NSPE Coronavirus Considerations

A Message from NSPE President David P. Martini, P.E., F.NSPE
March 13, 2020

As responsible professionals, the members of the National Society of Professional Engineers and the community of technicians certified under NSPE’s NICET programs understand the importance of holding paramount the public health, safety, and welfare. In this connection, NSPE continues to monitor international, national, state, and local developments arising as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak and is taking all appropriate steps consistent with the guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to protect its employees, members, and other customers while maintaining the maximum level of operations in the performance of its services.

We want to make you aware of the actions we have taken and the issues we considered in doing so.

- All nonessential meetings have been postponed or (where feasible) adapted for virtual meetings.
- Consistent with the restrictions established for Washington, DC, NSPE has decided to not send individuals to mass gatherings of 1,000 people or more. Decisions regarding smaller meetings are being assessed, consistent with the latest authoritative information and the meeting location.
- Consistent with CDC guidance, NSPE staff and volunteers who meet any of the following criteria are strongly encouraged to self-quarantine and refrain from travel:
  - If you have shown evidence of fever or flu-like symptoms,
  - If you have traveled to one of the CDC’s listed high-risk locations, or
  - If you have been in contact with anyone who meets either of these conditions.
- For both your own well-being and the safety of those around you, you are strongly encouraged to stringently follow all CDC guidance regarding personal hygiene, in order to limit the potential of becoming infected or becoming an unwitting carrier of the virus.
- Above all we respect personal judgments made by staff or volunteers. Even if you do not meet these conditions, if you are not comfortable traveling or going to a meeting, you should not go.

At this time, NSPE has NOT made any decision to cancel the 2020 Professional Engineers Conference. However, we have:

- Reviewed our contracts with legal counsel to understand what damages might be incurred by having to move or postpone the meeting as well as the deadlines surrounding those decision.
- Determined that we will waive any registration cancellation fees should future conditions dictate cancellation, or if any registrant exercises a personal decision not to attend over concerns related to the pandemic.
- Listened to attendees and sponsors to help guide any future decisions and will continue to do so.
- In particular, we are sensitive to the impact that employer travel restrictions may have on an individual’s ability to attend a planned meeting.

The situation may look entirely different five months from now. A month ago, COVID-19 had not yet emerged as a serious and world-wide health issue; five months from now, the situation may be much worse or much better. NSPE staff and volunteer leaders are working daily to assess the fast-changing situation and will move quickly to adjust these policies as appropriate.

I recognize that many of our state partners have their meetings scheduled in the week’s ahead, and you are facing difficult decisions right now. I hope that you will find this guidance useful in making the best decision for your organizations. We will, of course, keep you informed of any changes.

David P. Martini, P.E., F.NSPE
President