

State News for NSPE Members

McNairy County Tornado, Flooding Caused Estimated \$30.3M in Damage

The tornado that tore through McNairy County in West Tennessee caused an estimated \$30.3 million in damage, according to the county's emergency management agency, [the Tennessee Lookout reports](#).

An EF-3 tornado with a 43-mile storm track swept through the county early April 3, killing five people. Wind speeds reached up to 160 miles per hour.

The storm hit Selmer, the county's largest city and county seat, home to about 4,500 people. Those killed include three Selmer residents on New Bethel Road, one McNairy County resident on New Bethel Road and one McNairy County resident on Friendship Road, according to the Selmer Police Department.

Residents and business owners bore the brunt of property damage, with preliminary assessments totaling \$27.6 million, the McNairy County Emergency Management Agency reported.

Flooding caused by the storm system also damaged roads across the county. The local government response and the cost of damage to public property, roads, utilities, and government facilities totals around \$2.7 million. Of the 332 structures impacted by the storm, 108 were destroyed and 70 sustained major damage, McNairy County EMA reported on April 5.

The preliminary damage assessments will be sent to FEMA, the first step in determining whether McNairy County is eligible for federal assistance with disaster recovery. The Small Business Administration also assessed the damage to determine if the county is eligible for low-interest disaster loans. [Read more](#).

New 1.4-MW Rooftop Solar Array Will Power Tennessee Air National Guard Base

Chroma Energy Group announced the completion of a new 1.4-MW solar installation at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Louisville, Tennessee, [Solar Power World reports](#). Chroma Energy Group began constructing the installation in April 2023 as a subcontractor to Apex Construction Group of Lenoir City.

The solar system, designed to enhance the base's energy resilience and offset energy costs, is part of a phased initiative to establish a microgrid at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base. The base will eventually add battery storage to the installation, further reducing the base's grid reliance. Once finished, the microgrid will enhance base operations during power outages and national emergencies, providing increased energy reliability for critical operations like air refueling missions.

"We are honored to be a part of this important project for the Tennessee Air National Guard," said Ed Rottmann, CEO of Chroma Energy Group. "This project is a great opportunity to help ensure the base is prepared for the future. We're proud to support the Air National Guard in their important mission." [Read more](#).

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

Make Your Voice Heard: Support Tomorrow's Workforce

The **Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act** seeks to expand the use of 529 education savings plans, traditionally limited to college tuition, to cover expenses for obtaining or maintaining recognized postsecondary credentials. NSPE is a strong advocate for this critical legislation, recognizing its potential to enhance workforce development opportunities for engineers and other professionals.

The Act includes technical training, certification programs (including the PE license), and other workforce development initiatives. By allowing 529 plans to cover fees for certifications, testing, and tuition, the Act provides valuable tax-advantaged resources for workers pursuing career growth, mid-career changes, or alternative career pathways.

Show your support by contacting legislators and urging them to support the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act (S. 756 and H.R. 1151)!

Join the Campaign Now!

Nominations Open: Director, New Professionals

Volunteer Engagement leads to cultivating a strong professional community, building leadership skills, and giving back to your profession. Nominations are open for the **Director, New Professionals** position on the 2025-27 Board of Directors.

The Director, New Professionals must be an NSPE member in good standing and a licensed professional engineer who is within the first 10 years of being licensed. To learn more about the process, necessary qualifications, duties, and the time and financial commitment, visit [visit Call for Nominations for 2025-2027 Director, New Professionals](#).

Self-nominations are permitted and are due by **April 25** (Noon ET).

QBS 2025 Awards Program Accepting Nominations

NSPE is seeking nominations for the 2025 QBS Awards. The QBS Awards program promotes and recognizes the exemplary use of the qualifications-based selection process in three categories: federal government sector, state governor sector (includes all governmental units under the state level), and nongovernment sector.

The deadline for nominations is May 30. [Access the awards information and nomination form](#).

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