



DATE: May 6, 2009

TO: NSPE House of Delegates
NSPE Board of Directors

FROM: Larry Jacobson, NSPE Executive Director

SUBJECT: Talking points for visits to state and chapter organizations

Listed below are highlights of recent and upcoming NSPE activities. These talking points are designed to ensure that all of the Society's representatives deliver consistent messages to members, the public, and states and chapters. The primary messages have remained the same, but the details have changed, so I hope you'll take a moment to review the latest NSPE news. Spreading these messages helps remind members why they are members of our organization.

1. NSPE's advocacy continues at federal, state, and local levels for the interests of PEs.
2. NSPE tracks the latest industry trends in its publications, education sessions, and interest groups.
3. NSPE keeps the image of PEs and licensure visible in the government, media, and community.
4. NSPE supports the activities that bring students into the field of engineering and believes licensure is at the pinnacle of any engineering career.
5. NSPE's "3-for-1" membership means that NSPE collaborates with its state and chapter organizations to deliver premium benefits—making joining and renewing membership a simple decision and seamless transaction.

Your efforts in building direct relationships with our members at a grassroots level are surely appreciated. I look forward to hearing the results of your meetings! Please contact me with any questions.

copy to:
State Society Presidents/Presidents-elect
State Society Executives and Primary Contacts
NSPE Past Presidents
NSPE Management Council

NSPE Talking Points: April 2009

What has NSPE done for me lately?

Below are key messages for NSPE officers, board members, and national staff to use to prepare presentations for meetings with states, chapters, and the general membership.

1. NSPE advocates the interests of PEs.

- The Nevada Supreme Court issued an opinion in March that protects design professionals from liability in cases where negligence in commercial property construction cases leads to purely economic damages. The decision (*Mandalay Resort Group, et.al. v. Terracon Consultants Western Inc.*) was applauded by NSPE, the Nevada Society of Professional Engineers, and other engineering and architecture groups. In early 2007, NSPE and the Nevada Society submitted a “friend of the court” brief in the case, urging the Nevada Supreme Court to uphold the economic loss doctrine. This doctrine, which states interpret differently, protects design professionals from unfair exposure to huge liability losses, including lost profits and other economic damages. As NSPE and the other organizations note in the brief, the doctrine provides the impetus for parties to negotiate economic risks through contract provisions and price terms.
- In a letter to President Obama, NSPE raised concerns that burdensome federal regulations could lead to the disqualification of “shovel-ready” utility construction projects that have the potential to create jobs and stimulate the economy.
- In December, an Illinois Appellate Court upheld a trial court ruling that NSPE, the Engineers Joint Contract Documents Committee, and other design and construction groups said would hamper the ability of engineering firms to use contract language to allocate work-site safety responsibilities. In *Leon Dorris v. Baxter & Woodman Consulting Engineers*, Baxter & Woodman designed wastewater treatment plant improvements for the City of Woodstock, north of Chicago, and served as the city’s representative. A professional services agreement between the firm and the city was based in part on standard wording from owner-engineer contract documents published by EJCDC. NSPE, EJCDC, and the other design and construction groups asked the Appellate Court of Illinois for the First Judicial District to overturn the trial court’s decision, which excluded from evidence several standard contract terms that defined the scope of the engineer’s on-site responsibilities. Both the city’s contract with Henderson & Son and the city’s contract with Baxter & Woodman included contract provisions stating that the engineer is not responsible for the contractor’s safety practices.
- Members of the West Virginia Society of Professional Engineers helped defeat a bill that would have repealed qualifications-based selection from the state code to allow two state agencies to award design contracts through competitive bidding. The Texas Society of Professional Engineers is also fighting anti-QBS bills.

NSPE remains vigilant against attacks on QBS at the state and federal levels. See NSPE's QBS Issue Brief at <http://www.nspe.org/GovernmentRelations/TakeAction/IssueBriefs/index.html>.

- On April 21, President Obama signed the Serve America Act, which was supported by NSPE and introduces new service programs that provide incentives for students and senior citizens to participate in volunteer community service. The new law specifically provides for increased “service opportunities for the nation’s retiring professionals, including such opportunities for those retiring from the science, technical, engineering, and mathematics professions, to improve the education of the nation’s youth and keep America competitive in the global knowledge economy and to further utilize the experience, knowledge, and skills of older individuals.”

2. NSPE stays on top of industry trends by researching current issues and offering relevant education opportunities.

- NSPE members now have access to four free PDHs via four online ethics courses. At the usual retail price, these four PDHs are worth about \$600. At the end of each seminar, a quiz will be available for those who need it to meet their state’s continuing education requirements. The seminars have also been approved for continuing education credit in New York. For details, visit <http://www.nspe.org/Education/WebSeminars/index.html>.
- This spring, NSPE has been offering its most extensive lineup of Web seminars ever. Topics have included ethics, succession planning, green design, tips for passing the FE and PE exams, controlling design costs, and others.

3. NSPE keeps the image of PEs and licensure visible in the community.

- On February 11, NSPE launched its first blog, *PE Journal*. The blog brings you President Brad Aldrich’s thoughts on the latest issues within the engineering profession. Do you want to receive e-mail notification of each new post? Simply enter your e-mail address in the field labeled “Email Notifications.” You can unsubscribe at any time. Visit <http://community.nspe.org/>.
- As cochair of the 2009 EWeek, NSPE was actively involved in the planning of this year’s event. NSPE also encourages members to take part in EWeek’s Million Hours Campaign by logging volunteer hours spent on outreach in science, technology, engineering, and math education through December 31, 2009. Log your hours at <http://millionhours.djangodomain.com/>.
- The Federal Engineer of the Year Award was presented to Kirankumar Topudurti, P.E., an expert in environmental engineering who oversees the \$100 million R&D program at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’s Construction Engineering Research Laboratory.

- EWeek's Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day and NSPE were mentioned on the *Official Google Blog* at <http://googleblog.blogspot.com>.
- In celebration of NSPE's 75th anniversary, several projects are being developed: a special August/September issue of *PE*, an NSPE history Web page, recognition of the anniversary at the Annual Meeting in St. Louis, and a proclamation letter from President Obama (pending approval).

4. NSPE supports math and science students and young engineers.

- NSPE will hold the Fifth Annual Young Engineers' Forum on July 18 in St. Louis. The forum is free to engineers 35 years old and younger and is worth up to seven PDHs.
- On January 22, the first issue of the *Young PE Quarterly* newsletter was delivered to more than 3,700 members. The newsletter is designed to provide useful career advice to members 35 years old and younger. To see the issue archive, visit <http://www.nspe.org/InterestGroups/YE/Resources/index.html>
- Kent Nelson, P.E., a test flight engineer for Northrop Grumman Corp. in Baltimore, was named NSPE's representative to EWeek's New Faces of Engineering program.

5. NSPE continues to provide professional and personal benefits to its members.

- NSPE members now have a major, new member benefit: free access to the complete results of the Society's Engineering Income and Salary Survey, as long as they take part in the survey. For many years NSPE published its own salary survey, then in 2003, we began a joint salary survey with ASCE, ASME, and other groups. Today, NSPE once again fully owns and operates its own survey, just like it did from 1952 through 2002. Encourage members to take part in the survey by visiting <http://nspe.enetrix.com/>.

6. Other Noteworthy Items

- Since the 2008 Annual Conference in Portland, Oregon, NSPE President Brad Aldrich and President-Elect Sam Grossman have been working to improve communications with state presidents and presidents-elect. As a continuation of that effort, Aldrich and Grossman have formed 10 groups made up of state presidents and presidents-elect to discuss issues such as attracting new members, recruiting and developing leaders, engaging members, planning meetings, and determining young engineers' expectations. The groups will begin their work at the end of April. This will be followed by a leader orientation on June 22 and the State Leader Conference, July 16–17 in St. Louis.