. Starting out as an NDOT inspector after graduation, he currently works at CCWRD Development Services as a senior civil engineer. The path that led him there included experience with roadway design and construction management. At any reasonable chance he gets, he will jump into Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) and try to optimize workflows.



Tim Newell has over 10 years of experience in water and wastewater engineering.

He has experience in performing feasibility analyses, planning studies, hydraulics of gravity sewer systems, hydraulics of pressurized systems, and sewer and water system modeling. He currently works in the CCWRD Modeling Department as a Senior Civil Engineer.

Stay tuned for information on the next monthly free virtual luncheon meeting.

Client Selection Is More Important Than Ever

By Rich Friedman
(Friedman & Partners)

When the economy starts to look rocky and project opportunities may be diminishing, it can be tempting to start saying yes to work that's not a great fit (but it's work) or chasing RFPs.

I saw a lot of this happening during the Global Financial Crisis (2008-2009), and I'm seeing it again now. In times of uncertainty, of course, we may be more willing to take on a project that is not ideal. But too often, firms start to convince themselves that throwing best practices out the window is their best option.

In this article, I discuss why that's not a good idea and offer some helpful guidelines for creating and implementing a thoughtful client selection process, one that strengthens your firm for the future.

[Read more.](#)

Clark County Water Reclamation District Seeks Qualified Firms

Clark County Water Reclamation District is seeking qualifications from qualified firms. The District awards professional services contracts using a qualifications-based selection process called the Statement of Qualifications (SOQ).

This solicitation is strictly for the addition of two specific categories:

1. Independent Cost Estimator
2. Scheduling and Claims Analysis

The Clark County Water Reclamation District awards professional services contracts using a qualifications-based selection process called the Statement of Qualifications. Interested firms may apply during the open period from August 11–September 10, 2020 by [clicking here](#).

If the applicant has a question regarding the SOQ process, please contact Rosaura Gallagher, Associate Engineer, at rgallagher@cleanwaterteam.com or 702-668-8248.

SOQs will be accepted at the Clark County Water Reclamation District Customer Service Counter, 5857 E. Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89122, on or before September 10, 2020 at 10 a.m. based on the time clock at the Clark County Water Reclamation District Customer Service Counter. Late SOQs will not be accepted!

Project Cancellations Sweeping the Nation as COVID-19 Intensifies Funding Shortfalls

Billions of dollars worth of transportation projects are being delayed or canceled across the country as state and local governments make spending cuts due to the coronavirus pandemic. A *For Construction Pros* article highlights findings from a recent American Road and Transportation Builders' Association report that points out that 14 states and 19 local authorities have delayed or canceled road, transit and airport projects worth \$8.58 billion.

[Read more.](#)

New Report Highlights National Flood Risks

When adjusting for future environmental changes, flood risk should be a consideration in Nevada. According to a report by the First Street Foundation, by 2050 the number of properties with substantial risk in Nevada will increase by 6.1%, bringing the total number of properties with substantial risk to 47,300. Currently, there are 44,600 properties with a substantial risk of flooding. Across the country, the number of properties facing substantial risk will increase by 10.9% to 16.2 million, the report says.

The report points out that flooding in Nevada typically arrives in the form of flash floods caused by sudden and intense rainfall events. The southern part of the state, including Las Vegas, experiences flooding all year round, but the hot summer months bring lightning, thunder, and rain, which lead to dramatic runoff events that concentrate in the urbanized areas at lower elevations.

While FEMA classifies 8.7 million properties as having substantial risk, or within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), the new First Street Foundation Flood Model identifies nearly 70% more, or 14.6 million properties with the same level of risk. This means nearly 6 million households and property owners have underestimated or been unaware of their current risk. This discrepancy exists because the Foundation uses current climate data, maps precipitation as a stand-alone risk, and

includes areas that FEMA has not mapped.

The model was produced by researchers and hydrologists from First Street Foundation; Columbia University; Fathom; George Mason University; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Rhodium Group; Rutgers University; the University of California, Berkeley; and the University of Bristol.

The model and data was shared with 100 academic researchers to use the data to analyze flooding's impact on the U.S. housing market; its implications for lower income and minority communities; its cost to federal, state, and local taxpayers; climate gentrification; and fairness in federal flood mitigation spending among other issues.

[Access "The First Annual National Flood Risk Assessment: Defining America's Growing Risk" report.](#)

How Is the COVID-19 'New Normal' Affecting your Organization?

For the upcoming issue of *PE* magazine, an article will address how months later the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the work lives of NSPE members from different practice areas: construction, education, government, industry, and private practice.

How have your projects or organizational priorities changed? What have been some challenges or changes for the better? Have there been any new opportunities? Share your experiences with *PE* at pemagazine@nspe.org.

At Virtual PECon, NTSB Chair Discusses Florida Bridge Collapse

In a session on August 5, National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Robert Sumwalt III explained the role of the NTSB and the agency's investigation and [report](#) on the deadly pedestrian bridge collapse at Florida International University in Miami.



In March 2018, a pedestrian bridge under construction at FIU collapsed—claiming six lives. Despite evidence of severe cracking, the engineer of record insisted that the cracking did not pose a safety problem, according to the NTSB report. The university wanted to enhance pedestrian safety by constructing the bridge over a multilane highway that had been the scene of a pedestrian fatality. It would also serve as a unique gathering

place for students, faculty, and university visitors.

“We all know that cracking in concrete is going to happen. That’s acceptable. But in this case, we saw structural cracks that were 40 times larger than is typically acceptable,” Sumwalt stated. The bridge was designed using an “accelerated bridge construction” design method.

The NTSB identified three critical errors: 1) The bridge was under-designed. 2) The peer review was insufficient; and 3) There was a failure to close the bridge to traffic and workers.

During the session, Sumwalt outlined how failures at all levels to stop work on the project or to close the highway to vehicle traffic and pedestrians played a significant role in the tragedy. He emphasized the responsibility to speak out for public safety no matter what.

“I saw those crushed cars. Six people lost their lives because of what I will call hubris and professional arrogance,” he stated. “I don’t care where you fit on the totem pole, if something doesn’t look right, you have an ethical and moral obligation to wave the flag.”

Access Virtual PECon Webinars

NSPE members who registered for an all-access pass and individual sessions can access webinar recordings at their convenience. Members who were unable to attend PECon can [purchase and access](#) some individual sessions at a discounted member price.

Coming Soon: ‘Fireside Chat’ Series

NSPE is hosting a set of fireside chat style webinars on legislative issues affecting the future of the engineering profession, as well as the here and now.

Monday, August 31 (TBD)

Diversity is the Future of Engineering: Opportunities in STEM Education

Monday, September 14 (3 p.m. ET)

Building for the Future, with US Rep. Bruce Westerman, P.E. (R-AR)

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