PE MATTERS STATE NEWS

NSPE-WV WEST VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

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State News for NSPE Members

Major Clean Hydrogen Project Planned for West Virginia

A Houston energy transition company, Fidelis New Energy, has announced plans for a $2 billion investment to produce clean hydrogen from natural gas in West Virginia, Energyportal.eu reports. The project, known as the Mountaineer GigaSystem facility, is estimated to create up to 800 permanent jobs. It will be located on a 1,000-acre site in Point Pleasant along the Ohio River in Mason County.

The facility will be built in four phases, with each phase producing over 500 metric tons of hydrogen per day. The hydrogen will be used to power the company's data center campus on the site and will also be transported for use in various industries, including greenhouses, transportation, and steel production. One of the key features of the project is its commitment to environmental sustainability. The company plans to remove and store approximately 10 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions underground annually, beneath state forests, wildlife management areas, and other state-owned properties.

Fidelis New Energy CEO, Dan Shapiro, highlighted the unique geology of West Virginia as a significant advantage for the project. The state's geology allows for the storage of carbon dioxide, making it an attractive location for clean hydrogen production. Read more.

University Engineers Study How to Pull Carbon Out of Building Air to Make Methanol

WVU reports that researchers at the school have taken the first steps toward developing technology that can capture carbon dioxide in the air and use it for eco-friendly manufacturing of methanol. The process they have begun modeling — which involves pulling air from buildings — could increase the sustainable supply of methanol, one of the world's most extensively used raw materials, while removing a planet-warming greenhouse gas from the atmosphere.

Project lead Xingbo Liu, who serves as professor, associate dean for research and chair of engineering at the WVU Benjamin M. Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources, explained “methanol, or wood alcohol, has so many applications — it’s one of the most common chemicals in the world. It can be used by itself or as a feedstock for making other products, such as paint, primer or insulation.”

Methanol is typically produced from fossil fuels like shale gas, but Liu and his partners said they believe they have found a way to erase harmful emissions from the production process by harvesting the carbon needed to synthesize methanol from the air of buildings like large apartment or office complexes.

The Phase I project is supported by $400,000 in US Department of Energy funding. 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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