

State News for NSPE Members

Construction Industry Still a Bright Spot for Hawaii Economy

Diverse projects are keeping Hawaii's construction industry busy and offering much-needed support for the state's fractured economy. Those projects include hotel renovations, new and remodeled homes, county and state infrastructure efforts and military construction. Some architecture firms and contractors are even adding staff to keep up with the steady—and sometimes increased—workload, according to a *Hawaii Business* magazine report.

Economist Paul Brewbaker says Hawaii's construction industry has been "remarkably resilient" during the pandemic. The number of natural resources, mining and construction jobs in the islands between March and November 2020 has been relatively stable, fluctuating between roughly 36,000 and 38,000 positions, according to state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism monthly data. By comparison, the number of jobs in that sector dropped dramatically as a result of the last recession: from a peak of 40,000 at the end of 2007 to a low of 28,000 in early 2011.

Brewbaker says it helped that construction was allowed to continue during the pandemic, when other industries had to shut down, and that construction workers quickly implemented safety measures on job sites.

[Read more.](#)

State Licensing Board Meeting

The Hawaii Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors & Landscape Architects will host its next meeting via Zoom on **Thursday, April 8** from 9a.m.-11:30 a.m.

A Zoom link and agenda will be provided prior to the meeting. Access the [licensing board website](#) for more information.

GAO Report: FEMA Needs to Address Long-Term Disaster Recovery for Pacific Islands

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and Hawaii experienced an unprecedented number of natural disasters in 2018—including typhoons, earthquakes, mudslides, and volcanic eruptions.

Due to distance from the continental US, disaster response and recovery can be challenging. FEMA has worked to address these challenges, but the agency could improve disaster recovery in several areas, according to a recent Government Accountability Office report. This report examines how FEMA and its federal partners prepared for and responded to the 2018 disasters; and the extent to which FEMA assisted the CNMI, Guam, and Hawaii in recovering from the 2018 natural disasters.

As of October 2020, FEMA obligated \$877 million—more than 70% of which was for individual and public assistance missions—following the 2018 disasters and made progress addressing some region-specific challenges. However, FEMA has not fully addressed housing assistance issues in the CNMI.

GAO also identified delays in FEMA’s obligation of public assistance program funds—used to repair or replace disaster-damaged public infrastructure such as utilities, roads, and schools. Specifically, on average, it took over a year for FEMA to approve funds for projects awarded after the 2018 disasters.

GAO is making four recommendations, including that FEMA (1) incorporate lessons learned into permanent housing construction guidance; and (2) use performance data to identify and address inefficiencies in the public assistance program. The Department of Homeland Security concurred, and FEMA is taking actions in response.

[Access the report.](#)



NSPE's **Job Board** is your one-stop resource for professional engineering employment. Whether you are on the hunt for your next career move or looking for today's top engineering leaders and talent, you will find it here.

NSPE provides the tools PEs need to keep current in the profession and advance their careers.

Featured Job

[Civil Engineer V \(SR-26\)](#)

Honolulu, HI

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

FAA safety engineer goes public to slam the agency's oversight of Boeing's 737 MAX

Haunted by the two deadly crashes of Boeing 737 MAX jets and his agency's role in approving the plane, veteran Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) safety engineer Joe Jacobsen is stepping forward publicly to give the victims' families "a firsthand account of what the truth is." In a detailed letter sent last month to a family that lost their daughter in the second MAX crash in Ethiopia two years ago this week, and in [interviews with The Seattle Times](#), Jacobsen gave the first personal account by an insider of the federal safety agency's response to the MAX crashes. Jacobsen should have been among the FAA specialists who reviewed the MAX's critical new flight control software during its original certification, which was largely controlled by Boeing. He's confident that he and other FAA engineers would have flagged its serious design flaws.

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Wanted: 2021 NSPE Emerging Leaders



NSPE is fostering a new generation of engineers who can think strategically, build effective teams, and lead successfully through its [Emerging Leaders Program](#). This intensive seven-month, professionally facilitated, virtual program is now accepting applications until **May 31**.

Early-career professionals with 5-8 years of experience who are just beginning to lead and think strategically in the profession are encouraged to apply. The program graduated its [first class of diverse, super achieving professionals](#) in February.

Between August 2021 and February 2022 participants will learn how to be successful at higher levels of leadership responsibility. Participants will engage in 90-minute leadership training sessions each month with learning discussions and mentoring on topics such as ownership, team development, communication skills, giving/receiving feedback, and presentation skills. There will also be ample networking opportunities with peers and national NSPE national leaders.

[Learn more and apply.](#)

Ethics Webinars for PEs and Those on the Licensure Path



Don't miss NSPE's upcoming ethics webinars on truthfulness and fidelity to employers and clients, with insight from Rebecca Bowman, P.E., Esq., NSPE's senior director for ethics and professional practice and NAFE executive director, and other NSPE ethics experts.

April 7

[Engineering Ethics—Canon III—Truthfulness](#)

Learn from a variety of situations in which circumstances can tempt (and even encourage) engineers to dance around the edges of Canon III.

Presenters: Hugh Veit, P.E., Susan Sprague, P.E., F.NSPE, and Rebecca Bowman, P.E., Esq.

May 5

[Engineering Ethics—Canon IV—Fidelity to Employers/Clients](#)

Examine the duties to employers and clients, and circumstances under which those duties can be pre-empted by higher duties, especially to the public health, safety, and welfare.

Presenters: David Kish, Ph.D., P.E., Jeff Greenfield, Ph.D., P.E., F.NSPE, and Rebecca Bowman, P.E., Esq.

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