

## State News for NSPE Members

### USDA Awards \$6 Million For Renewable Energy Projects in Puerto Rico

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded \$6,023,666 for 31 renewable energy projects in Puerto Rico, [The News Journal reports](#).

The loans and grants will allow agricultural producers and rural small businesses to make investments in renewable energy and energy efficient improvements to reduce their energy costs, generate new revenue and strengthen the resilience of their operation.

With grants from USDA Rural Development and the rural private sector, there will be an investment of nearly \$20 million in renewable energy systems and more efficient equipment, according to Maximiliano J. Trujillo-Ortega, state director of USDA Rural Development for Puerto Rico.

“These systems will help rural small and medium sized enterprises and farmers lower energy costs, keep equipment and services running when power outages occur, boosting Puerto Rico’s economy,” said Trujillo-Ortega. He confirmed that USDA Rural Development is set to offer loans and grants through the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) included in the funding of the Inflation Reduction Act, until September 2024. The state director also indicated that of the 31 cases that received funds, four are for agricultural producers and six are in Rural Partners Network (RPN) zones. [Read more](#).

---

### Firms Awarded Spots on \$5 Billion Power Project Contract

Six companies have secured spots on a \$5 billion contract to support the US Army in a power generation and stabilization project in Puerto Rico, [according to News is My Business](#).

The companies, Amentum, AshBritt, CDM Smith, OMP Solutions, PTSI Managed Services, and Weston Solutions, will compete for orders under the firm-fixed-price

contract set to be completed by September 2028, according to the Department of Defense.

Launched in July, the service branch's solicitation aims to stabilize Puerto Rico's power infrastructure. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will handle the task orders, which encompass planning, coordination and installation of temporary generating units, operation and maintenance, and collaboration with the Puerto Rico Electric & Power Authority (PREPA) and LUMA Energy. Work locations and funding will be determined based on individual task orders.

According to the multiple award task order contract, the contractor will provide power generation services to USACE customers. "The power generation services consist of rental and delivery of generator units; electrical connection of the generator output to the power grid; installation of new, or modification/repair of existing, power monitoring and control systems; testing and commissioning of the power generation and electrical systems; and operation and maintenance of the installed systems, to include fueling," the contract reads. [Read more.](#)

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

---

## Looking Toward a Promising Future

*By Bill Atkinson, P.E., F.NSPE, President 2023–24*



As I continue on my professional journey as the NSPE president, I often reflect on what our organization has done since its founding in 1934 and what NSPE needs to do going forward. The next stage of NSPE's future begins with our vision to ensure that the public lives in a world where engineering decisions are made by qualified and ethically accountable professionals. This will require that a unified engineering community step up to protect licensure laws across the nation and maintain high standards for professional practice. It will require that we embrace innovation and emerging technologies. This future will be bolstered by a new generation of engineers that we must encourage to understand that they can truly make a difference in the world. I look forward to playing my part and supporting

others in these efforts.

## **Licensure and Emerging Technologies**

Protection of the public health, safety, and welfare is at our core as professional engineers. Licensure is key to ensuring consistent standards of practice and professional competencies. We must make sure that these standards and competencies remain relevant to how we do things today, while looking toward the future.

We must continually question ourselves and the regulations that are in place. Are state licensing laws adequately regulating the profession of engineering without precluding otherwise qualified individuals from practicing? Is our current licensure model adequately serving its purpose? Are engineering licensure exemptions creating gaps where the public could be harmed? The answers to these questions can help drive us to better ways of safeguarding the public.

I believe that most individuals that become engineers do so because they are good at making things better. They are not tied to the world they are in today and are always pursuing excellence and improvement. I believe that by pooling our experiences as engineers, we can bring the best and brightest together to tackle any challenge that we may face as we seek to evolve. This evolution will involve the development and use of emerging technologies to spur innovative solutions. NSPE is supporting members by providing professional development that showcases the use of these technologies in a manner that is ethical and will benefit the public. [Read more.](#)

---

## **NSPECon24 – Call for Presentation Proposals**

Prepare to share your expertise during NSPECon24 in Raleigh, North Carolina, August 7-9, 2024. [Review the topics](#) NSPE seeks in the areas of career development, leadership, and issues and trends, and think about how you can contribute. The submission site will open on November 1 and the proposal deadline is **January 10, 2024**.

The [NSPECon23 program](#) is still available online and may give potential presenters some ideas about the caliber of sessions needed for next year.

---

## **Volunteers are the Heart of NSPE: Get Involved and Share Your Voice**



Volunteers are essential to advancing NSPE's vision to ensure a world where the public can be confident that engineering decisions affecting their lives are made by qualified and ethically accountable professionals. Volunteering is also a great opportunity for members to grow their professional network and connect with other leaders in the field.

There are [several ways to get involved](#)...here a few opportunities to consider

**Serve as a mentor for an engineering student.** If interested, send an email to [education@nspe.org](mailto:education@nspe.org).

**NSPE online community champion.** Virtual opportunity to promote community and sharing of ideas through NSPE's online channels. If interested, send an email to [membership@nspe.org](mailto:membership@nspe.org).

**Write an article for *PE* magazine.** Share your expertise and insights on professional practice, education, ethics, leadership, licensure, public policy, DEI, emerging technologies, and sustainability and resilience by serving as a guest writer for *PE* magazine. If interested, email [pemagazine@nspe.org](mailto:pemagazine@nspe.org) for submission guidelines.

**Collaborate with staff to draft/supply input** on federal legislation, regulations or public comments to federal Congressional staff and committees (Identify your area(s) of vocational expertise.) If interested, send an email to [governmentrelations@nspe.org](mailto:governmentrelations@nspe.org).

You received this e-mail because you are subscribed to *PE Matters* e-newsletter.

To update your e-mail address, visit [www.nspe.org](http://www.nspe.org) and login to manage your account.

If you do not wish to receive any more issues of *PE Matters*, click here to unsubscribe .

**Share with your network**



