

## State News for NSPE Members

### Biden Administration Approves Major Disaster Declaration for Puerto Rico

FEMA announced on September 22 that federal disaster assistance has been made available to Puerto Rico to supplement territorial and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by Hurricane Fiona. This action makes federal funding available to affected individuals in 55 municipalities within the commonwealth, according to a [news release](#).

Assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-interest loans to cover uninsured property losses and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster. Individuals can apply for disaster assistance at [www.DisasterAssistance.gov](http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov), by calling 800-621-3362, or by using the FEMA app.

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### Water Infrastructure Projects Open for Bidding

Puerto Rico is accepting bids for new water infrastructure projects in central and southern areas that will total nearly \$48 million, [bnamericas.com reports](#).

The projects include:

- The construction of two sanitary pump stations and the installation of equipment to replace the Patillas wastewater treatment plant;
  - Design and construction of emergency work at the Caguas wastewater treatment plant, which include “civil, structural, mechanical, and electrical work, to prepare a bypass for the rehabilitation of the inlet channels of the pump station, put in service existing equipment and the rehabilitation of the process units;” and
  - The rehabilitation of trunk sewers that convey raw sewage to the Caguas wastewater treatment plant. [Read more](#).
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## Transportation Authority Files Fiscal Plan to Omit Debt

The Puerto Rico Oversight Board filed a possible final Highways and Transportation Authority plan of adjustment in early September, [newstimes.com reports](#). In late August, a compromise was reached on a dispute that had pitted Assured Guaranty against Nuveen and Franklin Advisors and presented a hurdle to the plan.

The HTA was created for the purpose of constructing, operating, and maintaining Puerto Rico's toll road network, major highways, and mass transportation facilities. The plan settles about \$2.2 billion of debt.

The Biden Administration recently allocated millions for infrastructure projects in 22 states and Puerto Rico, including \$90 million for road improvements in Mayaguez.

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

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## Moving the Society Closer to Our Vision

*By Britt Smith, P.E., F.NSPE, President 2022-2023*



What does NSPE mean to you? I'd like to try to tell you what it means to me. I began my career with a small civil engineering firm with a focus on municipal engineering. After a few years, I moved to the public works department in Jefferson City, Missouri. This is the same city where my wife and I have raised our three children. As a result, I've had the privilege of working for the community that I have called home most of my career.

Like many of you, I was approached by another engineer early in my career and asked to join NSPE. I have moved through various leadership and volunteer roles at the chapter, state, and national levels. I could not be more humbled to be the president of NSPE. I never dreamed that I would be in this position. As I got involved with NSPE, I met and built friendships with many wonderful engineers within my community, around the state, and across this great country. Each time I get involved and want to give back, I seem to receive so much more than I give. Our founder David Steinman probably had similar thoughts. Steinman understood that the technical problems of the various engineering disciplines are different, but the interests of the profession are shared. He founded NSPE to unite the profession around those common interests. NSPE was created, and continues today, to be the single national professional society, with solidarity of purpose and concentration of strength, to provide for the professional interests of the

engineering profession.

NSPE has adopted as our vision: A world where the public can be confident that the engineering decisions affecting their lives are made by qualified and ethically accountable professionals. Our vision statement is a simple statement, but a very powerful message. I heard once that the average engineer holds the lives of more people in their hands than any doctor could see in a lifetime. As I considered that statement, I couldn't help but think about the awesome responsibility we carry. NSPE was created and continues today to help all members of our profession fulfill that responsibility.

[Read more.](#)

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## Nominations Open: Federal Engineer of the Year

Honoring the commitment of federal engineers to innovation and service is the hallmark of the [Federal Engineer of the Year Award](#).

Nominations for the award, which attracts participation from more than a dozen federal agencies, are open until October 31.

The FEYA ceremony is scheduled for February 24, 2023, at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. Tickets will be available for sale in January. [Apply or nominate a worthy engineer.](#)



### The 2022 Federal Engineer of the Year

**Robert Zueck, Ph.D., P.E.**, was named NSPE's 2022 Federal Engineer of the Year for his discoveries and contributions in the engineering field during a [virtual awards event](#) in February.

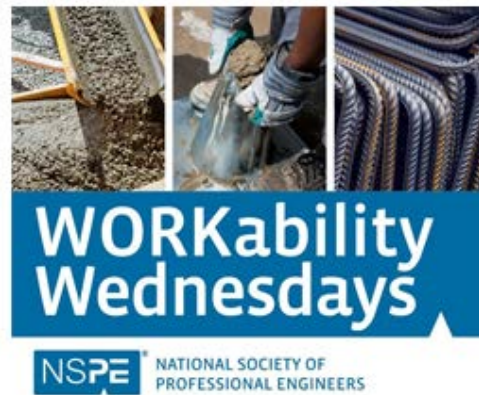
Prior to retirement, Zueck worked in the US Department of the Navy's Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC), Expeditionary Warfare Center at Port Hueneme, California. He is heralded for applying his vibration research to military defense projects for which engineers can now design beyond the speed, agility, and stealth limitations of many military sensors, weapons, and platforms. Find out more about Zueck in a [PE article](#).



## Access Free WORKability Wednesdays Webinars

The reviews of the [Engineering: Addressing Unintended Consequences as a Professional](#) webinar are excellent. “Applicable to all engineering disciplines,” says one attendee.

If you were busy this summer and missed it, there is time to watch this thought-provoking webinar at NSPE’s PE Institute. All webinars in the [spring series](#) are available free to members. Watch for more information soon about what to expect in the fall series lineup!



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22314**

