

State News for NSPE Members

‘Forever Chemicals’ Pose Threat to State Residents

To protect public health, state lawmakers are considering a ban on the use of certain materials that contain compounds in the per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance family. “Every major drinking water system and every school in the state has been tested since 2013. At least one PFAS compound was found in 44 percent of the 87 systems that were tested and 12 systems had levels above 20 ppt for the five chemicals highlighted by the foundation and the toxics center,” according to an [article](#) in the Providence Journal.

New Tools Available for PE Advocates

As “occupational reform” bills spring up across the country and put professional licensing at risk, an NSPE-formed coalition has prepared a useful resource kit that can be used by PE advocates to set the record straight.

The [Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing](#) is working to remind lawmakers that highly complex and technical professions, like engineering, rely on a rigorous system to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. It’s this rigor that clearly sets these professions apart from the vocational occupations that lawmakers often cite in defense of their efforts to weaken licensing requirements.

You can learn more about the threat in an ARPL-produced [webinar](#) covering the organization’s background, its work on behalf of highly technical licensed professions, and the state advocacy tools it’s created.

You’ll also find advocacy and messaging resources on the [main page](#) of the public Drop Box, titled “State Partner Tools and Resources (ARPL).” On this page, you’ll see folders for Key Messages and Talking Points, Lawmaker Outreach Handouts, Public Opinion Research, Sample Letters to the Editor and Op-Eds, Social Media, State Specific Folders, Video Files, and a folder for the webinar.

In addition to NSPE, alliance members include the American Institute of Architects, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards, the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, and the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying.

If you have questions, please contact Margaret Edwards at medwards@nspe.org.

State Announces Grants for Resilience Projects

As Rhode Island and other states struggle with the effects of climate change, the Department of Environmental Management has [announced](#) the availability of approximately \$3 million in matching grants for climate resilience projects throughout the state. According to the release, Rhode Island is the first state in the lower 48 where average annual temps have risen by over 2 degrees Celsius.

Other states and cities, with the help of AEC firms, are [working on the same challenges](#), as reported in the March/April PE magazine.

Can Licensing Adapt to Emerging Disciplines?

In case you missed it, RISPE member AJ Vincelli recently penned an [opinion column](#) in PE magazine about developing fields of engineering. “Licensed professional engineers are desperately needed in emerging disciplines—even more than in established engineering disciplines—due to their exploratory and rapidly evolving nature,” Vincelli wrote. “Importantly, public health and safety must be paramount as new technologies are implemented, and PEs are trained to prioritize these factors above all others.” She is a doctoral student in biotechnology at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Climate Change Special Issue

As climate change effects proliferate, professional engineers are taking on the crisis. They’re working to provide solutions as part of their responsibility to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

The [March/April issue of PE magazine](#) includes three articles highlighting PEs’ work in this area:

- [“Climate Changers”](#) –Young engineers feel a



responsibility to take action on climate with their work—and they’re increasingly choosing to work for companies that share this perspective.

- **“Harsh Realities Drive Adaptation”** – Cities are targeting climate-change impacts with comprehensive policies. Professional engineers and AEC firms are showing that their expertise can help bring these plans to fruition.
- **“A Grand Challenge Needs to Inspire Grand Solutions”** – Professional engineers have an abundance of opportunities to invent creative, innovative solutions to issues surrounding environmental sustainability and resilience.

Share Your Views on the Engineering Profession

Do you support the elimination of state licensure exemptions? Should states align their licensing requirements to help PEs easily practice in multiple jurisdictions? Does your place of employment welcome diverse perspectives?

These are just some of the issues facing the professional engineering community. NSPE encourages you to provide your perspectives on these topics and more by participating in the [2020 Engineering Outlook & Salary Survey](#).

The 15-minute survey is open to NSPE members, engineering students, and engineering professionals. Participants will be eligible to enter a drawing for one of four \$50 Amazon gift cards.

The results of the survey will be made available to participants and will also be shared in *PE* magazine and other NSPE publications.

[Access the 2020 Engineering Outlook & Salary Survey.](#)

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Thanks to updates to the NSPE database, members can now also choose exactly what emails they want to receive. With new subscription management options, members can unsubscribe from some mailing lists without missing out on information of interest to them. In order to make this possible, all members' email settings have been reset to the default. Everyone will need to log into their account to manage their preferences, even if they have previously unsubscribed from a mailing list.

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22314**