

State News for NSPE Members

FBPE Temporarily Expands Signing, Sealing Rules

The Florida Board of Professional Engineers has approved an emergency rule temporarily expanding the use of electronically or digitally signed and sealed engineering plans and documents to include printed copies.

In order to effectuate the Governor and State Health Officer's orders regarding self-quarantine to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the emergency rule temporarily waives the restriction in Chapter 61G15-23, Florida Administrative Code, that printed copies of digitally or electronically signed and sealed plans or documents are not considered signed and sealed. [Learn more.](#)

Magazine Highlights Seawall Project

A seawall along Flagler Beach was recently highlighted in *Composites Manufacturing Magazine* for its use of glass fiber reinforced plastic. FDOT installed the 5,000-foot-long seawall to protect the state highway from future storm surges. The seawall is expected to last 100 years or more with little to no maintenance.

The article quotes Lowry Denty, P.E. of Mott MacDonald Florida, LLC, the project's engineer of record: "The biggest thing with steel-reinforced marine structures is that once chlorides get into the concrete and the reinforcing, you get rust, degraded concrete and even pieces falling off. It's a lot of repairs." He added that the GFRP-reinforced seawall "should never have any maintenance issues until it reaches its design life." Read the [full article](#).

Everglades Reservoir Project Begins

Site work on the Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir Project in southwest Palm Beach County is officially underway. A component of the State of

Florida and the federal government's Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, the reservoir project provides ecological benefits, reduces harmful discharges to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries, and sends clean water to the Southern Everglades and Florida Bay. The project includes a combination of canals, stormwater treatment areas, and a storage reservoir anticipated to hold 240,000 acre-feet of water. It is expected to cost more than \$1.8 billion.

After the initial site preparation, the South Florida Water Management District will begin construction of canals and berms for the Stormwater Treatment Area in the coming months. The 6,500-acre STA west of the reservoir will include inflow/outflow canals and levees to connect the Miami and North New River Canals. Future projects include additional conveyance capacity through enlargement of the Miami Canal and the North New River and a new 4,600-cfs inflow pump station to deliver water from the inflow canal to the reservoir and STA. Brown and Caldwell is serving in the role of STA engineer of record.

The US Army Corps will build the 10,000-acre storage reservoir.

Clean Energy Workers Take a Hit

Nearly 30,000 Floridians working in the clean energy sector lost their jobs during the pandemic, [reports](#) [Floridapolitics.com](#).

The analysis of Department of Labor revealed that Florida was among the hardest hit states. Since the beginning of the pandemic, more than 1 in 6 clean energy workers nationwide have filed unemployment claims.

Get Ready for *Virtual PE Conference 2020* (#NSPEVirtual)

To protect the health, safety, and welfare of our members, while continuing to provide meaningful and valuable education and engagement opportunities, NSPE leadership has decided to postpone this year's Professional Engineers Conference (PECon) in Philadelphia until summer 2021. In its place, the Society will host an online Virtual PE Conference in August. Events will be centered around the annual celebration of PE Day, August 5.



The new virtual program will make it easier for attendees to participate according to

their schedules. Sessions can be experienced in a live virtual environment or by accessing recordings at a more convenient time. Virtual **PECon** will be easily accessible and affordable due to the elimination of travel costs and reduction in registration fees. PDH credits will be available for education sessions comparable to the amount you could earn at a regular **PECon**. The virtual conference will also provide networking and social connection with colleagues in addition to professional development opportunities.

Current plans include:

- Education tracks and sessions, featuring many of the sessions already planned for **PECon 2020**;
- Tracks spread throughout the week at various times of day, empowering attendees to take in more of the content they desire;
- Recording all sessions to make them available for on-demand viewing;
- Hosting keynote speakers and senior leaders allowing for interactive Q&A with attendees; and
- Networking/roundtable topic discussions with peers by region and areas of practice, geared to increase dialogue and member engagement.

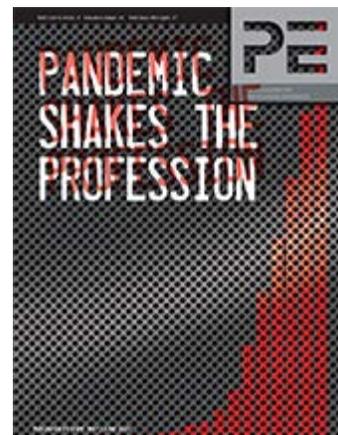
Stay tuned for more information on content and registration to come.

Pandemic Forces Profession to Adjust

NSPE and its certification division **NICET**, as well as state societies and individual members, are all adapting to a changed world.

Our latest [PE cover story](#) highlights how organizations and individual PEs are meeting the challenges with courage, compassion, and innovation. NSPE and its state societies are continuing to provide information, advocacy, and continuing education as staffers are sheltering at home. PEs are running companies from their bedrooms or dining rooms and working to ensure employee well-being while keeping businesses afloat.

No one knows what the future holds. But professional engineers will be among those helping to create that future—as always, prioritizing the public health, safety, and welfare.



[Read more from May/June PE magazine.](#)

Update: NICET's certification testing for engineering technicians has started to return but on a reduced schedule. Pearson VUE, the company that manages testing centers for NICET exams as well as NCEES exams and those in many other professions, began reopening on May 1. Centers will be operating at 50% capacity and for limited hours. The reopening of testing centers in Pennsylvania and Alaska has not been scheduled, due to locally imposed restrictions. For the latest information, visit [NICET's COVID-19 response web page](#) .

[Read the latest on NCEES's FE and PE exams.](#)

Don't Miss These Upcoming Webinars



NSPE is increasing the number of its webinars to serve members during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stay current in the profession, earn PDHs, and advance your career by tuning in.

- [Engineering Exemptions and Education: Diminish the First and Enhance the Second - May 20](#)
- [Negotiate It! How to Crush Your Fears, Develop Your Negotiation Muscle, and Gain Power in the Workplace - May 27](#)
- [Fire Protection Engineering in Property Risk Management - June 3](#)
- [Ethics in our Changing World - June 10](#)
- [Engineers, Building Water Systems and Legionella: What You Need to Know - June 24](#)

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