

The background of the slide features a bright, modern office interior with large, curved glass windows. Several business professionals are silhouetted against the light coming through the windows. They are engaged in various activities: some are talking on mobile phones, others are in conversation, and one is holding a tablet. The floor is highly reflective, mirroring the silhouettes of the people and the windows. The overall atmosphere is professional and dynamic.

ETHICS

IN OUR

# Changing

WORLD

presented by

*Tricia H. Hatley, P.E., F.NSPE*  
*NSPE President 2020-21*

*Stephanie Buckingham, CPTD,PHR*  
*Freese and Nichols, Inc.*

# Polling Question – What has changed in your life due to the pandemic?

- A. Eating more home cooked meals
- B. Exercising more
- C. Picked up a new hobby
- D. Gained weight
- E. Other (comment in chat)



# Overview of Today's Discussion

- Introduction
- NSPE Code of Ethics Overview
- Discussion of New Challenges

“ I’m excited to take on this new opportunity to give back to the organization that has been such a **strong influence** on my career and that is an advocate for **all professional engineers.** ”

Tricia Hatley, P.E., F.NSPE  
NSPE President 2020-21





## My role models/mentors and Past NSPE Presidents:

- 1978-79, Robert L. Nichols, P.E., F.NSPE
- 1992-93, Joe Paul Jones, P.E.







NATIONAL SOCIETY OF  
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

## Our Vision

A world where the public can be confident that engineering decisions affecting their lives are made by qualified and ethically accountable professionals

## Our Mission

To foster licensed professional engineers in service to society

## Our Values

Ethics and Accountability

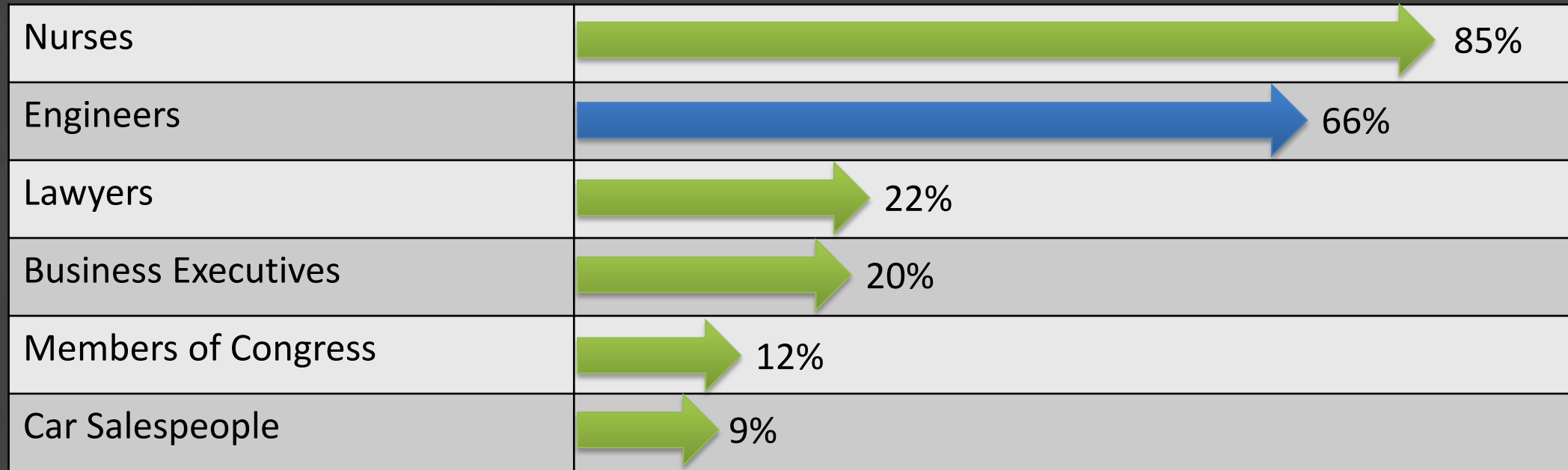
Qualifications

Professional Advancement

Unity



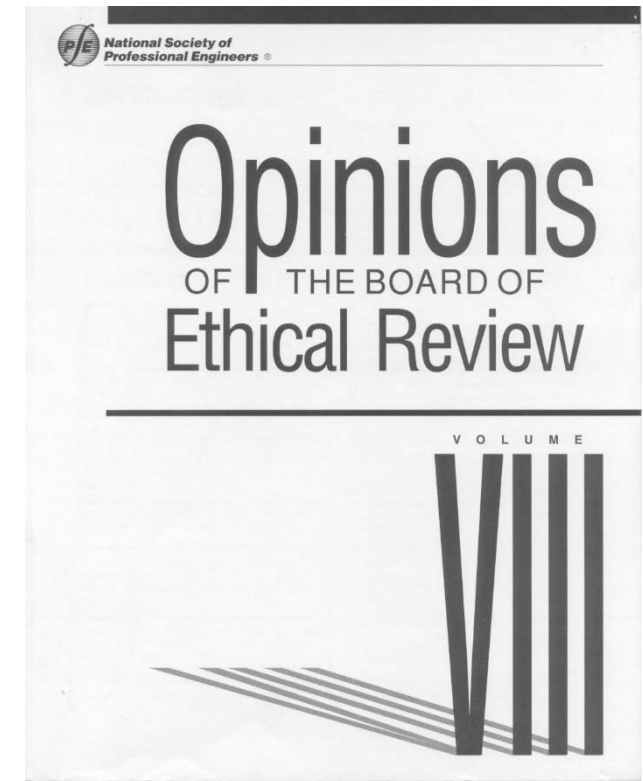
# When asked to rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in these different fields –



Gallup January 2020 survey

## Background on NSPE Ethics

- NSPE Code of Ethics - 1946
- Board of Ethical Review
  - Established - 1954
  - Nearly 700 opinions published
  - 12 cases published annually
  - Searchable on-line database



# Polling Question – Have you reviewed the BER cases before?

- A. Yes.
- B. No.
- C. I think so.



## Four Sections of the NSPE Code of Ethics

- I. **Preamble** – Answers the question “*Why have a Code of Ethics?*”
- II. **Fundamental Canons** – Describes the “bedrock” principles or fundamental obligations of Professional Engineers.
- III. **Rules of Practice** – Describes the fundamental rules that govern the professional practice of engineering.
- IV. **Professional Obligations** – Describes the standards of professional conduct for Professional Engineers.



## I. Preamble

Engineering is an important and learned profession. As members of this profession, engineers are expected to exhibit the **highest standards of honesty and integrity**. Engineering has a direct and vital impact on the quality of life for all people.

Accordingly, the services provided by engineers require **honesty, impartiality, fairness, and equity**, and **must be dedicated to the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare**. Engineers must perform under a standard of professional behavior that requires **adherence to the highest principles of ethical conduct**.

## II. Fundamental Canons

### **Engineers, in the fulfillment of their professional duties, shall:**

1. Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public.
2. Perform services only in areas of their competence.
3. Issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.
4. Act for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees.
5. Avoid deceptive acts.
6. Conduct themselves honorably, responsibly, ethically, and lawfully so as to enhance the honor, reputation, and usefulness of the profession.

# Recent updates



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT**



**ANTI-DISCRIMINATION  
PRINCIPLES**

Digital Communications



# New Challenges



Emerging Technology

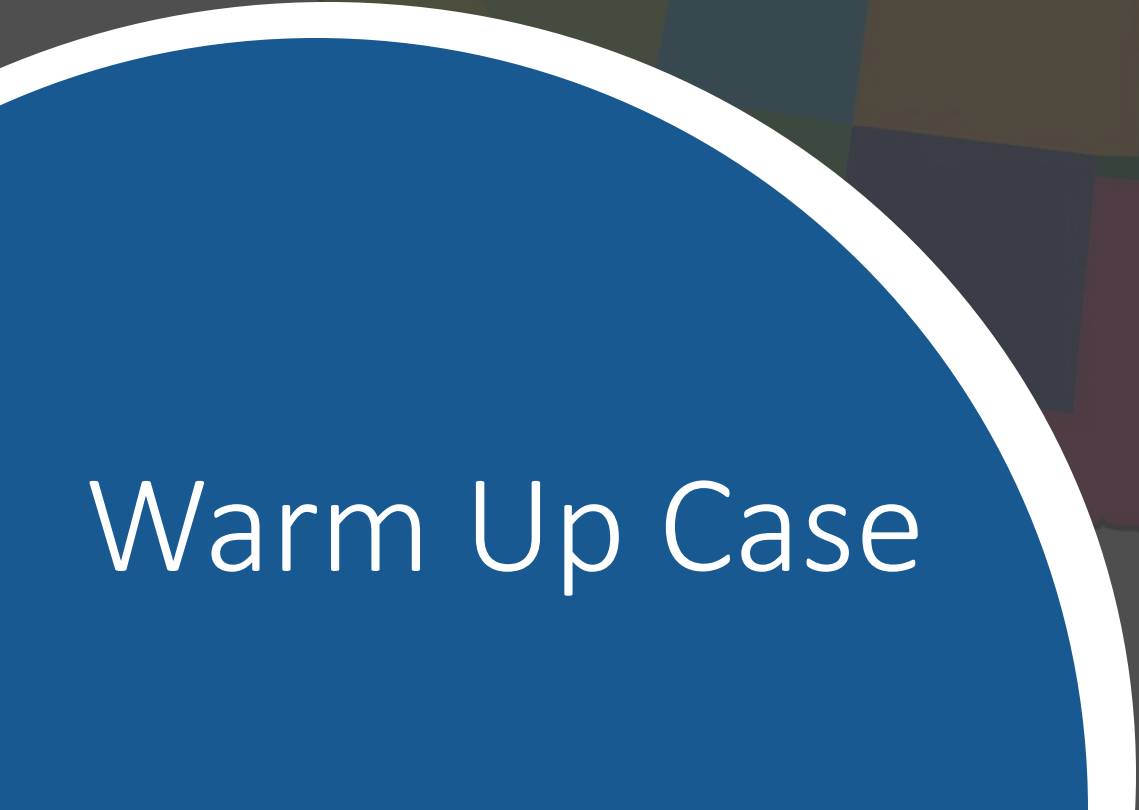


Sustainability and Resiliency





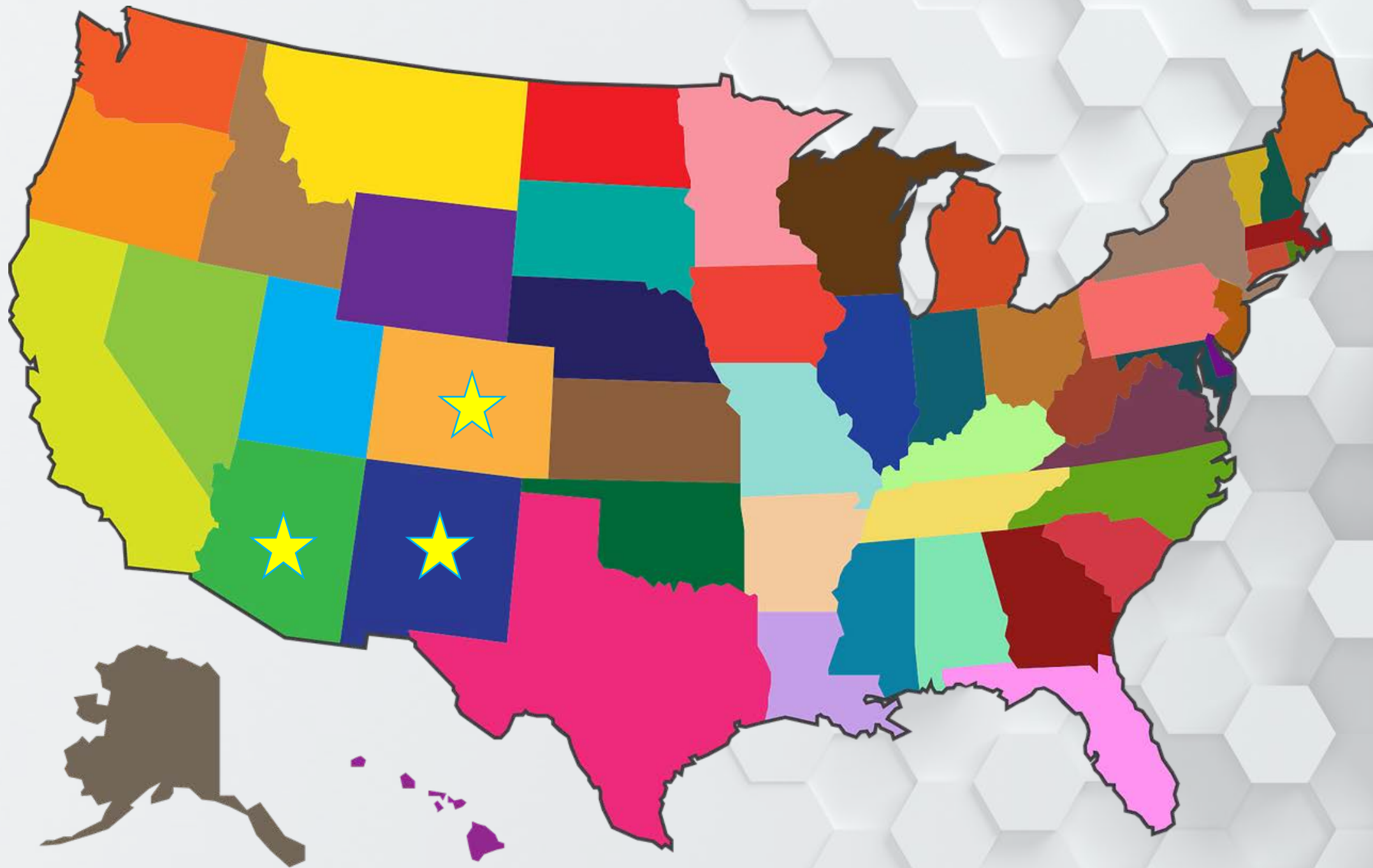
# New Challenge – Digital Communication



Warm Up Case



DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS





The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word interface for editing an email. The ribbon includes tabs for File, Message, Insert, Options, Format Text, and Review. The Message tab is active, showing the Clipboard group with Cut, Copy, and Format Painter options. The Basic Text group shows font settings for Calibri (Box) at size 11, with options for bold, italic, underline, text color, and background color. Below the ribbon, the email header fields are visible: To..., Cc..., and Subject. The main body of the email contains the text "Best Regards," followed by "Peter M. Jennings, P.E." on a new line.

File **Message** Insert Options Format Text Review

Cut Copy Format Painter

Clipboard Basic Text

Calibri (Box) 11 A<sup>+</sup> A<sup>-</sup> B I U [Color] [Background Color]

Send To... Cc... Subject

Best Regards,  
Peter M. Jennings, P.E.



DISCUSSION QUESTION:

What are Pete's ethical obligations?

# Polling Question – What are Pete's ethical obligations?

- A. List all states he is licensed in his signature line.
- B. His signature is fine as is.
- C. Other (comment in chat box)

# CONCLUSION

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Ethical not to include the states he is licensed in.

Professional obligation to use **prudence and good judgment** and consider participation as an **extension of professional activities**.

Code of Ethics Reference

III.3.a

III.8.a



# DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Social media pitfalls

## Case Study 1









# Nextdoor



Amy Smith

This project is ridiculous!!!! How could they do this to us without asking for input from the neighborhood. I heard that they are going to tear houses down to complete the project.



161

[Comment](#)



Zach Jones

Agree with Amy. There is a lot of shady stuff going on and the City is lying through their teeth. Everyone knows what they are really trying to do with this project. Why won't they tell us the truth of what they are trying to do?? They won't be tearing down my house.



503

[Comment](#)





DISCUSSION QUESTION:

How should the engineer  
respond?

# Polling Question – How should the engineer respond?

- A. Respond with appropriate technical clarifications/information.
- B. Private message the person(s) raising the issues.
- C. Create an anonymous account and respond that the person doesn't know what they are talking about.
- D. Do not respond.
- E. Contact the client and ask how to proceed.
- F. Other (comment in chat box)



Responsibility to the **Client**  
Accuracy and quality of service

Integrity  
Conduct in the Community



***Professional Obligations***

*1.b*  
*1.e*

***Rules of Practice***

*3.b*  
*1.c*



# New Challenge – Emerging Technology



# Autonomous Vehicles Issues



# Polling Question

**Which AV ethical issue do you think is most critical for engineers to consider?**

- A. Public safety
- B. Data protection and security
- C. Liability issues
- D. Regulations
- E. Environmental impact
- F. Societal impact
- G. Economic impact
- H. Other (comment in chat)

## Polling Question

**What role does the engineering profession have in the *ethics* of autonomous vehicles?**

- A. Development
- B. Testing
- C. Safety
- D. All of the above
- E. No role

"As technological advances increase, it is apparent more than ever before that licensed professional **engineers** need to **take a leadership role** in the **ethical development, application** and use of technology."

- **Tim Austin, P.E.**, NSPE Past President & Chair of Committee on Policy and Advocacy

NSPE Policy  
Published 2018



**Autonomous Vehicles:  
A Public Regulatory Policy Guide**

March 2018

**NSPE** NATIONAL SOCIETY OF  
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

NSPE PE Institute's On-Demand Webinar

*Ethics of Autonomous Vehicles: Who's in the Driver's Seat*

More on the Ethics of Autonomous Vehicles



# Case Study 2

## EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Drones









3002

POLICE





## DISCUSSION QUESTION

What are Engineer A's ethical obligations under the circumstances?

Polling Question –

**What are Engineer A's ethical obligations under the circumstances?**

- A. Follow the client's lead and do not report this to law enforcement.
- B. Send the video directly to the authorities.
- C. Don't send the video but let law enforcement know that the videos exist and where to find it.
- D. Other (comment in chat)

# CONCLUSION

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Engineer A took appropriate actions with the DOT. While the BER believes Engineer A **fulfilled his ethical responsibility**, since this is a matter of public safety, the Engineer **should also notify** the appropriate law enforcement agency.

## Code of Ethics Reference

II.1

II.4

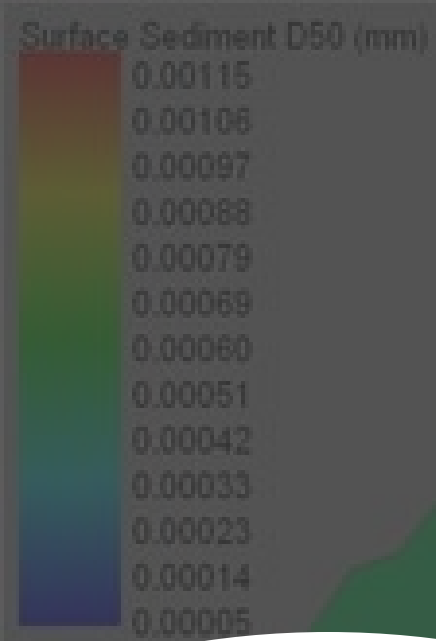
II.1.f

III.3.a

II.3.a



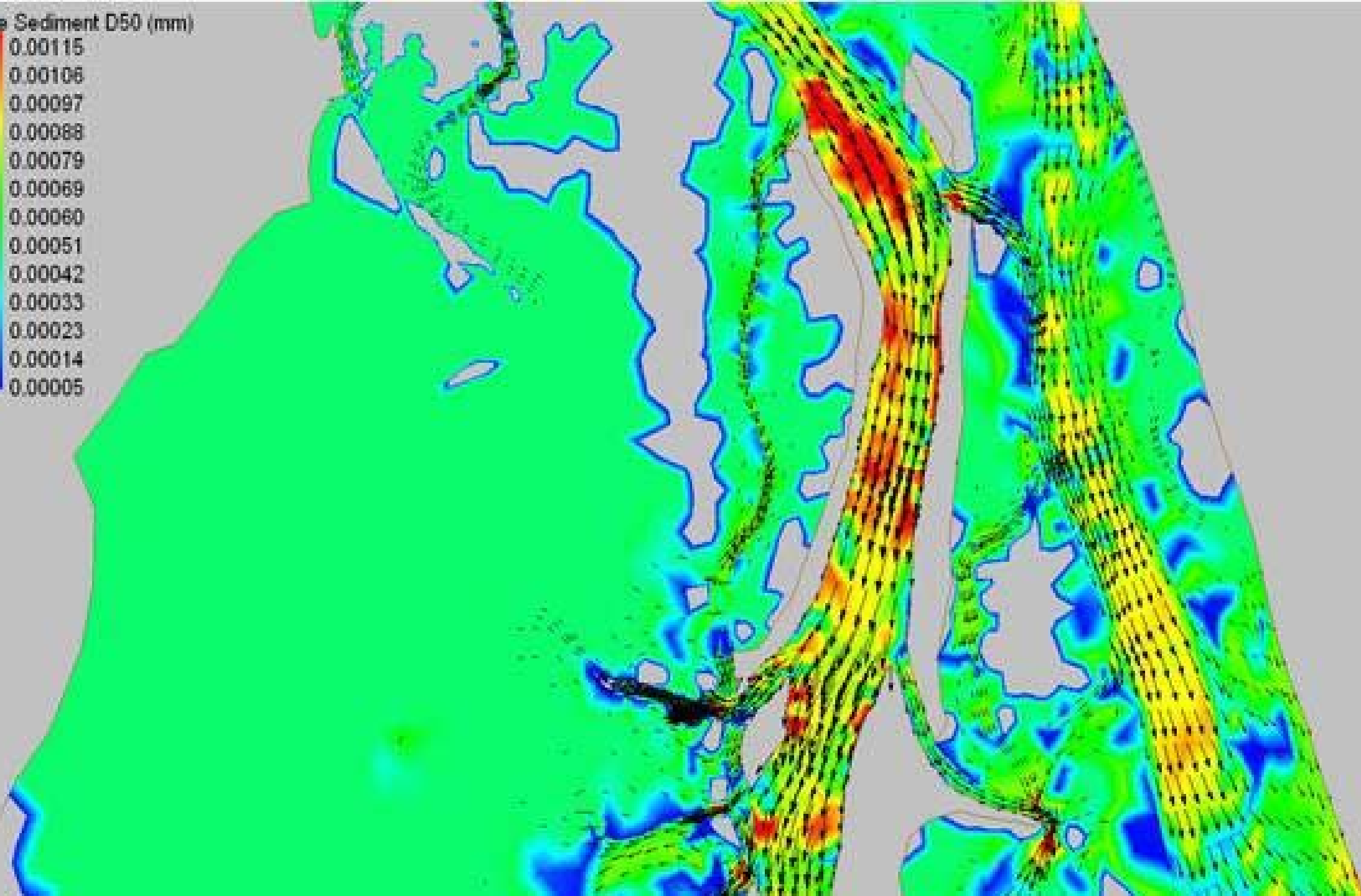
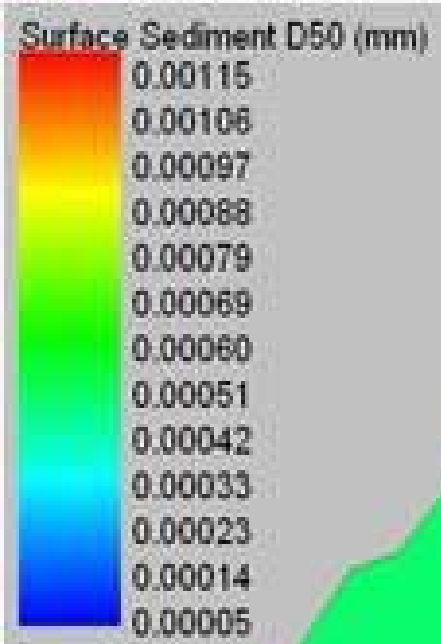
# New Challenge – **Sustainability and Resiliency**



# Case Study 3

## SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Building Codes







# 100-YEAR





## DISCUSSION QUESTION

What are Engineer A's obligations under the circumstances?

# Polling Question

## What are Engineer A's ethical obligations?

1. Withdraw from the project.
2. Move forward using the client's data.
3. Continue to pursue discussions with the owner.
4. Get on NextDoor and tell the community what's going on.
5. Other (comment in chat)

# CONCLUSION

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Engineer A should continue to pursue discussions with Client A to convince Client A of the danger and potential significant property and environmental damage. If Client A refuses, Engineer A should withdraw from the project.

Code of Ethics Reference

II.1.a,b

III.1.b

III.2.d



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Resources:

**Art Schwartz - [aschwartz@nspe.org](mailto:aschwartz@nspe.org)**

**[www.nspe.org](http://www.nspe.org) – BER case studies**

**[www.niee.org](http://www.niee.org)**

**[www.depts.ttu.edu/murcoughCenter/](http://www.depts.ttu.edu/murcoughCenter/)**