New Battery Facility Brings Jobs for Former Mine Workers

SPARKZ Inc., a battery startup that intends to commercialize a cobalt-free lithium battery in the US, plans to open a research and development facility in the heart of coal country in West Virginia. It is hiring displaced mine workers to do factory production work, Yahoo Finance reports.

Removing cobalt from clean energy production reduces the environmental impact of the process and lowers costs. "We must end our reliance on cobalt and China's dominance in the global battery supply chain," said Dr. Sanjiv Malhotra, founder and CEO of SPARKZ. "We are delighted to make West Virginia our home and aid the state's transition from its roots in coal mining to the new energy economy."

Vantage Ventures, an initiative to scale innovative technology companies in West Virginia, helped SPARKZ secure equity financing and select a space for the research and development facility.

West Virginia Water Projects Receive Funding

West Virginia has received funding for water resources projects and programs through the US Army Corps of Engineers. The funding comes from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

"This latest round of IIJA funding will help maintain important projects such as Summersville Lake, support water and wastewater services in central and southern West Virginia, and keep our communities safe from flood hazards," US Senator Shelley Moore Capito stated in a news release.

The funding will be invested in 10 areas within the state, the largest being $27.5 million for operation and maintenance at Jennings Randolph Lake, $6.5 million for Summersville Lake, more than $2 million for Central West Virginia Environmental Infrastructure, and $1.5 million for Southern West Virginia Environmental Infrastructure.
Stay up to date on legislative issues through the NSPE Advocacy Center.

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**Take the 2022 Engineering Outlook Survey**

Share your opinions on current issues affecting the practice of engineering by completing the 2022 *Engineering Outlook Survey*. The survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Once completed, you will have the option to enter our drawing for one of four $50 Amazon gift cards.

All responses will be kept anonymous and only used in aggregated results unless you give us permission to contact you regarding your responses. The results of the survey will be shared in an upcoming article in *PE* magazine, as well as other NSPE publications (website, newsletters, social media, etc.).

Start the survey.

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**NSPE Endorses Sustainability and Resilience Statement**

NSPE believes licensed professional engineers should be good stewards of the environment in order to preserve and protect our world for future generations. The NSPE Board of Directors recently endorsed “The Role of the Engineering Community in Addressing Climate Change,” a statement intended to unite, energize, and motivate people within and across organizations, and to fulfill their desires for meaning and purpose in their professional lives. Facilitated by Engineering Change Lab-USA, the statement was prepared with input from a working group of sixteen organizations including NSPE.

Read more about NSPE’s position on the environment, sustainability, and resilience.

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**New Live Webinar Series: Workability Wednesdays**

Would colleagues consider you workable? How easy is it for you to mold, flow, and bend in today’s work environment? Is your knowledge up-to-date and relevant? Please join us for this new webinar series to learn more about topics impacting the industry and to enhance your competencies in the profession.
These live and interactive webinars are **free** to NSPE members and will be held at 2:00 pm EDT on the first and third Wednesday of the months of April, May, and June. The next webinar on April 20 will focus on *The Future of Wichita’s Water - The Northwest Water Treatment Facility*.

Learn more about the upcoming webinars and register.