

State News for NSPE Members

Florida Tops in US for Solar Installations

The Sunshine State is finally realizing its solar-energy generation potential, [according to the South Florida Sun-Sentinel](#).

Florida topped all other US states for solar energy installations during the first half of 2023 and is on track to upend California and Texas, the top solar installers of 2021 and 2022, for solar energy capacity increase in 2023. The new figures were reported in the latest Solar Market Insight report recently released by energy analytics firm Wood Mackenzie and the Solar Energy Industries Association. The report shows that Florida added 2,499 megawatts of solar-generation capacity during the first half of the year, far surpassing the 1,648 MW added by California and the 1,292 MW added by Texas.

Florida's increase for the first six months exceeded the amount of solar capacity ever installed in the state during an entire year, an SEIA news release stated. It contributes to a record 32 gigawatts — a gigawatt is equal to 1,000 megawatts — of new solar capacity projected for the United States in 2023. That's a 52% increase over 2022 and a single-year record for the nation, according to the release. [Read more](#).

Researcher Will Map Vulnerable Critical Infrastructure in Western Florida

Compound flooding — when two or more sources of flooding occur simultaneously or in close succession — can spread the reach of natural disasters beyond their normal scope. A new study by Ebrahim Ahmadisharaf, a researcher at the Resilient Infrastructure and Disaster Response Center, or RIDER Center, in the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering, will help communities in the Pensacola Bay and Perdido Bay watersheds manage the threat posed by compound flooding.

Ahmadisharaf will map vulnerable critical infrastructure within the two western

Florida watersheds and update estimates of rainfall intensity, duration and frequency under climate change. The work is supported by a \$475,000 grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

“Improving community resilience is the motivation behind our work at the RIDER Center,” Ahmadisharaf said. “We have a good idea of how the communities we will examine are impacted by coastal flooding and by inland flooding, but we need a better understanding of how those two types of flooding work together and could place more people and infrastructure in harm’s way.”

Why it Matters: Official and municipal planners rely on detailed maps and predictions about weather and the impact of natural disasters to help decide where critical infrastructure should go and how to protect those investments. But climate change is altering the intensity of weather; for example, by making rainfall heavier. That means old predictions are outdated. Projects like this one can help update expectations and keep communities safe. [Read more.](#)

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

Workability Webinars Series to Focus on Emerging Tech

NSPE offers a live webinar series free to members—“WORKability Wednesdays”—to support members with their professional development goals. The first webinar of this season took place on September 13 - [How New PFAS Regulations Will Impact Water and Wastewater Utilities](#). A webinar on [What Utilities Want Fleets to Know About Moving to Electric Vehicles](#) will take place on September 27.



NSPE members get free access to the webinars, but must register to attend. Visit the [PE Institute](#) to review the full series line-up and to mark your calendar for these live, online events.

Registration Open: 2023 NSPE Women's Leadership Virtual Fall Symposium

Join us for these live, one-time events to hear from experts in the field and join your colleagues in important discussions organized by NSPE’s Women Leadership Program Task Force: [The Cost of Leadership](#); [Leading Yourself: Learning to Increase Your Emotional Intelligence](#); and [Networking Strategies: An Unconventional Approach to Connecting with Others](#). The webinars will take place on **October 12**, **October 19**, and **October 26** at 1:00 p.m. (ET). This exclusive

package is free and includes all three live, one-time sessions. The sessions will not be recorded and PDH credits will not be issued for them.

[Register now.](#)

#NSPECon23 Revisited

NSPECon23 provided an opportunity to learn and build community in the heart of Louisville, Kentucky. Find photos from the All Things Louisville reception, the first-time attendee mixer, PE Day celebrations, recognition and installation ceremonies, and more on [NSPE's Flickr account](#). Relive the fun and excitement with all your PE peers that gathered to celebrate the engineering profession.



Save the Date: NSPECon24—Raleigh, North Carolina—August 7–9



A False Solution for Our Workforce Challenges

The Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL) recently posted an opinion column that highlights the risks of weakening professional licensing requirements to address workforce challenges. NSPE is a member of ARPL.

Workforce shortages, talent pipelines at a trickle and expensive labor are all-too-familiar challenges facing businesses and the public sector. In an attempt to tackle these problems, there is a growing trend of exploring the weakening or elimination of certain key job requirements. These proposals include getting rid of college degree requirements without equivalency alternatives, doing away with requisite testing, and downgrading credentials and licensure for professionals.

To be sure, there are some elements of the occupational licensure process that require continuous improvement and elimination of impediments disparately impacting underrepresented groups. However, in the rush to address workforce challenges, legislators and other policymakers must be cautious not to create new problems that leave employers and the public at risk.

Weakening professional licensing requirements is a false solution to various workforce ills. Minimum qualifications ensured by licensing exist to protect employers and the public they serve. This is particularly important for technical professions with high public impact, such as architecture, certified public accountancy, engineering, landscape architecture and land surveying. Care must be taken to ensure that critical licensing systems for such professions, designed to ensure public and economic protection, are not compromised and swept up in

broad-brush calls for occupational licensing reform. [Read more](#) .

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