

State News for NSPE Members

TVA Investing \$15 Billion Over Next Three Years Amid Growth in the Region

A \$15 billion investment by the TVA is expected to be phased into various initiatives over the next three years. The main plans are to build additional generation, upgrade TVA's existing system to better meet electricity demands, and maintain energy security, [WBKO reports](#).

"It took us 90 years to build our current power system which positively changed the lives of millions," said TVA president and CEO Jeff Lyash. "In the next 30 years, we will have to double or triple the current systems at a speed unlike any other time in TVA history to ensure we can continue to provide affordable, reliable, resilient, and sustainable energy to fuel the region's economic growth."

TVA is the nation's largest public power supplier, delivering energy to 10 million people across seven southeastern states. Several area electric companies buy their power from TVA. The electric load did not grow much during the decade before the pandemic but has since seen "tremendous economic growth." TVA is adding 3,800 megawatts of new power generation and said they have invested \$25 billion in existing and new generation over the last 10 years. More than 10,000 megawatts of new solar energy is expected to be added by 2035. [Read more](#).

TN Agency Announces \$63 Million in Water Infrastructure Improvements

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) recently [announced](#) 20 grants totaling \$63,888,650 from the state's American Rescue Plan (ARP) fund, part of which TDEC is administering in the form of drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure grants.

Since August 2022, TDEC has awarded and announced \$996 million in executed grant funds representing every county and 248 cities through ARP programming,

and these new grants mark the conclusion of the award phase of the non-competitive grant program.

Of the 20 grants, two are collaborative grants and 18 are non-collaborative grants. Collaborative grants involve multiple entities (cities, counties, or water utilities) partnering on projects to work toward a shared purpose. The non-competitive grant program will fund a total of 266 non-collaborative grants and 71 collaborative grants. The non-competitive grant program has been a success, funding over 1,000 individual drinking water, wastewater, and/or stormwater infrastructure projects.

Tennessee received \$3.725 billion from the ARP, and the state's Financial Stimulus Accountability Group dedicated \$1.35 billion of those funds to TDEC to support water projects in communities throughout Tennessee. [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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