

State News for NSPE Members

Minnesota Sets the Record Straight on Gas Utilities PE Exemption

In the fall, the National Transportation Safety Board identified Minnesota and 30 other states that do not require a licensed professional engineer on natural gas pipeline projects. Minnesota PEs have taken steps to set the record straight that the NTSB's inclusion of Minnesota in this list was in error. The state does not exempt gas utilities from PE requirements.

License exemptions began getting more attention after the NTSB issued an investigation report on the September 2018 gas pipeline explosions in Massachusetts' Merrimack Valley. The agency made two critical recommendations: first, that all states with license exemptions for public utilities should eliminate those exemptions, and second, that a professional engineer should be required to review and approve gas pipeline construction and maintenance documents. When the NTSB identified states with exemptions, the governor of these states received a letter urging them to end these exemptions for gas pipeline operators.

NSPE staff is also working to secure a PE role in federal legislation on pipeline safety in addition to assisting state societies on this issue.

Threats to Licensure in Minnesota

What are the threats to licensure that could affect professional engineers and engineering in Minnesota? NSPE's [State Watch tool](#) allows easy drilling down by state, with threats categorized as

- Active threat—introduced in the current legislative session;
- Potential threat—prior licensure threats that could resurface;
- Enacted—signed into law;
- Consumer choice bill—allows unlicensed persons to practice professions that require licensure;
- Right to engage in a lawful occupation act—often assumes market

competition is sufficient to protect the public and that licensure is unnecessary.

[Learn about the latest threats and potential threats in Minnesota.](#)

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

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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NSPE is committed to providing the best service possible. To that end, we need to verify that member profile information is accurate. This includes preferred names and titles, and employer and contact information. NSPE asks all members to [review their member profile and update their information](#).

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.

[Update information and preferences](#).

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