

OhioENGINEER

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2025

The road ahead

*Transportation for
the next generation*

GOVERNMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE, ETHICS

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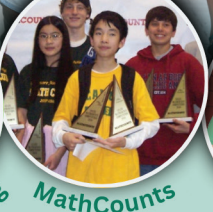
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Holly E. Ross Flanigan
Editor

For more information, contact us at:
Ohio Society of Professional Engineers
400 South Fifth Street, Suite 300
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Voice (614) 223-1144
E-mail OSPE@OhioEngineer.com
Website www.OhioEngineer.com

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LEADERSHIP VIEWS

by Kevin Houser, MSME, PE, President,
Ohio Society of Professional Engineers



NSPE-Ohio connections: Our opportunities for growth through outreach

As part of my goals as president of NSPE-Ohio this year, I intend to focus not just on increasing membership, but also on outreach and collaboration opportunities that align with our society's mission and make us more visible to our local communities. In this column, I will outline some of my ideas to achieve this. Such connections will position us for sustainable growth well into the future. They also allow us to develop ties to local government agencies and fulfill some of our ethical responsibilities through education.

Finding your collaboration opportunities

As we all know, there are many ways in which NSPE-Ohio's mission aligns with meaningful collaborations. Two well-established examples are the Ohio MATHCOUNTS competition and the annual Imagine Engineering program and coloring contest.

Beyond these statewide EFO initiatives, each of our local communities offers additional avenues for engagement. Local schools, for instance, frequently host career days and welcome speakers who can introduce students to engineering as a future profession. Community-based organizations—such as civic clubs, service groups, neighborhood associations, PTAs, booster clubs, and youth organizations—also seek presenters on topics relevant to their members, giving NSPE-Ohio valuable visibility at the local level. And of course, lending our time and talents to community projects provides yet another opportunity to make a positive and lasting impression.

None of this is overly simple. We have to make the effort within our local chapters to find and reach out to these organizations and offer our services. We

need to talk with local leaders to identify opportunities and get ourselves “in the loop” for areas where we can participate. We all have busy lives, but NSPE-Ohio and our chapters can leverage our many members to ease the workload on any one person.

Making ourselves known

Visibility matters too—our work in these collaborations needs to be noticed by the community at large so it strengthens our presence and reinforces the value of NSPE-Ohio. As I mentioned at our Leadership Retreat, local news media—whether television or print—is an excellent way to achieve this. Let's make the effort to identify media contacts so we can share our activities with them. Local newspapers and news stations often look for public-interest content, and it's a great way to get NSPE-Ohio noticed at no cost. An added bonus is that the causes we support get noticed too, amplifying their impact.

Why go to all this effort?

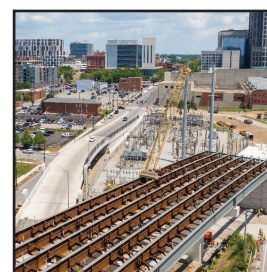
By collaborating with local organizations—and getting that work covered by the media—we can reach a far wider audience and highlight the critical nature of the work we, as engineers, do. Increasing our visibility also encourages additional collaboration and can open doors to resources we might not otherwise know about, helping us share our message with even more people. Reaching out to the broader community builds support for our profession and creates allies in both the public and government when issues important to us arise. And through all of this, we present engineering in a positive light to the next generation, strengthening the long-term viability of our profession.

On the cover:

I-70/I-71 Downtown Ramp Up Project in Columbus, Ohio,
July 2025.

See “The road ahead,” page 5.

Photo courtesy of ODOT.



Nominate Ohio's best in engineering

The 2026 NSPE-Ohio Awards program is now open



NSPE-Ohio is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Engineering Awards. These prestigious honors celebrate individuals and organizations whose work exemplifies engineering excellence—through groundbreaking projects, transformative education, or dedicated service to the profession. The awards spotlight achievements that inspire future engineers and elevate the impact of our profession.

Awards with nomination deadlines of March 1, 2026, include:

- NSPE-Ohio Citation
- Meritorious Service Award
- Outstanding Engineering Student Award
- Outstanding Educator Award
- Outstanding Engineering Achievement Award

Nominations due April 1, 2026 include:

- Overall National Engineers Week Observance Award
- NSPE-Ohio Uncommon Engineer Award
- Legislator of the Year Award
- Professional Engineering Management Award
- Ohio New Product Award

For full details, nomination forms, and deadlines, please visit the NSPE-Ohio website at <https://ohioengineer.com/index.php/Member-Access/Getting-Ahead> and download the Awards Manual.

Nominations must be submitted by email to admin@ohioengineer.com. No hard copies will be accepted except for samples, if applicable.

Questions may be directed to the NSPE-Ohio office at admin@ohioengineer.com.

Winners will be celebrated at a special Awards Luncheon taking place Saturday, June 13, at the 2026 All-Ohio Engineering Conference. The Awards Luncheon will be a showcase of the engineering talent and dedication driving Ohio forward. Awards winners will also be featured in *OhioENGINEER* magazine.

Help us celebrate those who go above and beyond. Nominate a colleague, educator, student, or innovator today—and be part of honoring the best in Ohio engineering.



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What are you up to?

NSPE-Ohio members, we invite you to share news stories and photos from your recent travels and professional experiences for potential publication in *OhioENGINEER* magazine. We're especially interested in professional achievements and travel photos with an engineering connection.

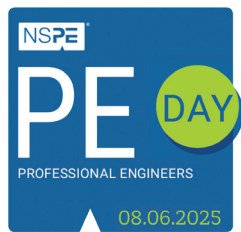
Please send your submissions to pr@ohioengineer.com. For photos, only submit images you own and be sure to include permission for NSPE-Ohio to publish them in *OhioENGINEER*.

NSPE-Ohio celebrates 10th annual Professional Engineers Day with member video showcase

August 6 marked the tenth annual Professional Engineers Day, and NSPE-Ohio members celebrated in style—by sharing their PE pride through short, spirited videos. This year, six members participated, each offering a personal glimpse into what it means to be a licensed professional engineer.

These videos were shared across NSPE-Ohio's social media platforms and website, helping amplify the voice of Ohio's engineering community. From reflections on career milestones to expressions of gratitude for the profession, the clips captured the heart of PE licensure and its impact.

Find the full collection of PE Day videos on NSPE-Ohio's YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn pages, or visit OhioEngineer.com to explore more.



A heartfelt thank you to the following members for submitting videos and sharing their stories:

- **Laurie Adams, PE, PTOE, PTP**, Managing Principal, DGL Consulting Engineers
- **Kevin Houser, MSME, PE, NSPE-Ohio President**
- **Howard R. Jones, PE, F.NSPE**, Meritorious Service Award (2025)
- **Greg Nortz, PE, OTISCO Engineering**, Professional Engineering Management Award (2025)
- **Aurea Rivera, PE, F.NSPE, PMP, PMI-ACP**, a new NSPE Fellow
- **Robert Rusnak, PE**, Young Engineer of the Year (2025)

Participants used #LicensedPEday, contributing to a growing conversation on social media about the importance of PE licensure and the value it brings to public safety, innovation, and professional integrity.

Let's keep the momentum going—celebrating the power and pride of professional engineering every day.



Winning products & companies earn recognition & exposure

The Professional Engineers in Industry practice division of the Ohio Society of Professional Engineers is pleased to announce its 2026 Ohio New Product Award competition. If your company has developed a new product, machine, process or material, it may be eligible for this state-level competition. Award winners will receive significant recognition, including media coverage.

The purpose of the New Product Award is to stimulate and recognize the full spectrum of benefits that come from the research and engineering of new products or processes. These include added employment, economic development, strengthening of the nation's competitive position internationally and contribution to the public's standard of living.

Any new product, machine, process or material that has been primarily designed and manufactured in Ohio and placed on the market in the time frame described under the "Ohio New Product Award Rules" may be entered. Nominations are grouped according to the size of the manufacturing company. Winners will be selected in four firm size categories: Small (50 or fewer employees), medium (51 to 200 employees), large (201 to 9,999 employees) and mega (10,000 or more employees).

Judging is performed by the NSPE-Ohio-PEI Awards Committee. Nominations must be submitted via an entry form, which may be copied for multiple applications. A winner will be selected in each of the aforementioned firm size categories.

The application deadline is April 1, 2026. Download the New Product Award packet (including the application) at <https://ohioengineer.com/index.php/Member-Access/Getting-Ahead>. Please email admin@ohioengineer.com with any questions.



Plan smart, stay compliant

Virtual CPD opportunities for Ohio engineers preparing for 2028-2029 renewal

Ohio's professional engineers have just wrapped up the 2026–2027 license renewal cycle with the December 31, 2025 deadline. For many, the rush to complete CPD hours before the cutoff is still fresh. But continuing education isn't just about meeting requirements every two years—it's about building skills that strengthen your career and prepare you for the future.

That's why NSPE-Ohio and the Engineers Foundation of Ohio (EFO) encourage engineers to start planning now for the 2028–2029 renewal cycle, due December 31, 2027. Ohio law requires 30 CPD hours—including 2 hours in professional ethics or rules—for each renewal cycle. By engaging with upcoming programs, you'll not only stay compliant but also gain leadership, policy, and technical insights that position you to lead projects and influence the profession well before the next deadline arrives.

Looking Ahead: CPD for the 2028–2029 Renewal Cycle

Planning early pays off. These upcoming 2026 programs are ideal for engineers who want to stay ahead of the curve:

- **The Engineer As Leader**
Date: Earn 10 CPD hours, March 12-13, 2026. Explore leadership development and communication techniques tailored for engineering professionals.
- **Ohio Engineers Legislative Day:**
Earn 4 CPD hours, April 24, 2026. Stay informed on policy affecting the engineering profession in Ohio
- **All-Ohio Engineering Conference:**
Earn 12 CPD hours (includes 2 ethics hours), June 11–12, 2026. The premier statewide event for professional engineers, featuring a mix of technical, managerial, and ethics sessions.



- EFO will offer the **Fall CPD Conference** and the **December Seminar** in 2026. The program dates will be announced, but PEs may expect 15 CPD hours (including 2 hours of ethics) on a mix of topics in November and 6 CPD hours (including 1 hour of ethics) on a project management topic in December.

Why choose NSPE-Ohio & EFO CPD programs?

- Fully aligned with Ohio's legal and ethical CPD requirements
- 100% virtual—attend from anywhere
- Ethics hours included in multiple offerings
- Expert-led, engaging content
- 30% discount for NSPE-Ohio members

Mark your calendar and stay tuned for updates. For full program details as they become available, email ospe@ohioengineer.com

Closing note

As you plan ahead for the next PE license renewal cycle, remember NSPE-Ohio and EFO CPD programs deliver flexibility, relevance, and value—all from the comfort of your home or office. By committing early, you'll reduce stress, maximize learning opportunities, and ensure your professional growth continues seamlessly.



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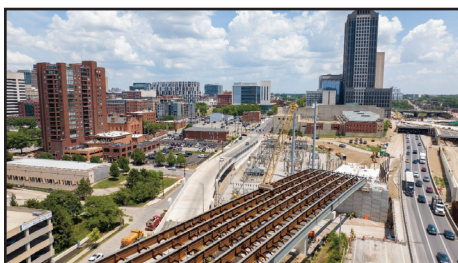
The road ahead

Transportation for the next generation

Ohio's transportation infrastructure is the backbone of our state's economy: connecting families, businesses, and communities while supporting national freight movement. To that end, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) isn't just maintaining Ohio's roads and bridges—we're positioning them for the future.

With more than 43,000 lane miles, 14,000 bridges, and one of the largest freight networks in the country, Ohio's infrastructure is both vast and essential. Each year, drivers log more than 110 billion miles on Ohio roads, placing the state in the top ten nationally for vehicle travel. In fact, Ohio is within one day's drive of 60 percent of the U.S. and Canadian population.

To keep our system safe, accessible, well-maintained and positioned for the future, ODOT has invested more than \$16 billion in nearly 7,000 projects during Governor Mike DeWine's administration. Those investments span from highway reconstruction to modern safety improvements. Through the leadership of prior and current ODOT Directors Jack Marchbanks and Pamela Boratyn, the Department has ensured and continues to ensure that today's improvements lay the foundation for tomorrow's connectivity.



I-70/I-71 Downtown Ramp Up Project in Columbus, Ohio, July 2025. Photo Courtesy: ODOT

Building a safer future

Safety is the cornerstone of nearly everything that ODOT does. Ohio spends more per capita on roadway safety than any other state, and the results are clear. Since 2022, traffic fatalities

have declined for three consecutive years, reversing a decade-long trend of increases. In 2024 alone, roadway deaths dropped by 7 percent, with pedestrian fatalities decreasing 17 percent.

Innovative programs are helping drive these results. Wrong way driving detection systems, first installed in Cincinnati and Dayton, are now expanding across the state, alerting drivers with flashing LED lights and triggering law enforcement intervention. In 2024, wrong-way crashes fell by nearly 20 percent. Simultaneously, ODOT is investing in automated queue detection systems to warn drivers of backups on the road ahead before they encounter it.

Additionally, the passage of Ohio's distracted driving law in 2023 has already reduced handheld phone use by 10 percent and cut distracted driving crashes by 11 percent.

Preparing for tomorrow's growth

Ohio's economy is booming with transformative projects like Intel's chip manufacturing facility in Licking County, Honda and LG's battery plant in Fayette County, and rapid growth in data centers. To align transportation with this economic expansion, ODOT undertook a Strategic Transportation and Development Analysis, working with more than 500 partners to forecast population growth, freight demands, and workforce mobility over the next three decades.

The study identified 72 congestion "hot spots" statewide. ODOT is already addressing 51 of them with existing programs. Twenty-one additional areas will require new investments to prevent bottlenecks that could potentially stifle economic growth. With sustainable funding, these improvements will help Ohio lead the nation into the future.

Challenges on the horizon

Despite strong progress, ODOT faces mounting fiscal pressures. Construction costs have risen 30 percent since

2019, eroding the value of motor fuel tax revenue, the main funding source for roadway improvements. With more fuel-efficient vehicles further reducing revenue, states like Ohio face risks of delayed safety, maintenance, and capacity projects.

ODOT is working to stretch dollars by streamlining project delivery, phasing projects to reduce escalation risks, and improving planning estimates. Efficiency efforts include converting highway lighting to LEDs, saving \$58 million over 13 years, and downsizing the fleet, cutting \$1.4 million annually.

Innovating for the next generation

Meanwhile, ODOT is advancing innovation through **DriveOhio**, the state's hub for smart mobility. From automated truck platooning on interstates to research into advanced air mobility, Ohio is positioning itself as a leader in next-generation transportation. These projects not only promise safer and more efficient travel but also place Ohio at the forefront of up-and-coming industry.

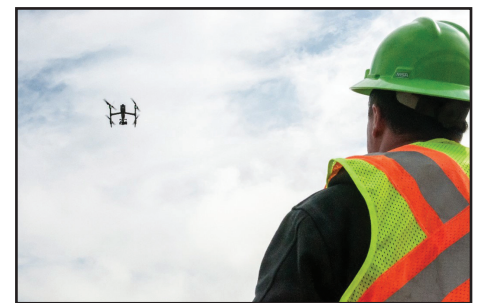


Photo Courtesy: ODOT

The road ahead

Ohio is on a strong path. By blending traditional roadwork with forward-looking innovation, ODOT is preparing its network not only to serve today's drivers, but to meet the needs of future generations. The road ahead may bring challenges, but Ohio is determined to maintain our place as a national model of safety, resilience, and growth.

by Tom Pannett, PE, Esq., MBA, CPPO^{ret}



Balancing progress

Ethical considerations in infrastructure planning

The infrastructure dilemma

Infrastructure is the backbone of modern society. Roads, bridges, water systems, and public transit connect communities, support commerce, and safeguard public health. Yet, the process of building and maintaining these systems can involve difficult ethical decisions, mainly when projects affect residential neighborhoods, require land acquisition, or prioritize the needs of one community over another.

Decisions surrounding infrastructure improvements are rarely straightforward. There is always a balance between technical progress and the impact on the community.

This balance is increasingly vital as Ohio and other states invest in large-scale infrastructure upgrades. With federal funding flowing through programs like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Justice40 Initiative, engineers and planners are being asked not only to build efficiently, but also to do so ethically.

Eminent domain: Legal tool, ethical challenge

Eminent domain allows governments to acquire private property for public use, often for infrastructure projects. While legally sanctioned, its use can raise ethical concerns, particularly when it disproportionately impacts low-income or rural communities.

In Mahoning County, the case of *Mill Creek MetroParks v. Less* sparked public debate when the park district sought to use eminent domain to build Phase III of a recreational bikeway across private property. The Ohio Supreme Court ruled in July 2023 that the lower court had not yet held the required hearing to determine whether the park district had the authority and necessity to take the land. As a result, the court vacated the appellate decision and remanded the case back to the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court for further proceedings. The controversy has fueled legislative proposals to restrict the use of eminent domain for recreational trails, though such measures currently remain stalled.

In Washington County, the case of *State ex rel. Bohlen v. Halliday* involved Ohio Power's attempt to acquire easements for a high-voltage transmission line. Property owners challenged the necessity of the takings, arguing that the proposed easements exceeded what was reasonably required for the project. Although the trial court ruled in favor of Ohio Power, the landowners appealed the decision. The Ohio Supreme Court ultimately granted a writ of prohibition, ruling that the compensation trial could not proceed while the appeal on necessity was still pending.

These cases demonstrate how infrastructure intersects property rights and community trust. Government officials, planners, engineers, and attorneys must ensure that projects are not only legally sound, but are also ethically defensible.

Projects may fall short ethically when they lack transparency, fail to engage affected residents, or prioritize convenience over fairness.

Projects may fall short ethically when they lack transparency, fail to engage affected residents, or prioritize convenience over fairness. For example, in *Mill Creek MetroParks v. Less*, residents argued that the park district's use of eminent domain for a recreational trail was unjustified and poorly communicated. Similarly, in *State ex rel. Bohlen v. Halliday*, landowners challenged the necessity of utility easements, claiming the scope exceeded what was reasonably required. In both cases, public skepticism grew not just from legal action, but from a perceived disregard for community input and proportionality.

According to Patricia Salkin, writing in the *Fordham Urban Law Journal*, eminent domain decisions should be guided by public purpose and fairness, not just legal precedent. Salkin argued that "ethical considerations must be part of the calculus when public agencies decide whose land to take and why," in her analysis of how

legal authority intersects with community impact. Her commentary has been widely cited in discussions about infrastructure planning and the evolving role of government in land use decisions.

Who gets the investment?

Infrastructure project funding often follows tax revenue and population density. According to a 2024 report from Policy Matters Ohio, federal infrastructure investments have historically flowed more easily to affluent communities with greater administrative capacity, leaving behind smaller, often poorer and traditionally underserved areas. An analysis by Resources for the Future found that many of these "disadvantaged communities" lack the resources to apply for competitive grants, making it more difficult for them to access federal funding even when they are eligible. In response to these disparities, the federal government launched the Justice40 Initiative in 2021, setting a goal that 40 percent of the benefits from climate, energy, and infrastructure investments flow to disadvantaged communities that have been historically marginalized and overburdened by pollution.

In Ohio, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) has begun implementing Justice40 principles in its transportation and water infrastructure planning. According to MORPC's Justice40 fact sheet, the agency is collaborating with regional partners to address the barriers faced by historically marginalized communities and ensure that federal investments reach those most in need. In February 2024, MORPC co-hosted a regional Justice40 training session with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) and the Columbus Partnership, providing tools for nonprofit, government, and academic leaders to incorporate equity into their planning practices. The agency is also developing a Central Ohio Regional Equity Strategy to guide long-term investment decisions and foster meaningful engagement with underserved neighborhoods.

MORPC's funding commitments reflect this approach. In March 2025, the

See "Balancing progress," page 7

agency approved more than \$52 million in new infrastructure projects, including multi-use paths, intersection improvements, and bus rapid transit upgrades across Franklin, Delaware, and Licking counties.

Still, disparities persist. A study by the Urban Institute found that counties with more administrative capacity are more likely to win competitive federal grants. "It's not just about need, it's about who can navigate the system," said Urban Institute researcher Carlos Martín. And that makes sense... if your community has more money (from a larger or more affluent tax base), then you will have more or more sophisticated staff to apply for such grants.

This poses the question: Should infrastructure spending prioritize underserved areas, or follow traditional cost-benefit models? And how can professionals advocate for communities that lack the resources to compete?

The broken windows theory applied to infrastructure

The Broken Windows Theory, introduced by criminologists James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling in 1982, suggests that visible signs of disorder (like broken windows) can lead to further neglect and crime.

In New York City, then-Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Police Commissioner William Bratton popularized the theory through aggressive enforcement of minor infractions, such as fare evasion and graffiti. "Obviously murder and graffiti are two vastly different crimes," Giuliani said in 1998, "but they are part of the same continuum, and a climate that tolerates one is more likely to tolerate the other," as reported by The New York Times.

Certainly, Giuliani has been a controversial figure in recent years, but the crime statistics during his tenure as mayor are well-documented. Between 1993 and 2001, New York City experienced steep declines in violent crime: murders dropped by 66 percent, robberies by 67 percent, and burglaries by 68 percent, according to FBI Uniform Crime Reports and city data. These reductions coincided with the implementation of "broken windows" policing under Giuliani and Commissioner Bratton.

Fast forward to 2025, when New York is less likely to pursue the "broken windows" theory of policing, an analysis by Vital City shows that overall major crime remains roughly 30 percent higher than it was in 2019. Though initially applied to law enforcement, the theory has implications for infrastructure, as well. Neglected infrastructure sends a message. If a

neighborhood's roads are crumbling and streetlights don't work, it arguably signals that the area isn't valued.

In Cincinnati, the Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) has applied these principles to areas such as Over-the-Rhine and Bond Hill. The city combined code enforcement with infrastructure upgrades, aiming to restore community pride and reduce crime. According to the Cincinnati City Manager's Office, the NEP uses a 90-day strategy to address blight, building code violations, and public safety concerns through coordinated city services and community partnerships.

Modern interpretations of the theory emphasize community engagement over punitive responses. As noted in Psychology Today, civic efforts, such as transforming vacant lots into gardens or parks, can reduce crime and improve overall wellbeing. Infrastructure neglect can also affect public safety. Poor lighting, uneven sidewalks, and potholes increase the risk of accidents and injuries. These issues disproportionately affect older adults, people with disabilities, and those without access to private transportation. And, as is self-evident, those living paycheck to paycheck can hardly afford vehicle repairs and downtime due to poor road conditions.

Maintenance is not just technical, it's symbolic and social. It reflects how we value distinct parts of our communities. And, as communities thrive, their tax base increases and—in a do-loop of success—they have more money to spend on things like infrastructure.

Planning with ethics in mind

Several frameworks help professionals navigate the ethical dimensions of infrastructure planning. The PNAS Nexus Framework, published in 2024, proposes three pillars: restorative justice, policy innovation, and research innovation. According to PNAS Nexus, the framework aims to ensure equitable access to infrastructure, minimize risk disparities, and repair historical harm through community-engaged research and policy reform.

The Envision Framework, developed by the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure, is utilized in Ohio cities such as Dublin and Upper Arlington. According to the City of Dublin's Planning and Zoning Commission, the Envision Dublin Community Plan guides infrastructure expansion with a focus on mobility, community facilities, and environmental stewardship. Similarly, Upper Arlington's "Envision Henderson" plan outlines infrastructure improvements along West Henderson Road, emphasizing walkability, safety, and community input.

These tools help engineers and planners think beyond cost and efficiency. They encourage us to ask: Who benefits, and who bears the burden?

In practice, applying these frameworks requires more than checking boxes. Engineers must engage with stakeholders early, understand community priorities, and adapt designs to reflect local values. For example, a stormwater project in a flood-prone neighborhood might prioritize green infrastructure not only for environmental benefits but also for aesthetic and recreational values.

Public agencies are increasingly using scenario planning and participatory design workshops to gather input from residents. According to the American Planning Association, these approaches enable planners to identify unintended consequences and build consensus, ultimately leading to more resilient and widely accepted infrastructure outcomes.

Ohio's revitalization efforts

In 2024, Governor Mike DeWine announced \$18.2 million in Neighborhood Revitalization and Critical Infrastructure grants for 34 Ohio communities. The funding supported water and sewer upgrades, sidewalk replacements, and park improvements. "With this funding, we are addressing vital needs in communities across the state," DeWine said in a press release. "These projects will make Ohio's neighborhoods stronger and safer for generations."

"These grants reflect a growing awareness that infrastructure must serve all Ohioans," said Lydia Mihalik, director of the Ohio Department of Development. "We're investing in places that have been overlooked for too long."

The initiative aligns with federal Community Development Block Grant priorities and Justice40 goals, marking a shift toward more inclusive infrastructure planning.

Ethical engineers and public officials share a duty to prioritize the public good. The National Society of Professional Engineers' Code of Ethics states that professionals must "hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public" in all decisions.

This principle has deep roots. Philosophers from Aristotle to Confucius emphasized civic responsibility and moral leadership. Socrates urged reflection on one's role in society, while Confucius taught that harmony and duty were essential to good governance. It is important for us as infrastructure professionals to recognize and embrace these long-tested ideals.

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The role of engineers & attorneys

As a professional engineer and lawyer, I often joke that the left half of my brain doesn't know what the right half is doing—but in this case, both sides have something valuable to contribute. Ethical infrastructure planning requires collaboration not only across disciplines, but also across different modes of thinking. Engineers bring technical expertise and problem-solving skills, while attorneys ensure legal compliance and protect property and procedural rights. Together, they can advocate fairness, transparency, and meaningful community engagement.

Engineers are trained to solve problems, but not all issues are technical. Many are social, legal, or ethical in nature. Attorneys help navigate complex issues like eminent domain, environmental permitting, and public procurement. They also advise on community engagement strategies and risk mitigation, ensuring that infrastructure projects respect both

legal frameworks and public interests.

Good infrastructure is built on good relationships. That means listening to residents, respecting property rights, and being honest about trade-offs. Transparency and open communication aren't just best practices, they're ethical imperatives. Transparency also strengthens public trust. As noted by engineering ethics experts, it involves clearly communicating risks, limitations, and assumptions throughout a project's lifecycle; not just to clients, but to regulators and the public. These principles are foundational to ethical engineering and essential to building infrastructure that serves everyone.


Infrastructure professionals face complex decisions. Whether it's choosing a project site, allocating funds, or maintaining aging systems, the ethical stakes are high.

There is no perfect formula. But we can strive for transparency, fairness, and

community engagement. That's how we build trust—and ultimately better infrastructure.

As Ohio continues to invest in its roads, bridges, and public spaces, the challenge will be to strike a balance between progress and compassion. We have the tools, and the responsibility, to lead the way.

Tom Pannett, PE, Esq., MBA, is a "transportation attorney" at Kegler Brown Hill + Ritter in Columbus, Ohio, and a former administrator with the Ohio Department of Transportation. He is a Certified Public Purchasing Officer in retirement. In his legal practice, Tom, among other things, advises engineers, contractors, and agencies on legal and ethical issues related to public infrastructure and defends professional engineers before the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors.

**OHIO SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS**

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WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these new NSPE-Ohio members from September 29, 2025, through December 8, 2025:

<u>Akron Chapter</u> Grant Hoot Christopher Mann Mark Seikel	<u>Franklin County Chapter (continued)</u> Brooks Vogel
<u>Canton Regional Chapter</u> Carter Spangler	<u>Mahoning Valley Chapter</u> Brian Farnsworth Michelle Fleming
<u>Dayton Chapter</u> Josh Boatwright Nate Buscher Justin Cohen Zameer Murad Heidi Voirol	<u>Northeast Chapter</u> Shawn H. Smith
<u>Franklin County Chapter</u> Vilas Sarsani	<u>Southwest Ohio Chapter</u> Andrew Brewer Evan Frayer Jacob Wuenschel
	<u>Toledo Regional Chapter</u> Ryan Krauthaim

GUEST COLUMN: MENTORSHIP

by Sebastian Lobo-Guerrero, PhD, PE, BC.GE, Geotechnical Project Manager, American Geotechnical & Environmental Services, Inc., and Adjunct Professor, University of Pittsburgh

The responsibility of mentoring in engineering practice

What is a mentor?

Do we need mentors?

Do we have the training to serve as mentors?

I believe we are all somehow familiar with the concept of having a person in our career and life that has guided us on our journey. Many times we have had mentors without being aware they were “mentors.” To me a mentor is a person in our industry that has significantly more experience than we do, and through advice and sharing lessons learned can help us navigate and advance in our engineering careers. It is a person that also helps us clarify our thoughts and ideas, and many times finds the solutions we were already moving toward. This mentoring figure can be from our family, a college professor, a company supervisor, or even a peer from a professional society or another organization. As long as this person is helping us to find our path and learn, he or she is a mentor to us. One way or another, we all have engineering mentors.

I grew up in a family where everyone was an engineer, from my grandfather to my uncles and my dad. My father was my first mentor as I spent my free time growing up visiting civil engineering sites and learning from him. I also had numerous college engineering professors that I consider my mentors. But probably even more relevant to my specific engineering practice, I had many peers that became the figures that I wanted to emulate. I will always be thankful for all these heroes that helped me so much in my career. However, it was not clear to me that at some point I transitioned from being mentored to becoming the mentor. I



Sebastian Lobo-Guerrero, right, receives lifetime career recognition in Colombia, with his father and first mentor Gustavo by his side.

was never trained for that. I was trained to learn from others, and to learn by myself, but never trained to lead others and become their mentors. What once felt like the natural right of a young engineer — learning from others — eventually became the responsibility to guide others myself.

Engineering is a career in which we transmit knowledge not only through classrooms, but also in day-to-day practice. We need to understand our part in this chain. We all start at the entry level, and hopefully we will all retire as senior engineers. We simply pass through the process in this short adventure we call life. What we received from those who came before us, we now need to improve and pass along to the next generation. If we do not do this, the future of our profession is in jeopardy.

Anyone in our field can become a mentor, from teaching in a college setting, to supervising in practice, to participating in professional societies and conferences, or even simply giving talks and volunteering in our communities. The positive impact you can have on the lives of others is unbelievable. I have been blessed to have all these opportunities and it is part of what makes my career so fulfilling and



Lobo-Guerrero, back center, is also a mentor to university students.



Lobo-Guerrero, center, mentors fellow engineers through real world fieldwork.



< **Sebastian Lobo-Guerrero is a five-time presenter for NSPE-Ohio and Engineers Foundation of Ohio.**

rewarding. This column is just a short invitation for you to become as active as you can be in mentoring. Hopefully it inspires you to become *very active* in our amazing professional society.

Sebastian Lobo-Guerrero, PhD, PE, DGE, an experienced geotechnical engineer who specializes in the design of deep/shallow foundations, earth retaining structures and landslide stabilization. He received the 2021 ASCE Lifetime Achievement award.

NEWS

Ohio seeks applicants for U.S. Route 30 broadband infrastructure expansion

The Ohio Department of Development has announced that BroadbandOhio is releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a U.S. Route 30 Middle-Mile Infrastructure Project to build a fiber network eastward from Mansfield to Canton and westward from Mansfield to Lima.



The U.S. Route 30 Middle-Mile Infrastructure Project, funded as part of Ohio's biennial budget in House Bill 96 during the 136th General Assembly, commits \$20 million to address connectivity issues across northern Ohio.

BroadbandOhio is expected to award and execute a contract with one respondent to build the infrastructure, which will connect a Point of Presence (PoP) in Mansfield. The work will include the construction of all infrastructure, participation in partnerships with major anchor tenants, and redundancy facilitation.

Responses to the RFP may be submitted by any entity able to provide the services. Final proposals are due February 2, 2026. Proposals and supporting documentation must be submitted via OhioBuys for consideration, and prospective offerors must be registered via the OhioBuys Supplier Portal.

ALL-OHIO ENGINEERING CONFERENCE AWARDS

Longtime leader Howard Jones, PE, F.NSPE, receives the 2025 Meritorious Service Award

NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson, PE, presents the 2025 NSPE-Ohio Meritorious Service Award to Howard Jones, PE, F.NSPE. The award honors continuous contributions to the engineering profession and NSPE-Ohio's mission. Jones' 60-year journey includes service at national, state, and chapter levels, twice elected Franklin County Chapter president and longtime editor of the Columbus Engineer newsletter. After 18 years as NSPE-Ohio secretary, Jones retired in 2024, and he previously received the NSPE-Ohio Uncommon Engineer Award. His career at American Electric Power advanced transmission line standards, while his leadership in technical and professional associations have shaped industry best practices.



State Representative Roy Klopfenstein is named NSPE-Ohio's Legislator of the Year



State Representative Roy Klopfenstein (R-Haviland) was named NSPE-Ohio's Legislator of the Year in recognition of his work in championing House Bills 238, 430, and 497—advancing engineering licensure protections, empowering county engineers, and promoting regulatory reform to safeguard public welfare and strengthen Ohio's engineering profession. Pictured, Representative Klopfenstein receives his award from NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson, PE, (left) and Jeff Kennedy, PE (right), an NSPE-Ohio past president and past vice president of legislative and government affairs.



< Gregory Nortz, PE, receives Professional Engineering Management Award

NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson, PE, presents the 2025 Professional Engineering Management Award to Gregory J. Nortz, PE. Nortz is recognized for his vision and leadership in engineering management. Since joining NSPE-Ohio in 2019, he has served on the Franklin County Chapter Board and as PEPP Trustee. Licensed in seven states, he co-founded Otisco Engineering Ltd. in 2009, specializing in mechanical, plumbing, and hydraulic system designs. His career spans mechanical engineering, R&D, HVAC systems, and advanced instrumentation, with contributions to aerospace, manufacturing, and construction. Nortz holds multiple patents, including a Coriolis-Type Mass Flow Meter, and has advanced aerospace instrumentation for the International Space Station. His service and innovation reflect the qualities honored by the Professional Engineering Management Award.

Mark Bloom, PE, receives the EFO President's Award for his leadership as co-chairman of Ohio MATHCOUNTS

EFO President Scott Dilling, PE, presents the President's Award to Mark Bloom, PE. Dilling explained that after making a telephone call, Bloom agreed to serve as State MATHCOUNTS Co-coordinator alongside him. "Mark jumped right into action. I can't thank him enough for agreeing to help me this past year," Dilling said. He noted that Bloom stepped into unknown territory with him, filling big shoes after years of strong leadership in the program. For these reasons, Dilling selected Bloom as one of his EFO President's Award recipients, recognizing his willingness to take on new responsibilities and his contributions to the success of the Ohio MATHCOUNTS Program.



Dennis Irwin, PhD, PE, F.NSPE, receives EFO President's Award for his leadership in providing continuing education

EFO President Scott Dilling, PE, presents the President's Award to Dennis Irwin, PhD, PE, F.NSPE. In presenting this award, Dilling reflected that he was "extremely impressed as to how professionally the Fall CPD Conference was done." Dilling said, "It occurred to me that the success of the CPD conferences really come down to the vetting and selection process of the program speakers," which he said can be attributed to EFO's Professional Education Committee Chairman Dennis Irwin. Dilling presented the EFO President's Award to Irwin "for his dedication, creativity, and discernment" in finding and scheduling quality and timely continuing education presentations for Ohio's professional engineers.



ALL-OHIO ENGINEERING CONFERENCE AWARDS

Mark Setterlin receives Outstanding Engineering Achievement Award for Metro Parks Canopy Walk & Tower



NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson, PE, presents the Outstanding Engineering Achievement Award to Mark Setterlin, representing the Setterlin Company, for the Metro Parks Canopy Walk & Tower at Blacklick Woods Metro Park. Recognized for innovation and accessibility, the project features a 40-foot ADA-compliant elevator tower, a 660-foot walkway elevated 35 feet above the forest floor with rope bridges and play elements, and a 55-foot observation tower and deck with a hammock-style cargo net, creating a distinctive experience for visitors in Central Ohio.

OSU's Jia Radloff, receives Outstanding Engineering Student Award



NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson, PE, presents the 2025 Outstanding Engineering Student Award to Jia Radloff of The Ohio State University. Radloff, graduating this spring with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, has distinguished herself through academic achievement, earning a 3.65 GPA overall, a 3.50 GPA in engineering courses, and a perfect 4.00 GPA in her final term. Her passion for structural engineering is reflected in advanced studies, research projects, and internships with Progressive Companies and SmithGroup in Chicago. Radloff also serves as president of the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute and Structural Engineers Association of Ohio student chapters, leading outreach and mentoring initiatives.



< Robert Rusnak, PE, receives Young Engineer of the Year Award

NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson presents the 2025 Young Engineer of the Year Award to Robert Rusnak, PE, honoring his leadership, professional excellence, and community service. A graduate of The Ohio State University, Rusnak has advanced as senior engineer and project manager at Fishbeck in Dayton, where he leads roadway, storm sewer, and water line improvement projects that strengthen Ohio's infrastructure. As team leader of Fishbeck's Dayton municipal group, he mentors engineers and delivers high-impact projects serving local communities. Rusnak actively supports the Dayton Chapter of NSPE-Ohio and contributes to humanitarian efforts through Coats for Kids, Oktoberfest fundraising, and Family Promise.

OSU's Ryan Winston, PhD, PE, receives Outstanding Engineering Educator Award

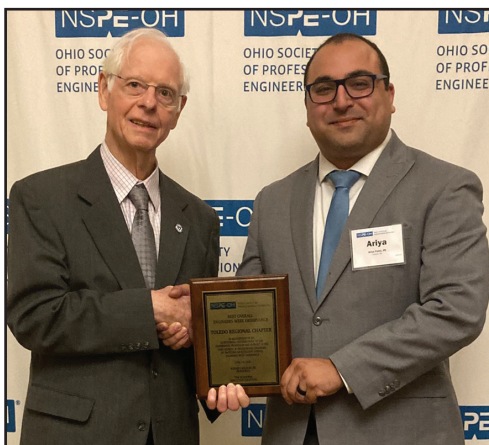


NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson, PE, presents the 2025 Engineering Educator of the Year Award to Ryan Winston, PhD, PE, Associate Professor at The Ohio State University. The award honors teaching excellence, professional expertise, and dedication to engineering students. Dr. Winston's work in stormwater management and sustainability has earned international recognition, with over 80 scientific publications, \$20 million in research funding, and collaborations spanning five continents. At Ohio State, he has developed innovative courses and guided graduate students into impactful careers, advancing engineering education and practice both locally and globally.

Franklin County Chapter honored with Five-Star Recognition by NSPE-Ohio



NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson, PE, presents the Five-Star Chapter Award to the Franklin County Chapter. Chapter President Rao Chitikela, PhD, PE, accepted the honor, which recognizes outstanding service to members. The "Star Chapter" program awards up to five stars, with Franklin County earning the highest level through active participation in NSPE-Ohio functions and meeting top standards of involvement and professional development.



< Toledo Regional Chapter receives Engineers Week Observance Award

NSPE-Ohio President Rodney Wilson, PE, presents Toledo Regional Chapter (TRSPE) President Ariya Fathi, PE, with the Engineers Week Overall Observance Award. In 2025, the TRSPE united professionals, students, and industry leaders to celebrate and advance the engineering profession. TRSPE's signature programs include MATHCOUNTS, Engineer-for-a-Day, and the Engineers Week banquet. Fathi, a staff engineer with Verdantas, LLC, in Toledo, accepted the award for TRSPE, which was recognized for its community engagement.

Ohio Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE-OH) Member,

The complete text of the NSPE-OH Constitution is shown in this issue of *OhioENGINEER*.

The NSPE-OH Board of Directors proposes and recommends your approval of changes as marked within. Any recommended deletion will be shown as a red strikethrough, and any new language will be shown in bold red.

Voting Instructions

Please study these changes and return this original ballot so it is received at ospe@ohioengineer.com or NSPE-OH, 400 South Fifth Street, Suite 300, Columbus, OH 43215-5430, no later than **Monday, February 16, 2025, 5:00 p.m.**

Mark your vote below and provide your name, signature, member number, address and chapter. Your signature and member number are necessary to validate your vote.

Ballot

The NSPE-OH Board of Directors recommends a vote of "Yes" to accept the changes to the NSPE-OH Constitution as proposed.

All Articles with Changes

- ☐ **Yes**, I vote in the affirmative for the change in the NSPE-OH Constitution Article 6, Section B, as proposed by the Board of Directors.
- ☐ **No**, I vote in the negative for the change in the NSPE-OH Constitution Article 6, Section B, as proposed by the Board of Directors.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

NSPE-OH Chapter _____

NSPE Member Number _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____



Ohio Society of Professional Engineers Constitution

Preamble

Recognizing that service to the public, to the state, and to the profession is a fundamental obligation of the professional engineer, the Ohio Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE hereafter known as NSPE-OH) does hereby dedicate itself to the promotion and protection of the profession of engineering as a social and economic influence vital to the health, safety and welfare of the community and all mankind.

Professional surveying is as equally significant in importance and hereinafter is considered of equal stature with engineering. ("Surveyor" and "surveying" are included by reference in "engineer" and "engineering" as used hereinafter, except where they obviously do not apply, such as "professional engineer" or "engineer-in-training.")

Article 1 Name

- A. The name of this organization shall be the "Ohio Society of Professional Engineers", hereinafter called NSPE-OH.
- B. NSPE-OH shall be incorporated as a non-profit organization under the laws of the State of Ohio.
- C. NSPE-OH shall be a member state society of the National Society of Professional Engineers, hereinafter called NSPE, and hereby accepts the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of said NSPE.
- D. NSPE-OH subscribes to and supports the Code of Ethics of NSPE.

Article 2 Objectives

- A. The objectives of NSPE-OH shall be:
1. Advancement and promotion of the public health, safety and welfare.
 2. Encouragement of all qualified engineers to seek legal status through registration.
 3. Stimulation and development of professional concepts among all engineers.
 4. Uniting of all qualified engineers of the state in one organization.
 5. Advancement of the professional, social and economic interests of the professional engineer.
 6. Promotion of high standards of the engineering profession in governmental matters.
 7. Representation for the engineering profession in governmental matters.
 8. Cultivation of public appreciation for the work of the professional engineer through improved public relations.
 9. Development of a civic consciousness by members of the engineering profession.
 10. Establishment and preservation of high standards of ethical conduct in all professional matters.

Article 3 Chapters

A. Engineers

1. The membership of NSPE-OH may be organized into chapters. The Board of Directors defined in Article 6 and hereinafter called Board, may authorize and charter such chapters defining geographical boundaries as may best serve the members of NSPE-OH.

Each chapter thus formed shall have a minimum of twenty-five voting members, which are defined as persons meeting membership requirements as set forth in Article 4, except students, and shall not be delinquent in dues payment to NSPE-OH or NSPE. All members of each chapter shall be

members of NSPE-OH and NSPE.

2. The Board shall make rules and regulations for chartering, combining or dissolving chapters. (These rules shall be expressed in the Bylaws.)

3. Each chapter chartered by NSPE-OH shall adopt such Constitution and Bylaws for its operation as it may deem proper; provided that nothing contained therein shall conflict with or contravene the Constitution and Bylaws of NSPE-OH. Such Constitution and Bylaws and any changes thereto are subject to approval of the Board.

4. Chapters shall engage only in such activities as are consistent with professional ideals and ethics. Such activities shall be restricted to the area for which the chapter is chartered, except as the Board may authorize.

5. In all matters of local concern not covered by this Constitution and Bylaws, chapters shall retain full autonomy, but may call upon NSPE-OH and NSPE for advice, counsel and assistance.

6. Each chapter shall be represented on the Board of NSPE-OH as provided in the Constitution and Bylaws of NSPE-OH.

7. No chapter in any way can contract any debt or obligation on behalf of NSPE-OH unless expressly authorized by the Board.

8. The fiscal and administrative years of the chapters should be concurrent with those of NSPE-OH.

B. Students

1. Student Members in engineering colleges and universities may be organized into student chapters as provided by the Bylaws.

Article 4 Membership

A. The membership shall consist of various membership grades as defined by NSPE and as outlined in the Bylaws.

B. Any person becoming a member of NSPE-OH shall agree to abide by the Constitution, Bylaws and the Code of Ethics of NSPE-OH and NSPE. All members are subject to election, suspension, discipline or termination of membership.

C. Any applicant who has been refused membership shall have the right of appeal to NSPE in cases of tiered (NSPE, NSPE-OH) membership applications and the NSPE-OH Executive Committee in cases of associate (state-only) membership applications. (Tiered membership is the standard; there is no state-only membership currently allowed.)

D. All NSPE-OH members shall have voting privileges in NSPE-OH. Only licensed members may hold elected offices in NSPE-OH.

E. All members of NSPE-OH's chapters shall be members of NSPE-OH.

Article 5 Dues

A. The dues of NSPE-OH shall be determined by the Board and stated in the Bylaws. Dues for the various grades of membership shall be in addition to NSPE dues as prescribed in the Constitution and Bylaws of NSPE.

B. The procedure for billing and collecting all dues shall be determined by the Board and stated in the Bylaws but shall be consistent with NSPE's requirements.

C. The schedule and conditions for dues payment, delinquency, dropping from membership and reinstatement shall be determined by the Board and stated in the Bylaws, but shall be consistent with NSPE's requirements.

Article 6 Board of Directors

A. NSPE-OH shall be administered by a Board of Directors which determine all questions of policy and administer its affairs under this Constitution and the general provisions of the law under which

it is incorporated.

B. The following shall comprise the voting members of the Board of Directors:

Executive Committee
One director from each currently chartered chapter
The chair from each practice division
The national director
Young engineer (1)
~~NSPE-OH PAG Chair (1)~~
Investment Committee Chair
Constitution & Bylaws Committee Chair

The following shall comprise the nonvoting members of the Board of Directors:

President of the State Student Council (1)

The "National Director" is the designated NSPE-OH representative to the NSPE House of Delegates (HOD).

C. All voting members of the Board of Directors shall be members in good standing of the NSPE-OH and the NSPE.

D. Any person who is entitled to Board representation and authorized to represent in more than one capacity shall vote in single capacity for the highest office to which elected.

E. The Board shall direct the investment and care of funds for NSPE-OH, adopt an annual budget, and make appropriations for specific purposes. The Board shall be empowered to invest and reinvest such funds as may be available for the creation of a reserve fund. Expenditures from the reserve fund other than for investment or reinvestment shall require an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Board of Directors present and voting.

F. The Board is authorized to appoint an executive director, when the financial and other conditions warrant, to fix the compensation, and to define the duties. (See Bylaws)

G. No officer of NSPE-OH shall receive a salary or compensation, except for expenses incurred on behalf of NSPE-OH as approved by the Board.

H. Within the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws, the Executive Committee shall act for the Board between Board meetings. All action of the Executive Committee shall be reported to the Board and approved or disapproved or modified by said Board.

Article 7 Officers & Executive Committee

A. The officers of NSPE-OH shall comprise the Executive Committee, members of which shall be determined by the Board and outlined in the Bylaws.

1. The duties of the officers shall be defined in the Bylaws.

2. All officers shall be installed at the annual meeting or convention and take office (seated) July 1 (administrative year) and hold office until their successors have been duly elected, installed and seated.

3. Should a vacancy occur in the office of president; the president-elect shall assume the office. Other vacancies among the elected officers occurring during the year shall be filled from the unexpired term by election by the Board. Vacancies in state chapter directors on the Board shall be filled by the affected chapter. Vacancies in the representative of each practice division shall be filled by the affected practice division. Vacancies in a national director position on the board shall be filled by the Board of Directors in accordance with the Bylaws.

4. Each practice division shall be chaired by a chair who shall be elected by the practice division for a term of office determined by that practice division.

Article 8 Nomination and Election of Officers

A. All officers, chapter directors and nonvoting members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the voting members of NSPE-OH, except in the case of practice divisions, in which the members of each practice division shall elect their own officers.

Article 9 Meetings

A. NSPE-OH shall hold an annual meeting at such time and place as may be selected by the Board, which meeting shall be open to all members and their guests.

B. Special meetings of the voting members of NSPE-OH shall be called by the president on two-thirds vote of the Board, or upon petition by 50 voting members of NSPE-OH, or by 10 percent of the membership, whichever is the smaller number.

C. The Board shall meet in accordance with the requirements in the Bylaws.

Article 10 Headquarters

A. The location of the headquarters of NSPE-OH shall be determined by the Board.

Article 11 Committees

A. Such committees as may be desirable shall be established in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Bylaws.

B. The duties of all committees shall be defined by the Board in the Bylaws.

Article 12 Practice Divisions

A. To further the objectives of NSPE-OH, establishment of practice divisions is authorized.

B. The Board may sanction the creation or order the dissolution of practice divisions according to provisions defined in the Bylaws.

Article 13 Amendments

A. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by a majority of the Board, or by a petition signed by not less than 10 percent of the voting members of NSPE-OH. Constitutional amendments submitted by petition shall be reviewed by the Board before being submitted to the secretary for ballot. The findings of this review may be transmitted to the members at the discretion of the Board.

B. Proposed amendments to the Constitution, together with a ballot, shall be transmitted by the Ohio Engineer to each voting member, providing thirty (30) days, from the date of the transmission, to vote on said amendment.

C. A Constitutional amendment shall become effective, as prescribed in Article 15, upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the votes cast by the voting members.

Article 4 Bylaws

A. The Board shall prepare and adopt a series of Bylaws which shall govern all procedures under this Constitution, including those of the Board and of the committees.

B. The Bylaws may be amended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Board of Directors, or two-thirds of a weighted ballot (if used); provided that the text of the proposed amended Bylaw shall be mailed or electronically transmitted (as directed by the member) to each director at least 20 days before the meeting at which a vote on the amended Bylaw will be taken. Amended Bylaws become effective immediately upon approval.

Article 15 Effective Date

A. This Constitution shall become effective upon its adoption by the voting members of NSPE-OH.

B. Any amendment to this Constitution, adopted according to the procedure specified herein, shall become effective 30 days after deadline for the receipt of the ballot.

PROGRAMS

Golfers rally to support Ohio's future engineers

For EFO's 2025 Benefit Golf Outing, engineers and friends took to the fairways at Bent Tree Golf Club in Sunbury to raise funds for youth education programs. The annual event supported Imagine Engineering, Ohio MATHCOUNTS, and scholarships, strengthening STEM education opportunities for children across the state.

The first-place team included team captain **Chett Siefring**, **Stace Bieber**, **Brent McPherson** and **Andrew Milligan**. The second-place team included team

captain **Muhammad Riaz**, **Matt Cornett**, **Jason Gardner** and **Adam Fowler**. The third-place team included team captain **John Enderle**, **Aaron Call**, **Michael McWatters** and **Scott Sands**. In the special contests, **Cornett** was closest to the pin, **McWatters** won the longest drive and **Dave Straub** made the longest putt.

Golf Outing Chairman L. Steve Day, PE, F.NSPE, extends his gratitude to the golfers and generous sponsors who made the fundraiser successful. He recognizes the following sponsors:



Pictured Above & Below
Scenes from the 2025 EFO Benefit Golf Outing. Thanks to our golfers, generous sponsors, and volunteers: County Engineer Co-Chair Jeremiah Upp, PE, PS; Howard Jones, PE, F.NSPE; and Rao Chitikela, PhD, PE.

Right: The Wyatt Teller-autographed NFL football was a popular raffle prize.



EFO President Rodney Wilson, PE, shows off the Jack Nicklaus autographed hat for the raffle.

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Rodney Wilson, PE

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Meadowcroft Rockshelter & Historic Village
Miller Boat Line
MJ Engineering/Graham Wand
National First Ladies' Library
Pro Football Hall of Fame
Shadowbox Live
Snow Trails
Stambaugh Auditorium
Toledo Alliance for the Performing Arts
Trumpet in the Land
USS COD
Western Reserve Historical Society
Westerville Golf Center, Inc.
Young's Jersey Dairy



State Board accepts five settlement agreements

Four firms and a registrant were subject to State Board action following review of compliance matters

The Ohio State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors recently accepted settlement agreements in five cases.

No Ohio CoA—Firms

In two unrelated cases, firms located in Mount Juliet, Tennessee, and Seattle, Washington, were each charged, according to the State Board, with offering to provide engineering services in Ohio at a time when the firms did not possess active certificates of authorization (CoA), in violation of Ohio Revised Code Sections 4733.16 and 4733.22. Per the State Board, the Seattle firm was also charged with providing engineering services and advertising to provide surveying services, which, without an

Ohio CoA, are also in violation of these code sections. In order to avoid further administrative action for violations of the Ohio Revised Code Chapter 4733, each firm entered into its own settlement agreement with the State Board. Each firm agreed to pay a \$1,000 fine and to comply with the laws and rules governing the practice of engineering and surveying in Ohio.

Failure to report discipline

In two separate cases, engineering firms located in Hillsborough, North Carolina, and Mandan, North Dakota, were each charged, the State

Board said, with failing to report prior disciplinary action taken against an engineer designated by the firm to be responsible for and in charge of engineering activities and decisions for the firm on

a certificate of authorization application. Failing to disclose prior disciplinary actions on an application to the State Board is a violation of Ohio Revised Code Section 4733.22. To avoid further administrative action for violations of Ohio Revised Code Chapter 4733, each firm entered into its own settlement agreement with the State Board. The Hillsborough firm agreed to pay a \$1,000 fine, while the Mandan firm agreed to pay a \$1,000 fine and to comply with the laws and rules governing the practice of engineering and surveying in Ohio.

Providing false or misleading information on CoA application

A PE-PS registrant residing in Twinsburg, Ohio, was charged, according to the State Board, with providing false and misleading information to the State Board on a certificate of authorization application for his firm. Providing false or misleading information on an application to the Board is a violation of Ohio Revised Code Sections 4733.20(A)(1), (2) and 4733.22. In order to avoid administrative action for violations of Ohio Revised Code Chapter 4733, the dual registrant entered into a settlement agreement agreeing to pay a \$2,000 fine.

The Ohio State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors is the state agency that regulates and licenses the professions of engineering and surveying in Ohio. The Board licenses approximately 30,000 registered professional engineers and professional surveyors, 3,700 registered engineering and surveying firms and evaluates more than 2,200 licensing applications yearly. The Board's mission is to safeguard the health, safety, property, and welfare of the citizens of Ohio by providing effective licensure and regulation of professional engineers, professional surveyors and engineering and surveying firms.



NSPE adopts position statement on international licensure agreements

NSPE's Committee on Policy and Advocacy has issued a position statement to express support for and encourage mobility of engineering licensure among U.S. states, territories, and foreign countries as long as protection of public safety, health and welfare is maintained.

To provide mobility with foreign countries, Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) between NCEES and their foreign equivalent should be encouraged, so long as the methods of establishing licensure in the two countries have been deemed equivalent in rigor. NSPE encourages state boards to adopt regulations to allow international comity, understanding individual states may continue to have requirements unique to engineering in those states.

NCEES and the Engineers Council of the United Kingdom signed an MRA last year and, according to NCEES, "Almost 30 NCEES member licensing boards were present to signify their intent to participate in the agreement."



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by Travis L. Rhoades, PE, F.NSPE, Vice President, Legislative & Government Affairs,
Chairman, Ethics Committee, Ohio Society of Professional Engineers



What we stand for: Reflections on ethics from Gettysburg

I recently had the opportunity to stand at the edge of Cemetery Ridge in Gettysburg, looking out over the same fields where, more than 160 years ago, thousands of Americans fought and fell. It's impossible to stand there and not feel the weight of history. The Battle of Gettysburg, like so much of our shared national past, was shaped by moral conviction, human error, and the consequences of decisions made under enormous pressure.

What struck me most during my visit was not just the scale of the battlefield, but the clarity of purpose etched into every monument and memorial. The ideals of freedom, unity, and duty drove those who fought here. While the war itself was tragic, the principles that endured were rooted in moral clarity.

As I return from that experience and reflect on the theme of this issue (government, infrastructure, and ethics) I cannot help but draw a line between the battlefield and the boardroom, between the cannon and the calculator, between the decisions made in the heat of war and those made every day by engineers working on behalf of the public. While our challenges may be different, our responsibility is just as great. Ethics is not a footnote in the work we do. It is the foundation.

The ethical weight of engineering

Engineers shape the physical world, but more importantly, we shape the lives of those who live in it. The roads we design, the water systems we maintain, the bridges we build, and the policies we help shape all have profound effects on safety, equity, and opportunity. The public may not always see the hand of the engineer, but they trust that it is steady, qualified, and ethical.

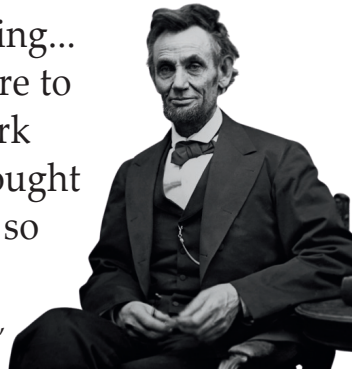
In legislative and government affairs, we continually navigate the space between political will, practical constraints, and ethical imperatives. Engineers often work quietly behind the scenes, but we must never be silent when it comes to integrity. We are, by training and by oath, servants of the public good.

That is why the **NSPE Code of Ethics** isn't just a guideline; it is a promise. It

begins with our fundamental canons: to hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public; to perform services only in areas of competence; and to act for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees. These aren't abstract ideals. They're real, and they're tested every day in public works, regulatory decisions, and legislative priorities.

"It is for us the living... to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced."

President Abraham Lincoln,
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania



Ethics in the trenches of policy

In my work with the L&GA Committee and Board of Ethical Review, I've seen how ethical questions often arise not in moments of scandal, but in moments of convenience. Should we stay quiet when a shortcut is proposed to meet a deadline? Should we approve a budget that we know will underestimate long-term maintenance needs? Should we support a bill that might win favor in the short term but ultimately cost taxpayers more in the long run?

The answers are not always straightforward. However, our role as professional engineers requires that we consider more than just what is legally or politically feasible. We must ask what is **right**. That is where ethics lives, in the space between obligation and discretion.

One of the most critical aspects of our work in legislative affairs is advocating for policies that protect the public interest, even when it's not popular or easy. Whether it's pushing for infrastructure investment, defending licensure, or promoting sustainability and resilience in design, our voice matters. And that voice must be anchored in ethical responsibility.

Infrastructure is more than concrete & steel

As Ohio and the nation invest in infrastructure, we must recognize that our systems reflect our values. Are our roads and transit systems equitable? Are our water systems safe for every community? Are we building not just for today, but for future generations as well?

Ethical engineering means confronting hard questions about access, impact, and accountability. It means listening to affected communities, being honest about risks, and standing firm when decisions threaten public safety. It also means mentoring the next generation to do the same.

We cannot afford a culture of silence or compliance when ethical questions arise. We must be a profession that welcomes questions, supports transparency, and builds structures (not just physical ones, but organizational ones) that encourage ethical reflection.

Learning from the past, leading into the future

Back at Gettysburg, I read a plaque that quoted Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address: *"It is for us the living... to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced."*

It reminded me that every generation has its own unfinished work. For engineers, that work is the constant pursuit of better, safer, and fairer systems. We must hold the line, not with bayonets, but with principles.

Ethics is not the absence of wrongdoing; it is the active presence of right action. It is showing up, speaking up, and doing what is hard when it is easier to do nothing.

We are not called to fight battles like those fought at Gettysburg. But we are called to defend something just as vital: the trust placed in us by the public. Let us be worthy of that trust. Let us be engineers not just of infrastructure, but of integrity.

136th Ohio General Assembly: Bills monitored by NSPE-Ohio

ELECTRIC SERVICE LAW CHANGES, House Bill 15 (Klopfenstein)	To amend the competitive retail electric service law, modify taxation of certain public utility property, & repeal parts of House Bill 6 of the 133rd General Assembly.	<u>Status:</u> 5/15/2025 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 8/18/25
CREATE WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS, House Bill 49 (Claggett)	To allow for the creation of water improvement districts.	<u>Status:</u> 4/9/2025 - House Natural Resources, (1st Hearing)
TRANSPORTATION BUDGET, House Bill 54 (Stewart)	To make appropriations for programs related to transportation for the biennium beginning 7/1/25 & ending 6/30/27 & to provide authorization & conditions for the operation of those programs.	<u>Status:</u> 3/31/2025 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 3/31/25
REVISE, STREAMLINE OCCUPATIONAL REGULATIONS, House Bill 59 (Fowler, Hiner)	To revise & streamline the state's occupational regulations.	<u>Status:</u> 11/19/2025 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Vote 91-0
ODOT RESPONSIBILITIES-HIGHWAYS IN VILLAGES, CITIES, House Bill 83 (Ferguson, McClain)	To clarify & amend the laws related to the Director of Transportation's responsibilities for state highways located in villages & cities.	<u>Status:</u> 5/20/2025 - House Transportation, (3rd Hearing)
RESTORE CLEAN OHIO FUND, House Bill 93 (Hall, Sweeney)	To restore the Clean Ohio Fund to be administered by the Department of Development & the Clean Ohio Council.	<u>Status:</u> 5/20/2025 - House Finance (1st Hearing)
TAX EXEMPTION-PROJECTS IN PORT AUTHORITY AREA, House Bill 147 (Lorenz)	To exempt from sales & use tax building materials sold to a contractor under a contract valued at \$25 million or more for projects in areas with a port authority.	<u>Status:</u> 5/28/2025 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, House Development, (1st Hearing)
SURPLUS REVENUE ALLOCATION-ROADS, BRIDGES, House Bill 151 (Stephens)	To allocate a portion of any state revenue surplus to a program that funds certain road & bridge projects.	<u>Status:</u> 5/20/2025 - House Transportation, (1st Hearing)
CREATE MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE GRANTS, House Bill 159 (Santucci, Demetriou)	To create the manufacturing technologies assistance grant program & to make an appropriation.	<u>Status:</u> 11/18/2025 - House Finance, (1st Hearing)
ESTABLISH CARBON CAPTURE REGULATION PROCESS, House Bill 170 (Robb, Peterson)	To establish a process to regulate carbon capture & storage technologies & the geologic sequestration of carbon dioxide for long-term storage.	<u>Status:</u> 10/15/2025 - Referred to Senate Energy
CREATE UNIVERSAL REGULATORY SANDBOX PROGRAM, House Bill 176 (Fischer, Lorenz)	To create a regulatory relief division within the common sense initiative office & to establish a universal regulatory sandbox program.	<u>Status:</u> 9/30/2025 - House Government Oversight, (3rd Hearing)
LAW MODIFICATIONS-EXCAVATION REQUIREMENTS, House Bill 227 (Robb Blasdel, Johnson)	To modify excavation requirements.	<u>Status:</u> 11/18/2025 - BILL AMENDED, Senate Public Utilities, (3rd Hearing)
STATE-FUNDED PROJECTS-AMERICAN IRON, STEEL, House Bill 284 (Hiner, White)	To require iron or steel that is produced in the United States be used on projects supported by state funds.	<u>Status:</u> 11/5/2025 - BILL AMENDED, House Development, (3rd Hearing)
TIMELY PAY REQUIREMENT-PRIVATE CONSTRUCTION, House Bill 288 (Roemer, Sweeney)	To require owners of private construction projects to timely pay contractors.	<u>Status:</u> 6/17/2025 - REPORTED OUT, House Small Business, (4th Hearing)
ESTABLISH COMMUNITY ENERGY PROGRAM, House Bill 303 (Ray, Hoops)	To establish the community energy program & pilot program & to define electricity measurement in alternating current.	<u>Status:</u> 11/19/2025 - PASSED BY HOUSE, Vote 77-8
ESTABLISH LEAD LINE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM, House Bill 307 (Jarrells, Robb Blasdel)	To establish a program regarding lead service line replacement & to name this act the Lead Line Replacement Act.	<u>Status:</u> 10/8/2025 - House Development, (3rd Hearing)
COMPUTER REGULATION, AI RISK MANAGEMENT, House Bill 392 (Fischer, Demetriou)	To limit further regulation of certain computational systems, require risk management policies for AI-controlled critical infrastructure, & to name this act the Ohio Right to Compute Act.	<u>Status:</u> 11/13/2025 - BILL AMENDED, House Technology and Innovation, (3rd Hearing)
PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTS-LABOR AGREEMENTS, House Bill 512 (Claggett, Workman)	To modify the law regarding project labor agreements in public improvement contracts.	<u>Status:</u> 10/15/2025 - Referred to Committee: House Commerce and Labor
LAW CHANGES-PUBLIC UTILITIES, Senate Bill 2 (Reineke)	Re public utilities law, to make changes regarding utility tangible personal property taxation, & to repeal parts of House Bill 6 of the 133rd General Assembly.	<u>Status:</u> 3/26/2025 - Referred to Committee: House Energy
MAKE CHANGES-BUILDING INSPECTIONS, Senate Bill 6 (Roegner)	To make changes to the law relating to building inspections.	<u>Status:</u> 7/1/2025 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 9/30/25
MAKE CHANGES-PUCO NOMINATING COUNCIL, PROCESS, Senate Bill 99 (Hicks-Hudson, Demora)	To make various changes to the Public Utilities Commission nominating council & nomination process.	<u>Status:</u> 3/5/2025 - Senate Public Utilities, (1st Hearing)
REGULATE CARBON CAPTURE, STORAGE TECHNOLOGY, Senate Bill 136 (Schaffer, Chavez)	To establish a process to regulate carbon capture & storage technologies & the geologic sequestration of carbon dioxide for long-term storage.	<u>Status:</u> 3/19/2025 - Referred to Committee: Senate Energy
REGULATE UNDERGROUND MINING-LIMESTONE, DOLOMITE, Senate Bill 181 (Wilkin)	To establish regulations for the underground mining of limestone & dolomite & to increase certain severance tax rates.	<u>Status:</u> 6/17/2025 - Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources, (4th Hearing)
CHANGE LAWS-OIL, GAS WELLS, Senate Bill 219 (Landis)	To make changes to the law governing oil & gas wells.	<u>Status:</u> 11/19/2025 - PASSED BY SENATE, Vote 25-8
REGARDING ADMINISTRATIVE RULES-NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, Senate Bill 268 (Lang, Cutrona)	Regarding regulatory-focused non-government organizations and model administrative rules adopted by state agencies.	<u>Status:</u> 11/18/2025 - Senate General Government, (1st Hearing)

* This is a partial list of the bills that NSPE-Ohio is tracking in the 136th Ohio General Assembly.

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