

February 2019

NSPE-KS

KSPE TOPEKA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Topeka Chapter, Kansas Society of Professional Engineers
825 S. Kansas Ave., Suite 500, Topeka, KS 66612

NSPE-KS TM TOPEKA CHAPTER
KANSAS SOCIETY OF
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ▶ February Meeting
- ▶ Calendar
- ▶ NSPE Board Update

2018-19 Topeka Chapter Officers

State Director: Robert Koopman
Past President/ Membership: Lynn Berges
President: Dan Scherschligt
Vice President: Jason Hoskinson
Treasurer: Troy Bandy
Secretary: Jeff Lolley

FEBRUARY MEETING

KSPE Update & Award Presentations

Presented by
Dennis Kuhlman
2018-2019 KSPE President

Thursday, February 28th

Bartlett & West
1200 SW Executive Dr.
Topeka, Kansas

11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Cost: \$25 per person (Catered Lunch)

(Previous newsletter mistakenly had lunch at \$15. Apologies from the editor.)

Please make your reservation with Jeff Lolley via
e-mail at jeff.lolley@bartwest.com no later than
noon on Friday, February 22nd.

Has your e-mail address changed? Please visit the NSPE or KSPE website, www.nspe.org/membership/join-now or <https://www.kansasengineer.org/join-us> and update your contact information. To login, have your e-mail address and membership number handy.

If you have any questions, contact Jeff Lolley by phone at (785) 272-2252,
or by e-mail at jeff.lolley@bartwest.com.

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KSPE TOPEKA CHAPTER CALENDAR

Date	Speaker/Topic	Member Host	Time	Location
Feb. 28 th , 2019	State KSPE UPDATE	Dennis Kuhlman	11:30 pm	Bartlett & West (Topeka)
March 2 nd , 2019	<u>State MATHCOUNTS</u>		TBD	Washburn University
March/April 2019	Joint Meeting with Tri-Valley Chapter		TBD	TBD
May 2019	Joint Meeting with Kansas Section of ASCE		TBD	TBD
June 6 th , 2019	Topeka Chapter BBQ		TBD	Lake Shawnee
June 12 th -14 th 2019	<u>KSPE Annual Conference</u>			Drury Plaza Hotel Broadview Wichita

A few excerpts from the most recent NSPE Board Update. Please find the report in its entirety [here](#).

Federal Court Ruling Preserves “Professional Engineer” Designation: A federal judge has ruled that an Oregon man was within his First Amendments rights when he referred to himself as an “engineer,” even though he was not licensed as a professional engineer. This ruling does not, in any way, weaken or change the fact that only PEs may engage in the professional practice of engineering in the state, nor that only licensed individuals may call themselves professional engineers or PEs.

The ruling on December 28 by US Magistrate Judge Stacie Beckerman stems from a case that began in 2016, when the Oregon Board of Examiners for Engineering and Land Surveying fined Mats Järnlström \$500 for referring to himself as an “engineer” in documents sent to the board and in media interviews. Järnlström’s case began when he submitted a letter and calculations to the board, calling into question the timing of red-light cameras, after his wife received a ticket for a red-light violation. In the letter, Järnlström, who earned an electrical engineering degree in his native Sweden, referred to himself as an “electronics engineer,” which the board said violated state law regarding use of the title “engineer.”

Although recognizing his right to use the generic term “engineer” publicly and privately, the judge’s ruling was limited. The judge determined that Järnlström may study, communicate publicly about, and communicate privately about, his theories relating to traffic lights as long as his communications occur outside the context of an employment or contractual relationship relating to the timing of traffic lights with a governmental or other entity that changes or implements or has final approval to change or implement traffic-light timing without the review and acceptance of responsibility by an Oregon-licensed professional engineer.

While Oregon is one of the few states with legislation attempting to regulate the general use of the term “engineer,” and this ruling is a setback for those provisions, it is important to stress that this ruling does not in any way weaken or change the fact that only PEs may engage in the professional practice of engineering as defined by the state, nor that only licensed individuals may call themselves professional engineers or PEs.

More Than Just Licensure: Professional Certifications Face Challenges, Too

Independently, and in conjunction with the Professional Certification Coalition, NSPE and its NICET division continue responding to actions by state and local legislatures/agencies that threaten the use of professional certifications by engineering technicians and engineering technologists.

In late 2018, NSPE sent a letter to the Washington State Fire Marshal’s Office to attempt to preserve NICET certification as the best, and only, means to qualify fire protection technicians. (A similar effort was successful in Louisiana earlier in 2018.) But efforts failed in a case in Iowa when the state fire marshal agreed to accept what many consider an inferior (“cheap and easy”) certificate program as equivalent to NICET certifications.

NICET and advocacy staff will be preparing talking points to share with state and local agencies on the separate but important roles that both licensure and professional certification play in protecting the public health, safety, and welfare; attributes of professional certification programs versus certificate and/or education programs; and the value of NICET certification in meeting their quality objectives. Staff is also preparing model regulations for use by state and local agencies when requiring third-party credentials.