

State News for NSPE Members

West Virginia Establishes First-of-its-kind Financial Fund for Oil and Gas Well Retirement

West Virginia Governor Patrick Morrisey and Diversified Energy announced Thursday a partnership to create the nation's first financial assurance fund dedicated to retiring oil and gas wells, [WVNews reports](#).

The public-private collaboration, known as the Mountain State Plugging Fund, commits \$70 million from Diversified Energy to the state over 20 years to ensure the company's oil and natural gas wells are safely retired without cost to taxpayers.

The agreement positions West Virginia as the first state government to partner with an energy company to proactively address future funding for non-producing wells.

Diversified Energy, which started in West Virginia, also plans to increase investment in its wholly owned subsidiary, Next LVL Energy, to grow its well retirement capacity in the Appalachian Basin, which is expected to create jobs and economic impact in the region.

"I'm proud to announce this transformative partnership with Diversified Energy, a company started right here in West Virginia," Morrisey said. "The Mountain State Plugging Fund is a bold step forward — delivering high-paying jobs as well as environmental and economic benefits for our communities while showcasing West Virginia's leadership in energy innovation." [Read more](#).

WVDOT to Kick Off It's Virginia Bridge Design and Build Contest

Friday, October 31, 2025, marks the kickoff of the annual West Virginia Bridge Design and Build Contest. The contest, sponsored by the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT), BridgeWalk, West Virginia Department of Education, and WVU Tech in Beckley, challenges middle and high school students

to see who can design the lowest cost bridge using bridge design software developed for students. Finalists will also build a balsa bridge to see how much force the model will stand before collapsing. Access more information about the contest and register [here](#).

“To see the kids each year push themselves just a little bit farther and try a little bit harder ... is a real eye-opening experience you don’t always get in the classroom,” said Bryan Bush, a teacher at Eastern Greenbrier Middle School, one of last year’s winners. “The students love to get in there and use the software.”

“The West Virginia Department of Transportation has sponsored this STEM competition, now in its 25th year, to let middle and high school students know there are good jobs available right here in our home state,” said Jennifer Dooley, WVDOT Public Relations. “We have witnessed students in college tell us they went to college because of the competition, and some have come to work for us. Whatever they do, we want them to know the opportunities are here in West Virginia.”

The contest is FREE and open to every middle school and high school student who attends any public, private or home school in West Virginia. Finalists will be invited to compete for cash prizes at WVU Tech in Beckley in the spring.

“A lot of middle school students haven’t been to a college campus,” said Bush. “Stepping into the library there, they feel the anticipation, they see somebody else’s design, they start having that niche talk that they wouldn’t have anywhere else. The kids are recognized for their work and it’s a great event.” [Read more](#).

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

Call for NSPE Vice President Nominations

NSPE is seeking nominees to serve as vice president on the Board of Directors. The vice president serves four consecutive years: 2026-27 as vice president, 2027-28 as president-elect, 2028-29 as president, and 2029-30 as immediate past president. To learn more about qualifications, time and financial commitments, and how to apply, [please view the call for nominations packet in the governance section of the leadership toolbox](#).

Nominations are due to the NSPE Secretary at executive@nspe.org by **January 12, 2026**. Additional questions can be sent to executive@nspe.org.

Nominations Deadline Extended for FEYA

Federal engineers are at the forefront of our nation's most vital priorities from infrastructure and innovation to defense, public health, and safety. Honoring the commitment of federal engineers to innovation and service is the hallmark of the Federal Engineer of the Year Award (FEYA). Nominations for the 2026 award have been extended until November 30, 2025. [Visit the online portal for full guidelines and submission details.](#)



Why Does FEYA Matter?

Lt. Col. Brigham Moore, Ph.D., P.E., PMP, was named the 2025 Federal Engineer of the Year. Here's what Lt. Col. Moore had to say about the impact this award has had on his career: *"Being selected as Top Ten Finalist and ultimately as the Federal Engineer of the Year this past year has been an incredible highlight of my career. Within the Air Force, it has provided me opportunities to mentor and give back to the engineering community that I love. Professionally, it has reconnected me with previous advisors and engineering faculty, opening up doors and networking me with some people that I did not previously know. Finally, and personally, it served as a huge bolster to my confidence and commitment to continue making meaningful change with each project and major decision as I move forward."*

[Learn about Moore's government service and contributions to the profession.](#)



Engineers Week 2026 Resources and Outreach Grants

It's time to start planning for Engineers Week and Introduce a Girl to Engineering activities. NSPE members can [access resources on the NSPE website](#).

Outreach Grants

DiscoverE's grant opportunities are designed to support volunteer and educator efforts to inspire the next generation of innovators through hands-on exploration of engineering. Grants range from \$250 to \$1,000. The application period for the grants will close on November 3. [Access more information and apply](#).



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