



<sup>TM</sup> NATIONAL  
SOCIETY OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
ENGINEERS

# NSPE YEAR IN REVIEW 2016-17



# Year in Review 2016-17

*Since NSPE's founding in 1934, every year has brought unique challenges, opportunities, and achievements. In the past 12 months, an active membership and a strong network of chapters and state societies, collaborating with NSPE's national headquarters, have delivered numerous examples of an enduring commitment to the PE.*

- **NSPE Champions the PE License**
- **NSPE Stands as the Ethical Guide to the Profession**
- **NSPE Powers Professional Advancement**
- **NSPE Unites the PE Community**

## Championing the PE License

*NSPE protects the integrity of the PE license in a changing world and promotes a constant focus on the public health, safety, and welfare.*

### Nationwide Network in Action

*NSPE headquarters worked with many state societies to protect the PE license and the practice of professional engineers.*

- **AK:** Following up on a response to a rulemaking by the US Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service that was dismissive of the PE's role in the design of water systems, NSPE leadership met with RUS key staff to underscore the value and integrity of the professional engineer and the role they play in helping rural villages.
- **WA:** The Washington Society of Professional Engineers and NSPE collaborated on an autonomous vehicle proposal for presentation to the Washington Department of Licensing.
- **WI:** The Wisconsin Society of Professional Engineers and NSPE collaborated on promotion of legislation that will strengthen education requirements for taking the PE exam.
- **WY:** To preserve the strength of the PE license, NSPE and the Wyoming Society launched opposition to FE exam waivers.
- **AR, GA, ID, MT, NV, NH, OK, VA, WI:** Quickly responded to increasing attacks on occupational licensing to ensure the preservation of PE licensing.
- **GA, MN, OK:** To prevent regulatory ambiguity in the licensing of PEs, opposed efforts to establish a separate license for structural engineers.
- **AL, FL, KS, KY:** Fought the most recent threats to the use of qualifications-based selection in the procurement of design services.
- **MI, OH, SC:** Contested bills challenging the PE's decision-making authority regarding the specification of piping used for water supply, wastewater, stormwater, or storm drainage projects.
- **NC, OR:** Challenged legislation obscuring the line between interior design and the legally defined practice of engineering.
- **ME:** Opposed a bill to repeal continuing education requirements for PEs.

[www.nspe.org/advocacy](http://www.nspe.org/advocacy)

## A Growing Federal Presence

*NSPE represented professional engineers to numerous federal agencies, Congress, and organizations in the nation's capital. Here's a summary of the messages NSPE delivered on behalf of PEs and new rules that call for the PE's expertise.*

### NSPE's Message to...

- **Department of Energy:** In all stages of assessment and development of the electric grid, professional engineers should be involved.
- **Office of Personnel Management:** Use of the term "professional engineering" to define positions that are not professional engineering positions creates substantial confusion about job scope and responsibilities. NSPE urged OPM to revise the engineering licensure standard to require compliance with state licensure laws.
- **Chemical Safety Board:** PEs and the public rely on the CSB's work; Congress should fully fund the agency in the Fiscal Year 2018 budget.
- **Department of Transportation:** Professional engineers must play a key leadership role in the innovation, rebuilding, and growth of the nation's transportation infrastructure. PEs can provide DOT with critical expertise and serve a unique role in infrastructure development as the individuals in the decision chain who have a duty to put the public safety first.
- **Federal Trade Commission:** Due to recent attacks on occupational licensure, NSPE educated the FTC's Economic Liberty Task Force about the critical value of the PE to protecting the public.

### New Rules

- **Environmental Protection Agency:** NSPE action led to requirements for PEs in the certification of containment buildings for hazardous waste and the preparation/approval of design plans for gas collection and control systems at landfills.
- **Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement:** NSPE action led to updated oil and natural gas production safety rules that increased the role of PEs.

### Even More

- **Autonomous Vehicles:** NSPE pushed for independent testing and third-party certification of AVs and took its message to the National Academy of Engineering, the California DMV, the Florida Automated Vehicle Summit, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

[www.nspe.org/autonomous](http://www.nspe.org/autonomous)

- **New Resources:** PE advocates now have access to an online Threats to Professional Licensure Map, new advocacy tools, and reports summarizing state laws and rules on exemptions to PE licensing laws, definitions of the practice of engineering, education and experience requirements, licensing fees, and continuing education requirements.
- **In the Courts:** NSPE filed a brief with the Maryland Supreme Court in June 2016 to support an economic loss doctrine that protects design professionals against limitless claims by contractors with whom the design professionals do not have a direct contractual agreement for economic damages. In a victory for PEs and NSPE, in February 2017 the appellate court affirmed the lower court ruling, applying the economic loss rule in connection with an engineer's design of a wastewater treatment plant.

[www.nspe.org/advocacy](http://www.nspe.org/advocacy)

## Standing as the Ethical Guide to the Profession

*NSPE gives voice and impact to the practice of ethical engineering and serves as the profession's most respected ethics authority.*

- **Authoritative Expertise:** The Board of Ethical Review published 12 new ethics case studies, bringing the total number of published cases to more than 600. These cases are widely used by practicing engineers and students.  
[www.nspe.org/ethics](http://www.nspe.org/ethics)
- **Who's Driving?** Shared expertise by moderating a panel on Ethics and Autonomous Vehicles at the Annual Convocation of Professional Engineering Societies.
- **Ethics Education:** Provided a year's worth of courses, covering concepts such as objectivity and truthfulness; employment; public health, safety, and welfare; confidentiality; communications issues related to the public health and safety; and licensure and professional practice concerns.

## Powering Professional Advancement

*NSPE provides the tools PEs need to keep current in the profession and advance their careers.*

- **Online Learning:** Provided members with courses on topics such as career success, team-building strategies, improving soft skills in engineering, and critical thinking.  
[www.nspe.org/PEInstitute](http://www.nspe.org/PEInstitute)
- **Building Connections:** NSPE's Professional Engineers Conference is the only national conference in the US dedicated specifically to the needs of practicing PEs and those who support the profession.  
[www.nspe.org/pe-conference](http://www.nspe.org/pe-conference)
- **15 Free Webinars:** Each year, all NSPE members have access to a new lineup of 15 free webinars.  
[www.nspe.org/15forFree](http://www.nspe.org/15forFree)
- **Top Honors:** Recognized the career achievements of engineers with the Distinguished Service Award, Young Engineer of the Year Award, PEHE's Engineering Education Excellence Award, the PEGASUS Award, and the Federal Engineer of the Year Award.  
[www.nspe.org/awards](http://www.nspe.org/awards)

## Uniting the PE Community

*NSPE connects like-minded professionals at all stages of their careers.*

- **Join the Conversation:** NSPE's online Communities are connecting members from across the country, building professional networks, and encouraging dialog on professional issues. Join the more than 3,700 members who are taking part.  
<https://community.nspe.org>
- **New Day, New Look:** To date, 27 state societies have adopted the new visual identity of the NSPE network.
- **PE Pride:** The inaugural Professional Engineers Day was a nationwide hit! The mostly virtual event saw NSPE members, partner organizations, engineering firms, engineering schools, and even the general public recognizing PEs and posting the #LicensedPEDay hashtag across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.  
[www.nspe.org/PEday](http://www.nspe.org/PEday)

*View the PowToon video at [youtu.be/821u9mPblpg](https://youtu.be/821u9mPblpg). Access a PDF of this brochure at [www.nspe.org/review16-17](http://www.nspe.org/review16-17).*