

AWARDS PROGRAM



Water Environment
Association of Texas

In memory

Please join TAWWA and WEAT in remembering these water professionals who died since we last met in 2022.

Demetrius Allen
Kay Barnes
Santos Bautista
William L. Boomer
Stephen Brigman
Ronald Carlson
Ronald F. Culp
Daniel Dorsey
Martin Ellis

Lee B. Freese
James Gonzalez
Parish Harris
Thomas Howard
Walter Frederick (Fred)
Kappel
Gordon Koblitz
Chris Conrad Krueger
Kenneth Lattig

Glenn D. Nitsch
Rey David Pion
Alan Potok
Jose Sotelo
Sammy Stratton
Tommy Tabor
James "Vince" Turner
Christine Webb
Hollis Weeks

Texas Water™ Code of Conduct

The Water Environment Association of Texas and Texas Section of American Water Works Association are dedicated to providing a safe, harassment-free experience for everyone during Texas Water™ and official Texas Water™ conference events.

WEAT and TAWWA will not tolerate harassment of conference attendees, exhibitors, speakers, volunteers, or staff. WEAT and TAWWA prohibit Texas Water™ participants from intimidating,

harassing, unwelcome, abusive, disruptive, violent or offensive conduct. Texas Water™ participants asked to stop any such behavior must comply immediately. Violators may be subject to expulsion without refund. Harassment should be reported to conference staff immediately.

Please refer to our full Code of Conduct at www.txwater.org/codeofconduct_2023.cfm for more information including contact information for reporting actions contrary to the Texas Water™ code of conduct.

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Awards Luncheon
April 12, 2023, 11:30 a.m.
 George R. Brown Convention Center, Ballroom, 3rd Floor

AWWA Membership Awards.....3
 TAWWA Young Professionals Maverick Award.....3-4
 AWWA Diversity & Inclusion Award.....5-6
 AWWA Dr. John L. Leal Award Nominee.....6
 AWWA John Lechner Award of Excellence.....6-7
 AWWA Five under 35 - Outstanding Young Professional Award Nominees.....8-10
 AWWA Exemplary Source Water Protection Nominee...10
 AWWA Award of Merit.....11-12
 AWWA Honorary Member Award.....12-13
 Outstanding Service to AWWA Award.....14
 AWWA Water Industry Hall of Fame Award.....15
 AWWA Silver Water Drop Awards.....16
 AWWA Life Membership Awards.....17
 AWWA Gold Water Drop Awards.....17
 TAWWA William T. "Doc" Ballard Award.....18
 AWWA George Warren Fuller Awards.....19-21
 WEAT Emerging Leader Award.....22
 WEAT Exemplary Employer Award.....23

WEAT Dennis R. Laskowski Recruitment Award.....24
 WEF Outstanding Service Award.....24
 WEAT Workforce Development Awards.....25
 WEF Laboratory Analyst Excellence Award.....27
 WEAT Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year Award.....28
 WEF George W. Burke Jr. Award.....28-29
 WEAT Ronald B. Sieger Biosolids Management Award.....29
 WEF William D. Hatfield Award.....30-31
 WEAT Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award.....31-32
 WEF Lifetime Membership Awards.....33
 WEAT Outstanding Public Official Award.....33
 WEAT W. Walter Chiang Lifetime Achievement Award.....34
 WEAT Ernest F. Gloyna Pillars of the Profession Award.....35-36
 WEF Arthur Sidney Bedell Award.....36-37

Awards Celebration
April 13, 2023, Noon
 Exhibit Hall, Meter Challenge Area

TAWWA Chapter Awards.....38-40
 TAWWA Water Conservation & Reuse Awards...41-43
 WEAT Clean Water Challenge Awards.....43-44
 Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers.....45
 WEAT Sidney L. Allison Award.....45-46
 Ken Miller Water for People Founder's Award.....46
 Watermark Awards- Members.....47-53

WEAT Operations Awards Ceremony
April 13, 2023 2:45 p.m.
 Exhibit Hall, Top Ops Area

WEAT Susan B. Hier Award for Excellence in Education & Licensing.....54
 WEAT Municipal WWTP of the Year Category 1.....55
 WEAT Municipal WWTP of the Year Category 2.....56
 WEAT Municipal WWTP of the Year Category 3.....57
 WEAT Operations Team of the Year.....58
 WEAT Outstanding Operators of the Year.....59-60

Awards Luncheon

April 13, 2023, 11:30 a.m.

George R. Brown Convention Center, Ballroom, 3rd Floor

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

The Texas Section AWWA recognizes members for their outstanding recruitment efforts that help maintain the Texas Section's leadership as the largest single state section of AWWA's forty-three sections with over 4,300 members. Even during the Pandemic, the section's continued growth is a testimony to our meeting the needs of water professionals statewide. And, our volunteers who recruit new members are the reason the Texas Section AWWA remains the most influential water organization in the state.

This year we recognize the following for their outstanding recruitment efforts this past year.

Melissa Bryant - 2 Members

Stephen Smith - 3 Members

Texas State Chapter - 15 Members

Texas A&M Chapter - 19 Members

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS MAVERICK AWARD

...recognizes an individual member age 35 or younger who exemplifies exceptional qualities in the areas of volunteerism, community involvement, leadership, and outstanding service in the science of water supply, treatment, operations, and quality.

Varenya Mehta

This year we honor Varenya Mehta with Kit Professionals in Houston for his extraordinary leadership among his peers and coworkers.

Mehta served as a co-chair of the SE Texas Chapter's YP Committee for the last two years. During his time in this role, he and his fellow co-chairs organized a multitude of technical, social, and/or philanthropic YP events. These events include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Plant tours of the City of Houston's Northeast

Water Purification Plant Expansion and the City of Sugar Land's Surface Water Treatment Plant

- Tour of manufacturing facility that produces treatment process equipment, such as belt presses, centrifuges, and heat exchangers
- Multiple technical webinars on topics of interest, such as impacts of Winter Storm Uri, polyfluoroalkyl substances, and the mentor-mentee relationship.

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- SE Texas Chapter’s YP Summit in October, 2022 (he additionally assisted in organizing this event in 2019 prior to pandemic)
- Numerous YP Happy Hours and networking events
- Volleyball YP Happy Hour with local ASCE chapter to promote inter-organizational networking
- Collaboration with local WEAT chapter to identify volunteers to serve as judges for projects by local middle and high school students at the Science Engineering Fair of Houston
- SE Texas AWWA Chapter’s booth at the Houston Waterworks festival, sharing with children and families from the local communities the importance of safe drinking water. He and other YPs showcased a project exhibiting the process and importance of water filtration.
- Collaboration with other local YP organizations to pack over 45,000 meals at the Houston Food Bank

Moreover, he has really sought to do all of the above in a collaborative manner. When the YP Committee co-chair stepped down, Mehta recruited a replacement and sought to develop a true committee and sought input from others.

Mehta has also participated in AWWA Association

level YP activities. He participated in the AWWA/ WEF National YP Summit in 2021, and he delivered a podium presentation in the YP track at ACE 2022, in San Antonio.

Mehta additionally serves as the treasurer of the Houston Chapter of the American Society of Indian Engineers and Architects (www.asiehouston.org). In this role, he oversees chapter finances and helps to organize chapter events. Their most recent scholarship fundraiser had more than 250 attendees.

Mehta is recognized for his ability to support cohesion and promote collaboration between junior staff at his employer, KIT Professionals, Inc. He is consider the instrumental “glue guy” in the office, coordinating events and outings for KIT staff, such as happy hours and birthday lunches.

His work supervisor notes “that n addition to all he does, Varenya somehow finds time to deliver all of his technical work. He is an integral part of our water and wastewater planning team, and it has been a joy to watch him grow from a relatively “green” new hire directly out of school into a confident YP capable of delivering complex assignments and presenting both to clients and the larger engineering community. He is a diligent worker who will do whatever it takes to meet deadlines, and he has gained the trust of both company leadership and clients. He has delivered on numerous high-profile assignments on hydraulic modeling and water quality projects.”

**TEXAS SECTION-AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS MAVERICK AWARD WINNERS**

2003	Shay Ralls	2010	Chris Varnon	2017	Jacon Niemeier
2004	Matt Berg	2011	Melissa Bryant	2018	Theresa Pedrazas
2005	Bobby Mengdon	2012	Adam Conner	2019	Lizanne Douglas
2006	Marissa Vergara	2013	James Mansfield	2020	Katie Stowers
2007	Jason Christensen	2014	Letty Gomar	2021	Katie McNeal
2008	Alissa Lockett	2015	Grace Wilke	2022	Michael McBee
2009	Jerry Snead	2016	John Logan		

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AWARD

...to recognize an individual, group, or organization that has created, promoted, and maintained diversity and inclusion by establishing an environment that recognizes, encourages, and effectively utilizes each individual's talents.

Stephanie Corso

Stephanie Corso and Rogue Water boldly demonstrates how curiosity, authenticity, and empathy can create diverse and inclusive connections to share the universal stories of water, build relationships, and grow the water community for all.

Corso and Rogue water have created a fresh landscape for water communications. Their focus on human-centric solutions works to rebuild the trust, support, and buy-in necessary for a resilient water future.

Their work has demonstrated solid core values, empathy, authenticity, and curating connections, throughout their work and podcasts. Specifically, they invite diverse and multidisciplinary

voices to their podcasts for personal and professional perspectives on the importance and intersectionality of water and community locally and globally.

Corso respects and promotes diversity both personally and professionally and demonstrates and promotes how different backgrounds and experiences can blend together for better solutions and decision making.

By acknowledging the diversity of water customers and understanding that many different voices are more suited to reach and serve such an audience the emphasis on telling stories connects all people to a common purpose building trust and generating empathy.

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AWARD

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City of Sugar Land

The City of Sugar Land's initiatives around diversity, equity, and inclusion are a testament to the community, leadership, and their employees. They have created a program that enhances the work experience and creates a supportive and authentic environment.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program was created to develop and manage the city's

DEI initiatives and serve as both a resource and advocate for the values of diversity, equity and inclusion for all city employees. The program promotes and supports the organizational-wide understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion as a strategy for employee empowerment, development and success. Additionally, a critical component of DEI is to establish a long-term cultural shift to recognize and celebrate staff

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diversity and ensure that equity and inclusion principles lead daily operations and foster an open dialogue.

DEI is for employees by employees with the goal to ensure the institutionalization of its core principles as the collective culture in the organization. DEI

calls to create a safe space to share ever-changing thoughts, ideas, and concerns where our success will be determined by our willingness to listen with empathy and open minds, and our ability to understand and respect all members' experiences and circumstances.

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

DR. JOHN L. LEAL AWARD NOMINEE

...for distinguished service to the water profession in commemoration of the sound medical/public health expertise and the courageous leadership advancing public health that characterized the life of Dr. John L. Leal.

Stacy Walters

This year the Texas Section nominated Stacy Walters with the City of Fort Worth.

Walters has continued to strive to increase the awareness of public health through the advancements of water innovations made by trailblazers like Dr. Leal. His dedication and approach are the benchmarks for surveillance of water systems as a line of defense against a wide range of health threats.

While working with Fort Worth Water, Walters has worked as a chemist, quality supervisor, water quality manager, and currently as regulatory and environmental administrator. Her various roles have played an integral part in the maintenance and support of public health for the utility.

Her role as a chemist required consistent monitoring of daily water testing to ensure compliance testing was performed in a timely manner to ensure compliance. Walters led the utility's centralized laboratory through the process of achieving accreditation through the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program in both Louisiana and Texas. Fort Worth Water's lab was just the third lab to achieve NELAP certification and the first municipal lab to do so in Texas.

As water quality manager for more than ten years, there were many opportunities to assist the utility in preparing for upcoming new regulations and changes to existing regulations. This includes leading the utility in preparing for the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions. Her main goals are positioning the utility for meeting the effective date for compliance and working with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regarding best practices for compliance.

Walters has worked on projects with the Water Research Foundation and EPA. She is currently working with the Water Research Foundation on PFAS effluent monitoring. Walters also provided samples for EPA's study of monitoring nitrosamine in finished drinking waters.

She serves as Fort Worth's representative on the Trinity River Compact, a collaboration of entities with POTWs along the water way through North Central Texas. The compact's goal is to facilitate cooperative monitoring, studies, and related activities by its members, and is primarily interested in water quality, wastewater collection and treatment, discharge and reuse of reclaimed water, and related regulatory matters in the lower West Fork, lower East Fork, and main stem of the Trinity River.

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

JOHN LECHNER AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

...to recognize a Section Service Provider Member (SVP) who has demonstrated exemplary service to the drinking water community and to AWWA's Mission and goals. An AWWA Section has the opportunity to further recognize individual achievements by submitting the Section winner as a candidate for the Association John Lechner Award of Excellence.

Cliff Avery

Cliff Avery is recently retired from GCP Association Services, LLC, the successful enterprise he founded in 1990. The company continues to provide service — conference planning and support, newsletter publishing, electronic media curating, back-office operations, and day-to-day management — to several statewide associations in Texas, including the Texas Section of the American Water Works Association.

A native of Midland, Cliff Avery majored in Daily Texan, the renowned student newspaper at the University of Texas at Austin, but they gave him a degree in journalism anyway. After graduation, he worked at The Corpus Christi Caller-Times, then returned to his native West Texas, where he worked for weekly newspapers. He then joined the Lubbock ABC-TV affiliate as executive producer and news director.

Avery was hired as a general editor for a Time Inc. electronic publishing project in New York City in 1981. He rose to assistant managing editor, then moved to Chicago where he served as vice president and editor for Keycom Electronic Publishing, a joint venture of The Chicago Sun-Times, Honeywell and Centel.

He returned to his first love, community newspapering in the Austin suburb of Pflugerville where he won two Texas Press Association awards in column writing and was president of the Pflugerville Chamber of Commerce. After leaving the newspaper, he was elected to the Pflugerville City Council and chaired the local Library Board.

In 1990, Avery began what is now GCP Association Services as Gilleland Creek Press.

GCP was immediately active in the water industry, serving various Central Texas area Municipal Utility Districts (MUD) around the growing Austin area by producing newsletters and other public relations efforts for the districts. This led to the formation of the Central Texas Association of Utility Districts (CTAUD) in 1994. Avery managed the association and helped further its mission of providing Central Texas MUDs resources on issues that were important to their constituents.

Avery's first experience with Texas AWWA was in 1996, when he was selected from a number of bidders to be the editor of the section's new newsletter, TexasH2O. This responsibility has stayed with Cliff's company through the present-day, with TexasH2O printing as a 30-page, bi-monthly magazine distributed to over 4,700 drinking water professionals throughout the state of Texas.

As part of the responsibilities with the production of TexasH2O, GCP was selling ads that brought revenue to the section. With the appointment of Executive Director Mike Howe in 1997, that relationship deepened over time, with GCP becoming the full "back office" for the Texas Section.

In addition to newsletter responsibilities, GCP has created promotional materials and legislative advocacy documents, provided photography and videography services, and produced educational teleconferences/webcasts for the section, which have co-won four AWWA education awards. GCP has also played a prominent role in the

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establishment and advancement of Texas AWWA's twelve professional and student chapters statewide, providing a central hub for promoting and supporting their activities.

In 2002, GCP started managing exhibit booth sales for the annual Texas Water™ Conference. At the time, the conference had around 230 booths. That number has grown to over 650 as of the most recent conference.

In 2003, GCP began providing registration services for Texas Water, followed a year later by further roles in producing publications as well as technical program coordination. GCP helped lead innovative developments for the conference through online registration, abstract submission and review, and eventually coordinating the full use of a show management system.

GCP's role with the conference has only grown over time as Texas Water™ continues to set records

for attendance, quality, and revenue produced for the Texas Section.

In response to Hurricane Rita's destructive impact on the water sector in southeast Texas, Cliff assisted Mike Howe and Texas AWWA establish the Texas Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (TXWARN) in 2005. Cliff helped develop the TXWARN system through several iterations that increased its sophistication.

He has served as a disaster event coordinator and event manager through several successful incident responses. For TXWARN, Avery has also helped organize several webcasts and regional workshops regarding emergency preparedness and response for the water sector. In addition, Avery co-authored an article on TXWARN for the AWWA journal.

Avery has been a member of AWWA/TAWWA for over 25 years.

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

FIVE UNDER 35 NOMINEE

...to recognize and honor young professional members of AWWA who have demonstrated outstanding service to their Section or Association through leadership and active participation in AWWA YP programs.

Andrew Swirsky

Swirsky has been a strong contributor to the water industry and AWWA since joining in 2017. He was initially involved in the young professionals group including fundraisers and giving technical sessions for other young professionals.

He then supported the Texas Water conference as the finance chair in 2019 when it was hosted in Houston.

He is regularly involved in current local AWWA events including leading the annual Larry Kelm fundraising golf tournament to support Southeast Texas AWWA activities all year round. At the association level, he is on the AWWA Digital Twins

committee to advance his passions of merging data and water for helping utilities around the county.

Swirsky has spoken at several state level AWWA conferences including North Carolina, Florida, and Texas. His involvement for the water industry extends to the rural communities as he volunteers with the Texas Small Systems Division for AWWA.

While not participating in AWWA associated activities he focuses his time on deploying the latest water technology for hardware and software solutions to water and wastewater utilities around the U.S. as the Xylem digital solutions manager for the southern us.

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Swirsky contributes greatly to fellow young professionals in the industry by being a mentor and an example of how to engage and make an impact in your community even at a young age.

During Hurricane Harvey, Swirsky personally coordinated groups of volunteers to respond to the call for help from utilities to evaluate dozens of lift stations and water treatment facilities.

He has a forward looking vision on how to improve the industry through his involvement on the Digital Twins Committee and Texas Small Systems Division. He is a consistent and effective advocate for the water industry on LinkedIn in an effort to promote public awareness and encourage people to join the industry.

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

FIVE UNDER 35 NOMINEE

...to recognize and honor young professional members of AWWA who have demonstrated outstanding service to their Section or Association through leadership and active participation in AWWA YP programs.

Stefanie Massey

Stefanie Massey has been volunteering with AWWA since the beginning of her career in the water industry. She has made numerous contributions in the Texas Section and North Central Texas Chapter and is dedicated toward benefiting the YPs through AWWA YP programs.

Massey is a Texas Professional Engineer and a certified project manager at AECOM where she specializes in water and wastewater rehabilitation and improvements projects. She has been very active in the North Central Texas (NCT) Chapter of the Texas Section American Water Works Association for over ten years. She has served as the communications, arrangements and programs committee chairs prior to serving as secretary, vice president, president, past president and now, competitions committee co-chair. Currently, she serves as the regional activities chair at the Texas Section level assisting the growing number of chapters in the section.

Stefanie has also been active in planning the annual NCT TAWWA Pipe Tapping Invitational since its inception in 2017, currently serves on the NCT Drinking Water Seminar committee and supports the NCT Scholarship Committee chair in reviewing Texas Section scholarship applications.

Massey took on the role of president of the NCT Chapter in the Spring of 2020. She successfully led the transition of the chapter from fully in-person to fully virtual within a few weeks' time as the pandemic created a paradigm shift in how the industry was able to come together.

Attendance at the virtual events increased compared to pre-COVID, in-person events. Massey has a passion for connecting professionals in all roles within the water industry, educating the next generation of water professionals, and spurring on the current industry to excel in our delivery of clean water to the environment and the people of Texas.

Massey has served as a mentor for eight Southern Methodist University senior design/capstone project teams. Each project spans a full school year and includes a "real-life" problem with local DFW clients that the students address with guidance from their mentor. Projects have included transportation planning projects with Dallas County, wastewater treatment biological nutrient removal process improvements with Trinity River Authority, and master planning of a sustainable community with a private client. Stefanie believes that introducing students to tangible tasks that

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they will likely be assigned in their professional career, such as developing deliverables and presenting them to clients, maintaining a schedule, and receiving feedback from their mentor, will provide them with a springboard to succeed in their early careers.

Massey has also been active in the TAWWA mentoring program, where she has been a mentee, and in 2020 was a mentor. While meeting in person was not feasible, Massey and her mentee met virtually one to two times each month for the full mentor-program year.

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

EXEMPLARY SOURCE WATER PROTECTION NOMINEE

...to recognize organizations in North America who have developed and are implementing exemplary source water protection programs.

San Jacinto River Authority

The San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1937 to develop, conserve, and protect the water resources of the San Jacinto River basin, which includes Lake Conroe. The SJRA boundaries include the entire watershed of the San Jacinto River and its tributaries, which includes all of Montgomery County and parts of Walker, Waller, San Jacinto, Grimes, Fort Bend and Liberty Counties.

Lake Conroe is a 21,000-acre reservoir impounded by a dam on the West Fork of the San Jacinto River near Conroe, Texas. The dam and reservoir were constructed by SJRA and the City of Houston in 1973 to provide water supply for municipal and industrial purposes.

The vision and mission of the Lake Conroe Watershed Protection Plan and Program is to maintain the reservoir's current excellent water quality conditions and, when possible, improve the reservoir water quality. This goal is accomplished by identifying opportunities to better manage resources, by educating and informing the public and interest groups regarding water quality conditions, and by supporting and encouraging activities within the watershed that reduce future pollution from all sources. The management strategy defines and addresses both existing and future water quality problems emanating from both point and non-point sources of pollution within the watershed. It serves as a means of

resolving and preventing water quality problems using a holistic watershed approach.

In accordance with the American Water Works Association Source Water Protection Standard the SJRA's source water protection program includes stakeholder involvement and a commitment to provide resources to protect the water quality of the San Jacinto watershed.

The Lake Conroe watershed (the land area that drains into Lake Conroe) is primarily located in northern Montgomery County and southern Walker County; Grimes County occupies a small section of the watershed in the northwest area. Lake Conroe itself covers most of the lower one-third of the watershed and has significant residential and commercial development around the reservoir shores, including areas recently annexed by the City of Conroe.

The middle part of the watershed consists of the Sam Houston National Forest with small ranches and small farms scattered throughout the forest. The upper watershed comprises of a mixture of cultivated lands, pastures, pristine forests, and cleared land from timber harvesting. The City of Huntsville represents a major urban development located in the northeastern section of the watershed. The watershed of Lake Conroe comprises of approximately 450 square miles out of the total upper basin of the West Fork of the San Jacinto.

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

AWARD OF MERIT

An award of achievement to those outside the water profession who have demonstrated outstanding service in support of the principles of AWWA in providing better water for people.

Texas Natural Resources Conservation Service

This year AWWA has honored the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Service (TNRCS) for tirelessly promoting Farm Bill initiatives through NRCS programs to protect and improve water quality and quantity that is available for the citizens and industries across Texas. The Texas NRCS has partnered with the Texas Section AWWA for technical guidance in source water protection and developed evaluation methodologies and communication paths.

The Texas Natural Resources Conservation Service has worked diligently over the decades to implement programs and provide technical expertise and funding for projects that help improve water quality and quantity throughout the State of Texas.

Their most recent work on implementing the 2018 Farm Bill has been a model for other State NRCS offices. The NRCS in Texas reacted immediately to the availability of this new funding initiative by inviting representatives of the Texas Section AWWA to be members of the State Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) and during the first meeting with TAWWA representation, created a Watershed/Source Water sub-committee to guide the STAC on issues related to protecting the source waters of Texas.

Within a 12 month period from their creation, the STAC Watershed/Source Water sub-committee created a ranking rubric to utilize in determining a priority list of HUC 12s for focusing Farm Bill funding. The rubric took into consideration multiple factors, including; percentage of Source Water Protection Area (SPA) and Wellhead Protection Area (WPA) coverage within the HUC12, % of Urban versus Agriculture, Sole Source Supply, and Populations Served. The sub-

committee evaluated all HUC 12 watersheds in Texas (6,000+) with the rubric, and ultimately recommended 823 HUC12s for the TNRCS to focus upon. Those 823 HUC12s represented 23 million acres of agricultural/forested land, covered approximately 13 % of the total State of Texas acreage.

Utilizing the prioritized list, the Texas NRCS has funded thousands of projects and hundreds of millions of dollars since 2008. During FY 2022 alone, the Texas NRCS was able to fund a total of \$123,202,053 of Farm Bill money on 3,313 different contracts under their various qualifying programs, such as; Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), Watersheds Program and the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).

The methodology that the Texas NRCS has developed has proven to be effective and has been provided to several other state NRCS offices for their consideration and use in implementing the 2018 Farm Bill.

The Texas NRCS has also collaborated with the Texas AWWA in conducting a webinar that was dedicated to the 2018 Farm Bill and all of the available programs (ACEP, EQIP, CSP, and RCPP) through the NRCS. The webinar was one of the most attended webinars and was simultaneously broadcast to AWWA members and NRCS producers and staff.

Current activities involve continued communications and outreach from the Texas NRCS to water suppliers and agriculture producers. In an effort to reach the water suppliers

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and engineering firms across Texas, the TAWWA once again is collaborating with the Texas NRCS staff to dedicate an entire edition of the Texas Sections newsletter to the Farm Bill, Source Water Protection and NRCS programs that can be utilized to protect source waters across the State.

The Texas NRCS has cultivated a maturing relationship with the Texas AWWA and each are using the programs that the other brings to the table to help promote and fund a strong, resilient program of protecting and improving the quality and quantity of the source waters in Texas.

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

HONORARY MEMBER AWARD

...to recognize an individual whose knowledge and accomplishments in the field of water supply entitle them to special recognition.

Daniel Nix

The AWWA Honorary Member Award is presented each year to members “whose knowledge and accomplishments in the field of water supply entitle him/her to special recognition.” This year, AWWA is honoring Daniel Nix with the City of Wichita Falls.

Nix is a strong advocate for a “Better world through better water” and he has been a tireless worker in the water industry as exhibited by his work on the Section, national and international level. He has authored AWWA books, promoted education, and served on numerous committees that entitle him the Honorary Member recognition.

Nix’s career in the drinking water field has spanned 36 years beginning in the distribution field and advancing through laboratory, operations, supervisory and administrative components within the water sector. In the early years of his career he oversaw the implementation of the first major revisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act, since its inception in 1974.

Given Nix’s experience with Direct Potable Reuse, he was instrumental in the creation of AWWAs G485- Potable Reuse Program Operation and Management Standard, first participating on the

Direct Potable Reuse Standards Committee and then on the Indirect Potable Reuse Standards Committee. He continues to support Standards development by offering to serve on the Reuse Standards committee and serves on the AWWA Water Reuse Committee.

At the International level, Nix has been sharing his knowledge of Direct Potable Reuse with many different entities. During the operation of Wichita Falls DPR, he hosted representatives from Australia, Singapore, Japan and the World Bank to tour the facilities and teach them how the processes were operated, financed and regulated. He has also corresponded with representatives from the UK, Belgium and Israel on how to implement DPR in their countries.

More recently, he continues to share his knowledge, internationally, of implementing Potable Reuse projects through numerous AWWA webinar presentations, including; AWWA/World Bank Workshop (2021) and the upcoming AWWA International Council on Water Reuse in India (2022). Additionally, his First Edition of Filter Evaluation Procedures of Granular Media has been translated into French by the Quebec Section AWWA.

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Nix has worked with the US Environmental Protection agency on several initiatives, including, but not limited to: EPA 2017 Potable Reuse Compendium, 2020 Reuse Action Plan and the 2015 Framework for Direct Potable Reuse. More recently, in 2021, he collaborated with the General Dynamics and the EPA on developing a case study for the EPAs Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool (CREAT) Risk Assessment Application for Water Utilities.

At the state government level, he was instrumental in working with the 87th Texas Legislator in passing legislation directing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to develop Regulatory Guidance for Implementing Direct Potable Reuse for water utilities and engineering firms.

Nix has worked with the AWWA DC Office since 2017 on the implementation of the Farm Bill in Texas, His efforts got TAWWA a seat on the TNRCS State Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), re-established the watershed sub-committee within the STAC and getting TAWWA a seat within that sub-committee. He participated in creating a ranking rubric and ranking over 8000

Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 12s within Texas and identifying 831 high priority HUC12s for the TNRCS to focus Farm Bill within, and created and hosted a Farm Bill webinar between TAWWA and TNRCS.

Nix served through the Texas Section officers and is now one of two Texas directors on the AWWA Board of Directors. He currently serves as the chair of the Source Water Protection Technical Advisory Group in the AWWA DC Office. Most recently, he was asked to participate in the Water 2050 initiative as a representative on the Sustainability Think Tank to help guide the project.

Nix continues his commitment to water education and is instrumental in developing a new training project called SETH (Science, Engineering, Technology and Health) to train high school students across Texas in entry level water operations and help them successfully test for an entry level water license from the State of Texas. This innovative e 20-hour course will be delivered via the Internet by TAWWA to vocational programs across the state for free.

Texas Section American Water Works Association Competitions

- **Junior Meter Challenge (Wednesday)**
- **Meter Challenge (Wednesday)**
- **Pipe Tapping (Thursday)**
- **Top Ops (Thursday)**
- **Best Tasting Drinking Water (Thursday)**
- **Hydrant Hysteria (Thursday)**

The above awards are presented at the competition location following each competition.

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

OUTSTANDING SERVICE to AWWA AWARD

... to recognize and honor a member of the American Water Works Association who has demonstrated outstanding service to the Association through leadership and active participation in AWWA programs.

Mary L. Gugliuzza

Mary Gugliuzza is a stellar AWWA and Fort Worth, Texas utility representative. Mary has served the Texas Section and AWWA by teaching and mentoring other public information specialists. She is known for being a “go to” volunteer, someone AWWA and Texas can always depend on for whatever needs doing.

Gugliuzza has dedicated her professional career of writing and communications over the last 27 years to the water sector (drinking water, wastewater, reclaimed water, water conservation, and public education). Her focus has been with the City of Fort Worth, Texas water system and volunteer engagement through AWWA. Gugliuzza serves on the Fort Worth Water’s executive team providing the important and often overlooked utility need for media relations, crisis communications, public speaking and web site development. She plays a vital role in the utility’s emergency response and maintains partnerships with stakeholders, such as wholesale customers, county public health departments and school districts.

Gugliuzza displays a high level of initiative and innovation in her approach to promoting the water industry and AWWA. When Gugliuzza first stepped into the water sector she readily admitted to knowing nothing about water. That has changed because she now considers herself a “water nerd.” In the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, when she is called on to go before the media as a respected, trusted and knowledgeable source of timely information for the media and the public.

She is the busiest during Texas Section conferences, serving on conference committees, developing conference brochures and award booklets, managing awards ceremonies and organizing water

tasting contests. All of these activities promote AWWA and water professionals and improve our customers’ knowledge of and appreciation for the work we do.

She received the Texas Water Distinguished Service Award in 2007 from the Texas Section of AWWA and the Water Environment Association of Texas “For her many years of selfless commitment to the success of the Texas Water Conferences.” She has also been recognized numerous times for AWWA membership recruiting.

She has been a tireless AWWA volunteer and has established herself as a leader among her AWWA peers. She continues to demonstrate that leadership at the Section and the AWWA international level through her committee and council participation. Gugliuzza has served as AWWA Director at Large and recently was elected as an AWWA Vice-President.

Gugliuzza served on the AWWA Public Affairs Council 2006-2012 and 2013-2021, serving as chair from 2018 thru 2021. She was instrumental in the development of the recently released “Trending In An Instant” risk communications guide for utility leaders and public communications specialists. She has promoted the need for truthful and complete information to customers. She has mentored many other water professionals who have followed her example.

Gugliuzza is a George Warren Fuller Awardee and in the spirit of the award, she displays brilliant diplomatic talent and brings confidence to the table when she is called on to communicate emergency circumstances and water utility announcements to the media and the public.

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

WATER INDUSTRY HALL OF FAME AWARD

...to perpetuate the memory of those living and deceased who have made the most significant contributions to the field of public water supply.

Charlie Maddox, P. E.

The AWWA Water Industry Hall of Fame is one of the most significant award in the water community. Established in 1970 to perpetuate the memory of those living and deceased who have made the most significant contributions to the field of public water supply. The awardee's total influence upon the water supply profession must be continuously felt in the practices, inventions, or literature for which they were responsible are significant and have stood the test of time.

This year AWWA has honored Charles Maddox for his long career as an innovator, regulator, utility manager, and still as engaged AWWA member. His contributions have supported utility staff so they always had the best chance of success in water system operation and public health protection while at the same time achieving compliance with rules. Mr. Maddox's work experience and AWWA involvement have allowed him to achieve one of the main goals of his work, which was to bring operations and compliance to a practical and realistic level so operators and utility staff had the best chance of success in water system operation and public health protection while at the same time achieving compliance with rules

Charles Maddox's career in the drinking water and public health field has spanned forty-nine years with a beginning in the Texas Department of Health where most state drinking water regulatory oversight programs in the US began. It was in these early years of his career that he developed a true understanding of the public health goals in the field of the water utility industry and the relationship they have with sound engineering and operational practices. He moved up in leadership

responsibilities and led many efforts in revising the state water system design regulations and the drinking water standards, many of which were the result of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the revisions to that Act. Many of the changes he championed remain in the regulations to this day.

It was also at the beginning of his career, in 1973, that he became a member of AWWA and has attained Life Member status by continuing that membership. He organized the first, and then many subsequent seminars on the 1986 Safe Drinking Act amendments to educate operators, managers, and engineers on the treatment and water quality requirements they had to meet within their water systems. These Safe Drinking Water Act seminars were done in cooperation with the Texas Section of AWWA, with the registration fee going to the Section which greatly benefited the fiscal health of the Section and started the Section on a path of financial stability.

After 29 years of experience in drinking water and public health programs, he retired from state service in 2001 and began a career at Austin Water Utility where he worked as Water Regulatory Manager for 18 years before retiring in February 2020. He still remains on staff as a part-time consultant to Austin Water utility. In his Water Regulatory Manager role, he combined the skills and knowledge of a career in public health work and regulatory oversight with that of day-to-day operations of a water utility, both at the plants and within the distribution system. This allowed him to be an asset to the Austin Water staff and to all of his colleagues within AWWA and the water industry. He has also gained knowledge and insight

(Continued)

in return from the professionals he has worked alongside within the industry.

While employed at Austin Water Utility, he continued and enhanced his AWWA involvement. He served in the officer roles and then became Director of the Texas Section on the AWWA Board of Directors. After those positions, he was selected for a position on the AWWA Water Utility Council where he served two three-year terms. Over this time, he has organized the Texas Section participation in and attended twenty successive AWWA Fly-Ins in Washington, DC. These Fly-Ins cover two days of visits to congressional offices to promote water utility issues of concern.

He has also participated in many Texas Section educational teleconferences and webinars on technical and regulatory topics. He is a Fuller Award winner and most recently a recipient of the Dr. John L. Leal Award.

Maddox's work experience and AWWA involvement have allowed him to achieve one of the main goals of his work, which was to bring operations and compliance to a practical and realistic level so operators and utility staff had the best chance of success in water system operation and public health protection while at the same time achieving compliance with rules.

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

SILVER WATER DROP AWARDS

The AWWA Silver Water Drop Awards are given to those members who have achieved 25 years of service to the water community and AWWA.

John Carlton
D. Bryant Caswell
Steve Clouse
Aaron Collins
Rick Coronado
Todd Darden
Frank A. Ferris
Barry Hand

Michael J. Helfrich
Janice Holland
Donna Howe
Andrea Huizar Beymer
Mary Jo Kirisits
Tracey L. Long
Paul Aaron Lopez
Randy L. Luensmann
Michael Pifer

Wilfredo C. Rivera
Martin Rumbaugh
Caroline G. Russell
Robert L. Saenz
Thomas W. Snyder
Gregory T. Swoboda
Rick Wanner
E. Duwain Whitis

**Use #TXwater23 when posting about
the conference on social media.**

**Texts sent to 281-317-6104 will display
on the conference's social media feed.**

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

The AWWA Life Membership Awards are given to those members who have 30 years cumulative membership and are now at least 65 years old.

Hermon J. Alame	John L. Gardner	Stephen Rachac
Bruce A. Alexander	Rhonda E. Harris	Kyle Reed
Sam A. Arnaout	Chuck L. Hewell	Dave Reed
Larry L. Bittle	Michael W. Holloway	Randy R. Rogers
David E. Chardavoyne	Mike Howe	John T. Sutton
Barbara D. Crumby	Bahman Kaboudvand	Edward W. Tadlock
Craig M. Cummings	Timothy E. Lackey	Samuel G. Terry
Bruce P. Curtis	David M. Luedecke	Coy M. Veach
Alicia C. Diehl	Owen M. Matherne	Darryl Waldock
Sam E. Dungan	David W. Mueller	George O. Westhoff
George H. Freitag	Showri Nandagiri	

GOLD WATER DROP AWARDS

The AWWA Gold Water Drop Awards are given to those members who have achieved 50 years of service to the water community and AWWA.

Dorian French	Alan D. Lindskog	Charles R. Maddox
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Women Of Water Breakfast

Thursday, April 13, 7:15 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Ticket Required

Moderator:

- Liz Fazio Hale, General Manager, Gulf Coast Authority

Panelists:

- Jenna Covington, General Manager, North Texas Municipal Water District
- Carol Haddock, Director, Houston Public Works
- Tina Peterson, Executive Director, Harris County Flood Control District
- Irazema Rojas, Chief of Technical Services, El Paso Water

TEXAS SECTION – AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

WILLIAM T. “DOC” BALLARD AWARD

William T. “Doc” Ballard was one of those people who not only was the consummate professional in his work, but also a mentor to many, and a friend to all. As a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin in 1946, and later with a Masters in Engineering from Georgia Tech, “Doc” began his career as a professional engineer with the State Public Health Department. He was assigned to the Tyler District Office and remained in Tyler working for the Department of Health, and later with LaGlonia Oil and Gas. He returned to the Department of Health as regional engineer of the Tyler office until his retirement in 1987. “Doc” was a consultant in water and wastewater treatment until his death in November 1999.

Many knew “Doc” from his work with utilities, his many scholarly and practical writings published in a variety of professional publications and his active role with organizations such as AWWA, WEF, WEAT and TWUA. And, he was a Texas Section AWWA Fuller Award Winner in 1991. For all that “Doc” did, those who knew him best remember

him for what he did for others. As a public health professional, he remained committed throughout his long and productive career to helping us in the water profession do our jobs better and more effectively. And, “Doc” did it with a personal touch that made him a great mentor, teacher and welcome friend.

In 1999, the Texas Section AWWA created the W. T. “Doc” Ballard Award to recognize those Texas Section members who have distinguished themselves in our profession by using their personal influence to shape the course of change in our profession by helping utilities and individuals serve the profession better.

This award is not presented every year and only to those whose selfless contributions to the industry, beyond all others, deserves recognition.

The recipient of this award is kept secret until announced publicly.

There is no recipient this year.

TEXAS SECTION – AWWA WILLIAM T. “DOC” BALLARD AWARD WINNERS

2000	Glen Doty*	2009	Kay Kutchins*	2017	Jack Schulze
2001	C.K. Foster*	2012	Ronny Hyde	2018	Steve Walden
2002	Charlotte Voelker	2014	Thomas Taylor	2019	Katie McCain
2003	Henry Graeser*	2015	Charlie Maddox	2020	Glenda Dunn
2004	John Kubala*	2016	Charlie Anderson		

** Deceased*

Professional Ethics Workshop For Engineers
Thursday, April 13, 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

GEORGE WARREN FULLER AWARD

One of the most prestigious awards in the water profession is the George Warren Fuller Award for distinguished service to the water supply field in “commemoration of the sound engineering skill, the brilliant diplomatic talent and the constructive leadership, which characterized the life of George Warren Fuller.”

Because of the Texas Section’s growth, AWWA granted it an additional director to represent the section on the AWWA board. This means the section is able to award two Fuller Awards each year, should more than one suitable candidate meet the high standards of the award.

This year’s award recipients are selected by previous Fuller Award winners, and kept a tightly guarded

secret until the Texas Water Luncheon. In a unique ceremonial process, all Fuller Award Winners in attendance are called to assemble in the front of the room. The group then begins searching the room for the person known only to the committee members as this year’s Fuller awardee.

Slowly, as a brief highlight of this year’s awardee is read, the group converges on this year’s winner’s location in the room. As the group converges, the detail in the awardee’s career highlights will become more and more specific.

See if you realize at the last moment who the awardees are for the Texas Section American Water Works Association 2022 Fuller Awards.

TEXAS SECTION – AWWA GEORGE WARREN FULLER AWARD WINNERS

1972	Robert P. Van Dyke*	1991	W. T. “Doc” Ballard*	2011	Mary L. Gugliuzza
1973	Haskell R. Street*	1992	Lee. C. Bradley, Jr.	2012	Richard Talley
1974	Richard G. Toler*	1994	F. Warren Norris	2013	Daniel Nix
1975	David R. Smallhorst*	1995	Katie McCain	2014	Donna Howe
1976	John H. Stacha*	1996	Jack A. Renfro	2015	Ron Tamada
1977	J. L. Robinson*	1997	Randy J. Goss	2016	Dave Scholler
1978	John T. Hickerson*	1998	Ronny Hyde	2017	Christianne Castleberry
1979	Otis Goldman*	1999	Steve Walden	2018	Jennifer Elms
1980	George O. Muller	2000	Carole Baker	2019	Shay Roalston
1981	Charles K. Foster*	2001	Mark Lowry	2020	Brent Locke
1982	Glen Doty*	2002	Bill Riley	2020	Wayne Owen
1983	John Kubala*	2003	Gary Smith	2021	Bruce Curtis
1984	Phil Kosub*	2004	Jeannie Wiginton	2021	Elston Johnson
1985	James H. Bailey*	2005	Charles Anderson	2022	Sally Mills-Wright
1986	Thomas D. Tiner	2006	Glenda Dunn	2022	Melissa Bryant
1987	Michael K. Tubbs	2007	Bill Smith		
1988	Michael Meadows	2008	Dean Sharp		
1989	Kay Kutchins*	2009	Mike Howe		
1990	Dennis L. Allen	2010	Charles Maddox		

* *Deceased*

For a complete description on the career of George Warren Fuller, read the following pages.

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

GEORGE WARREN FULLER AWARD

“Little can be said about George Warren Fuller without recalling a thousand and one connections which he has had with sanitary engineering practice in this country and abroad. Amazingly active mentally, he always catalyzed those individuals who were fortunate enough to work with him. An enthusiasm tempered by seasoned judgment and reinforced by a remarkable technical knowledge, accounting for the fact that his name is identified with almost every important sanitary advance in this country in the last four decades. Many, however, are born at the right time who are either ill equipped or are lacking in sufficient vision to make the most of that good fortune. In Mr. Fuller’s case, heredity and environmental influence, coupled with remarkable energy, all contributed to the development of a practitioner of outstanding stature. He will be remembered long in the future, as much for his distinctive personal characteristics as for his long list of contributions to sanitary science and practice.” So wrote Abel Wolman editorially in *Municipal Sanitation* after Fuller’s death on June 15, 1934.

George Warren Fuller was born in Franklin, Massachusetts, December 21, 1868, on the farm which was part of the land acquired by the family during the Revolutionary period. Three or four Fullers came to Massachusetts from England before the middle of the Seventeenth Century. The one with whom we are concerned was Ensign Thomas Fuller, who, in 1642, by vote of the people of Dedham, was “admitted” - a prerequisite to citizenship at that time - to the purchase of Martin Phillips’ lot. He seems to have been a capable and versatile man. He was a surveyor for several years after 1660 and selectman for fourteen years; he repeatedly represented the community at the general court, was co-trustee of money bequeathed for the establishment of a Latin school and laid out the road to Cambridge as well as many minor ones. He kept the town’s ammunition, for which he was paid ten shillings a year, but had considerable trouble in collecting the fee, and at one time remitted part of it in order to obtain settlement. In the succeeding line, down through Grandfather Asa Fuller, who was a Minute Man, there continues to be activity of a civic nature—service as selectmen, court representatives, and the like.

George Warren Fuller was at the head of his class when he attended the Dedham schools. His scholarship was,

of course, a source of great satisfaction to his mother. At sixteen he passed the examination for entrance at MIT but, his father having died a few weeks before, it was thought best for him to have a fourth year in high school, after which he was graduated at the head of his class and with the highest marks given up to that time. At MIT he met and came under the influence of such people as William T. Sedgwick, Ellen H. Richards, and Hiram F. Mills, all enthusiastically interested in the new science of public health.

Their influence was felt throughout his life. Following his graduation, he spent a year at the University of Berlin and in the office of Piefke, engineer of the Berlin water works. On his return to Massachusetts, the state board of health employed him for some five years, during the latter part of the period being in charge of the Lawrence Experiment Station where he extended the experimental work and studies started by another famous chemist and engineer, Allen Hazen. The Lawrence Experiment Station was then recognized as leading in research on the purification of water supplies and treatment of sewage in this country. Fuller’s brilliant achievements in this field attracted such attention to his ability that he was selected in 1895 to take charge of the experiments at Louisville, Kentucky, in the use of rapid filtration. Immediately after he had accomplished this work, he was offered a similar engagement in Cincinnati, Ohio. These experiments served to remove the questions, which had been raised about the adequacy of rapid filtration compared with slow sand filtration for these municipalities, and, at the same time, established the value of mechanical filtration where conditions were such as to warrant its use.

During his 34 years of practice as a consulting engineer, following the opening of his New York office and, later, the opening of branch offices in Kansas City, Missouri; Toledo, Ohio; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Fuller advised more than 150 cities, commissions, and corporations on their water supply and sewerage problems. The outstanding engagements, including among others: Washington, D.C.; New Orleans, Louisiana; St. Louis, Missouri; Indianapolis, Indiana; Kansas City, Missouri; Memphis, Tennessee; Wilmington, Delaware; New Haven, Connecticut; Lexington, Kentucky; Minneapolis and St. Paul,

(Continued)

Minnesota; Montreal, Quebec; the Shanghai, China, Water Company; the International Joint Commission (Canada and United States boundary waters); the New Jersey Water Policy Commission; the North Jersey District Water Supply Commission; the Hackensack Valley Sewerage Commission; and the Metropolitan Sewerage Commission of Rhode Island. For many of these engagements, his service included full control over all engineering work involved in the preparation of plans and contracts, as well as the actual construction.

Notwithstanding a busy life in active practice, Fuller gave freely of his time and energy to the advancement of his chosen profession through participation in the activities of technical societies, through contributions to the engineering press, and through educational activities. His record in this respect is outstanding. He was a member of the American Water Works Association (president); the American Public Health Association (president); the Engineering Foundation (chair); the American Society of Civil Engineers (vice-president); the American Institute of Consulting Engineers; the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; the Institution of Civil Engineers of Great Britain; the American Chemical Society; the American Society of Bacteriologists; the Engineering Institute of Canada; the Vereines Duetscher Ingenieure; the Association Generale des Hygienistes et Techniciens Municipaux of France; and the Franklin Institute.

Perhaps the most significant of Fuller's characteristics was his belief in organization and his devotion to standardization.

In 1920, at the Montreal Convention of the AWWA, Fuller negotiated the organization of a committee to codify and standardize water works practice. The Association before that time had developed a few specification Documents, but its relation to the preparation of those Documents was that of cooperative participation rather than leadership. The group under his leadership and chairmanship was first called the Standardization Council, later the Committee on Water Works Practice. He continued to be a dominant influence in the AWWA during the time its constitution and bylaws were being substantially revised.

At the New York Convention of the AWWA early in June 1934 (only a week before his death), Fuller was in constant attendance, participating in the sessions and continuing even then his stimulation of the activities of the association and its elected leaders.

With the AWWA, APHA, ASCE and FSWA alone,

more than 45,000 professional and technical men in North America are indebted to Fuller for the guidance of their organizational readjustments in the 1920-30 period, which made possible the standing that these associations have today.

George Warren Fuller was first of all a capable engineer, equipped with a mind that never closed a channel to new ideas. He was an inventive technician—first in the laboratory field, later in engineering and design. He was a skilled negotiator; a public relations counsel who never called himself one, but who by such skill persuaded reluctant city officials that they were very wise and right to authorize sanitary improvements. He was a loyal citizen who found himself able and willing to render service to his country during World War I. He was uncannily able to give ear to the ideas and aspirations of younger men in the field and to inspire in them some measure of the spirit of leadership that he possessed. He believed in the organization and assembly of technical and professional men and devoted himself fully to the advancement of their associations and societies to the end that they serve better through planned action and cooperation.

Fitting indeed were the words of M. N. Baker, in his editorial tribute in the Engineering News Record:

History will be better able than we are to appraise the contributions of George W. Fuller to the art of water purification, but history will not be so well able to appraise Mr. Fuller's personal qualities of understanding, kindness, sound judgment and tact as are we who have been fortunate enough to have frequent contact with him in our daily work. Here also should be recorded an acknowledgment of the debt the profession owes to Mr. Fuller, especially his chosen branch of the profession, for his liberal contributions of time and energy to its professional societies. It can be said without fear of contradiction that it was chiefly through his efforts that the American Water Works Association has been raised from the level of a social group to its present high standing as a technical organization. Mr. Fuller's passing also serves to re-emphasize the youthfulness of sanitary engineering and the fundamental nature of the contributions made by a generation of notable men, now largely departed—work that centered around the Lawrence experiments and laid the foundation for present design methods and practices of water filtration. Fuller's achievements and those of others of his generation are a legacy to be used by the present generation to carry the art forward to greater perfection.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

EMERGING LEADER AWARD

...recognizes a young WEAT member who has provided outstanding service in support of WEAT.

Eric Kong

Eric Kong is a project engineer with Freese and Nichols, Inc. in San Antonio, with over five years of experience in the design and construction of water and wastewater treatment processes. A native of San Antonio, Kong attended Churchill High School and earned a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University in 2016. He completed his Master of Science in Environmental Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin in 2021. Kong is an Envision Sustainability Professional and earned his professional engineering license in 2022.

An active member of WEAT and other professional organizations, Kong is the San Antonio Section WEAT Young Professional Representative. He plans and attends many YP activities, including organizing a local YP summer volleyball tournament.

Kong led the Young Professional Fall Forum Seminar, served in a leadership role for the Project Management Seminar, and recently volunteered at the Girls Inc. Rokit Science Festival. He has been

an active and engaged member of WEAT since joining, and has presented at Texas Water 2022 and WEAT section meetings.

Kong is enthusiastic about promoting WEAT with young professionals and excels at creating a sense of community. He always encourages new hires to join WEAT and enjoy the positive impacts of membership on their professional and social lives. He does this while maintaining a full design workload and striving to become a technical expert in his field. He eagerly takes on new assignments and follows through, proving to be a great role model to other young professionals.

Kong leads by example, demonstrating his passion for the industry by presenting at conferences and participating in local educational outreach. He has a thirst for knowledge and is passionate about the clean water sector and giving back to his community. For his outstanding leadership and organization at the local and state level, Kong is a worthy recipient of WEAT’s Emerging Leader Award for 2023.

**WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS
EMERGING LEADER AWARD WINNERS**

2002	Michael F. Bloom	2009	Tarlton “Trooper” Smith	2017	Matt Jalbert
2002	Rebecca Patterson Guthrie	2010	Meera Victor	2018	Lance Rothe
2003	Dennis Laskowski	2011	Jeff Sober	2019	Kristin O’Neill
2004	Heather Harris	2012	Erin Flanagan	2020	Allison Blake
2005	Randy Lee Bush	2013	Josh Marazzini	2021	Nyla Langford
2006	Jennafer “Jenna” Piper Covington	2014	Jason Crawley	2022	Heather Wootton
2007	Jennifer “Jennie” T. Almerico	2015	Lindsay Kovar		
2008	Naomi Azulai	2016	Brigit Buff		

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

EXEMPLARY EMPLOYER AWARD

.....recognizing a Texas employer who has exhibited companywide support of and involvement in WEAT and WEF activities, has rendered financial assistance toward employee memberships in WEAT and WEF, has encouraged employee participation in WEAT and WEF activities, and has encouraged technical and professional growth among its employees through participation in WEAT and WEF meetings, seminars, conferences, and publications.

San Jacinto River Authority

The San Jacinto River Authority is one of 10 major river authorities in Texas, with jurisdiction over most of the San Jacinto River watershed. Their mission is to “develop, conserve, and protect the water resources of the San Jacinto River basin.” SJRA manages multiple reservoirs, water supply, groundwater conservation, and flood control operations across southeast Texas and provides drinking and wastewater services to over 100,000 residents of The Woodlands.

SJRA places great importance on hiring and developing staff with technical and leadership abilities. This includes encouraging staff to author or co-author technical articles and presentations for industry-related associations, including the Water Environment Association of Texas. In addition, SJRA encourages their staff to actively participate in WEAT by attending section meetings, YP summits, and presenting at events like Texas Water. SJRA has about 20 staff who are members of WEAT.

As an avid supporter of technical and professional growth among its employees, SJRA actively encourages participation in professional associations such as WEAT. SJRA’s policy is to

cover costs of membership and participation in association events for their employees. They have hosted WEAT events at their offices, including local section meetings and the statewide Leadership Summit; in addition, they are a sponsor of WEAT’s Clog Alert campaign, and Apprenticeship Program.

Not only does SJRA encourage participation in WEAT for their technical and operational staff, but SJRA also urges those within the administrative and support departments to attend and participate. SJRA’s Public Communications (PC) Department is one of the many administrative and support departments at SJRA participating in industry events. SJRA’s PC Department has won two Watermark Awards thus far at Texas Water™, one for SJRA’s Know Your Watershed educational campaign and the other for SJRA’s Lake Conroe Mini-series.

They encourage staff to participate in WEAT and actively support their involvement through funding and other resources. For SJRA’s utility-wide commitment to employee growth within WEAT and WEF, we are proud to give them the 2023 Exemplary Employer Award.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

DENNIS R. LASKOWSKI RECRUITMENT AWARD

...recognizes members of WEAT for their outstanding recruitment efforts in the past year.

Fort Worth Water

Special thanks to the City of Fort Worth for becoming WEAT's newest utility member!

Special thanks to Shannon Dunne, assistant director – plant operations, Laura Wilson, P.E., deputy director – infrastructure, Shane Zondor, workforce initiatives manager, Tim Allen, water systems superintendent – electrical/

instrumentation, Kenny Wilson, water systems superintendent – maintenance, and Migdalia Jackson, water systems superintendent – VCWRF.

These individuals were instrumental in bringing the myriad benefits of WEAT membership to hundreds of their colleagues.

WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

...recognizes an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the water environment profession, to the Federation and its Member Associations.

Matthew Jalbert, P.E.

Matthew Jalbert is the executive manager of the Northern Region for the Trinity River Authority of Texas (TRA). He received his Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University in 2006 and his Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering in 2012 from the University of Texas at Arlington.

Jalbert worked with three engineering firms prior to 2015, when he was hired as engineering manager at TRA's Central Regional Wastewater System. In April 2019, he moved to the Planning, Design, and Construction Administration group for TRA, where he served as the manager of Engineering Services until 2022.

Jalbert has a longtime involvement with WEAT's North Texas Section. He received the WEAT-North Texas Section scholarship, which helped him through his undergraduate career at Texas

A&M and helped pave his way into the clean water sector. He served as the chair and co-chair of the North Texas Section Scholarship Committee from 2007 until 2014. From 2015 to 2017, he served as the vice-president, president-elect, and North Texas Section president. An active member in the Water Environment Federation Disinfection Committee, he has also participated in the Water Environment & Reuse Foundation Leader Innovation Forum for Technology group.

He holds his professional engineering license in the State of Texas as well as a TCEQ Class B Wastewater Operator license and was the winner of WEAT's 2017 Emerging Leader Award. At the state level, he has served as treasurer, vice-president, and president-elect. For his service as WEAT President for 2022-2023, he is the winner of the 2023 Outstanding Service Award.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AWARD

...recognizes individual(s) advancing workforce development programs in Texas that effectively attract, train and /or retain water sector workers.

Taylor Huynh

Taylor Huynh is an executive administrative services manager with the Trinity River Authority. A senior certified professional in human resources, Taylor has a B.S. in Management of Information Systems from the University of Texas at Arlington and has served with the TRA for 23 years, five of them in her current position.

Prior to joining TRA, Huynh served as a case liaison with the Texas Rehabilitation Commission and as an investment partner of an employment agency serving Tarrant and Dallas counties. She began working for TRA in January 2000 as a personnel services manager and advanced to human resources manager in 2013.

She has held leadership positions as an executive committee member of the United Way of Tarrant County Impact Council for funding and grants, Parent Teacher Association, and Uplift Education volunteer. She is an active supporter of United Way and local partner agencies and serves as campaign manager for TRA's annual fundraising events.

Huynh is an active member of the National Society of Human Resource Management, the Fort Worth Human Resources Management Association, the Water Environment Association of Texas, the Water Environment Federation, and the International Association of Human Resource Information Management.

A workforce champion in the clean water sector for many years, Huynh was critical to TRA hiring the very first operator apprentices within the State of Texas. Her vision, passion, and foresight were essential to developing the apprenticeship program within TRA. These apprentices are blazing a trail, helping to establish a program that is expected to make a significant impact on the workforce challenges confronting utilities across Texas.

Taylor was an early and ardent supporter of the WEAT Apprenticeship program. Her time and input were critical in crafting a program that addressed the complexities of our industry's workforce challenges.

She also empowered her staff to be involved in the development and implementation of the program and was generous in offering TRA facilities and resources to help support the work. Her voice as a utility leader helped open doors, broadening the program's scope and impact and bringing other utilities into the discussion.

We are privileged to have many wonderful people working hard for workforce development in our state. Huynh is one of those true workforce champions and is deservedly recognized with WEAT's 2023 Workforce Development Award.

WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION

LABORATORY ANALYST EXCELLENCE AWARD

...recognizes an individual for outstanding performance, professionalism and contributions to the water quality analysis profession.

Jason Turner

Jason Turner is a laboratory analyst at the Trinity River Authority Central Regional Wastewater System Laboratory. Since joining TRA in January 2019, he has become a dynamic and irreplaceable asset to the utility. He was previously employed with the City of Flower Mound, where he obtained a Class C Water Distribution Operators license.

He is currently studying for a wastewater operator's license, including recently completed courses in Basic Wastewater Operations, Wastewater Laboratory, and Activated Sludge.

As a TRA Safety Committee member, he has organized and participated in multiple plant-wide improvement projects and employee events. In 2022, he spearheaded a lab-wide push to update the chemical inventory information as well as digitize safety data sheets.

His can-do attitude has made him the "Mr. Fix-It" in the CRWS laboratory. Turner will take time out of his schedule to repair broken or malfunctioning equipment throughout the laboratory. There are occasions when an equipment repair requires

more time and attention. In these cases, he often works on the equipment outside work hours or even take the equipment home with him over the weekend for repair. His uncanny mechanical skills are renowned at the TRA CRWS facility, and he is often sought out by personnel from other departments.

Turner is always conscious of the meaning of laboratory data with respect to plant operations. He is known to reach out to operators when he observes sample consistencies that are outside of the norm. One documented example occurred when Turner observed that a specific sample site appeared "thinner than normal." After he informed liquids operation personnel of his observation, an investigation resulted in the discovery that there was an issue with the Final Clarifier bridges.

His dedication to constant improvement has made him essential to the CRWS Lab and the entire facility. In the words of his colleagues, Turner is the "perfect" choice for awards recognition. He is a model clean water professional, and we are honored to recognize that excellence with the 2023 WEAT Laboratory Analyst Excellence Award.

*Congratulations
to all our winners!*

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS
INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT
OF THE YEAR AWARD

...acknowledges an industrial waste treatment plant in Texas that has consistently exhibited outstanding performance of daily activities beyond the normal call of duty.

Odessa Wastewater Treatment Facility
Gulf Coast Authority

The Gulf Coast Authority (GCA) Odessa Wastewater Treatment Facility is a regional treatment facility that treats the waste from one municipality, multiple industrial plants via pipeline, and trucked-in waste, including the septic tank and portable toilet wastes. The facility holds an industrial wastewater permit from the TCEQ and has compiled an outstanding environmental compliance and safety record while providing reliable service to the City of Odessa and the local industry.

The average flow into the Odessa facility is approximately 3 MGD. Influent enters the headworks and goes through grinder pumps. Secondary treatment consists of an activated sludge treatment system with sludge recycling and clarification. Five biological treatment basins are equipped with submerged aeration. After the aeration basins, wastewater enters the clarifiers, where the solids are recovered and, if needed, clarified effluent goes to the sand filters. The sand filters provide additional effluent polishing to remove solids. Chemical disinfection is achieved using bleach. After dechlorination using sodium bisulfite, the effluent is discharged to Monahans Draw.

A portion of the treatment effluent is permitted for industrial reuse. The reuse water is chemically treated to meet reuse requirements, and blue dye is added to stabilize the effluent quality. Waste-

activated sludge is treated in an aerobic digester, conditioned with polymer, and dewatered using a belt filter press. The filter cake is loaded into trucks via a conveyor belt system and hauled to a permitted landfill. The belt press cake is routinely tested to confirm the solid waste classification of the dewatered solids.

The facility has a robust safety program and has achieved an outstanding safety record with no recordable incidents in the past two years. GCA has a formal written safety program, including incident reporting, lockout/tagout, confined space entry, and hot work permitting. GCA was recently awarded Texas Conservation Association Risk Management Fund recognition for liability performance.

The facility staff consists of operations, maintenance, and administration personnel. One operator holds a current wastewater operator license from the TCEQ. Additional staff are trained in operations and maintenance activities, including training courses through the TCEQ. The facility is on track to complete five years without a wastewater permit violation making the facility eligible for a National Association of Clean Water Agencies Peak Performance Platinum Award.

Given the complex wastewater treated and the unique operating conditions, the Odessa Wastewater Treatment Facility is a model for industrial wastewater treatment.

WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION

GEORGE W. BURKE, JR. AWARD

...recognizes municipal and industrial wastewater facilities for active and effective safety programs.

**40-Acre Wastewater Treatment Facility
Gulf Coast Water Authority**

The Gulf Coast Authority 40-Acre Wastewater Treatment Facility is a regional collection and treatment facility that treats the waste from multiple industrial plants delivered via pipeline. This facility employs an activated sludge process and chemical addition as needed. The average flow is approximately 7 MGD. The facility has 13 operations, maintenance, and administrative staff.

The facility is in Texas City, Texas, and provides treatment for multiple industrial dischargers, along with stormwater. The first treatment basin at the facility is the oxygen-activated sludge treatment system (OAS), a lined, 20-foot-deep aeration basin with a capacity of 10 million gallons.

The facility uses a variety of different flow patterns as needed to meet treatment objectives. This operating philosophy allows the facility to balance different flow splits to maximize efficiency in response to variations in loading or to conduct maintenance activities while meeting TPDES permit limits in all operating configurations. Microorganisms from the OAS are separated (settled) from the mixed liquor within two limited aeration basins.

Settled solids are moved to adjacent land farm, while the mixed liquor moves through a series of polishing facultative basins and is adjusted for pH and disinfected prior to discharge as effluent into Hurricane Canal.

The facility has a robust safety program and achieved an exemplary safety record of zero recordable or reportable safety incidents in years 2017 through 2022. In fact, the facility has not had a recordable or reportable incident since February 2016. The safety program uses life-critical programs such as lockout/tagout, hot work permitting, and confined space entry. Also, GCA has a mobile crane program to manage lifts safely.

GCA uses incident reporting, including near misses for safety and environmental incidents. These reports are treated as learning and improvement opportunities. Staff is trained in facility safety procedures and topics through an ongoing training program that includes internal and external training sources such as the Houston Area Safety Council. Staff that conduct industrial pretreatment sampling and maintain sampling stations are trained in the safety procedures for their respective industrial dischargers.

Safety performance requires the commitment not just of leadership and management but of the entire staff. The 40-Acre Facility staff is committed to the idea of working in a way that everyone goes home the same way they arrived. The GCA 40-Acre Facility is the fitting winner of WEF's 2023 George W. Burke Award for its outstanding incident record and an organization-wide commitment to safety.

Water for People Silent Auction

Use the Handbid app.

Bidding ends at 1:15 p.m. Thursday

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

RONALD B. SIEGER BIOSOLIDS MANAGEMENT AWARD

...recognizes a WEAT member(s), an engineering firm, a specific project, a municipality, or a specific municipal or industrial facility that has made significant accomplishments in the field of biosolids technology and management practices within the boundaries of the State of Texas.

Village Creek Water Reclamation Facility Biosolids Management and Beneficial Reuse Project

Village Creek Water Reclamation Facility is a 166 MGD plant that serves 1.2 million people in Fort Worth and 23 other communities. It is the City of Fort Worth's only biosolids facility and one of the premier facilities of its kind in North Texas. The recently completed Biosolids Management and Beneficial Reuse Project is a game-changing upgrade to the plant with long-term benefits.

The project replaced the belt filter presses/lime stabilization process with a centrifuge dewatering and drum drying process. This process has elevated the Village Creek WRF biosolids from a Class "AB" standing to a Class "A" pelletized biosolids product.

The new single-train Andritz Drum Drying System provided for the project is the world's largest rotary drum dryer in a biosolids application. It includes a Condensate Water Recycling System, in which processed water and condensate from the condenser is recirculated in a closed-loop system, reducing the condenser process water demand by about 50 percent. The water recycling system saves about 792,000 gallons per day and is the first to be implemented on a drum system of its kind.

Additionally, a pioneering onsite nitrogen generation system is used to pneumatically convey the pellets from the drum drying system to the storage silos with nitrogen gas, a safety measure that reduces the risk of fire or explosion.

The end product pellets have multiple market outlets, are environmentally safe and 100 percent beneficially reused. The product is appealing to a wide variety of users due to its nutrient content, low odor, low dust, durability, uniformity, and size.

The dried pellets are less than 10 percent water, and as a result, the volume of biosolids being trucked from the Village Creek WRF has reduced from an average of 22 trucks per day to 6 trucks per day.

The city's operating costs for biosolids management have reduced from an average of \$410 per dry ton before the project to \$310 per dry ton after the project, representing about a 25% reduction in operating costs. The accelerated 30-month design-build schedule brought the facility online 18 months sooner than the traditional design-bid-build delivery approach resulting in roughly \$4 million in savings in operating costs.

The City of Fort Worth is committed to promoting the beneficial and sustainable use of biosolids while using cost-effective and environmentally acceptable management practices.

Village Creek WRF is a testament to that commitment, and is the recipient of WEAT's 2023 Ron B. Sieger Award for Biosolids Management.

WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION
WILLIAM D. HATFIELD AWARD

...recognizes an operator of wastewater treatment plants for outstanding performance and professionalism.

Dow J. “Jody” Zabolio, P.E.

Jody Zabolio is the director of operations and water resources for Upper Trinity Regional Water District (UTRWD). He is responsible for managing the operations of four water reclamation plants and two drinking water plants, which serve customer cities and utilities throughout Denton County and parts of the surrounding area.

He has 34 years of experience in the clean water sector, is a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of Texas, and holds Class A Wastewater and Water Treatment Operators Licenses. He received his Bachelor’s and Master of Science degrees in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University.

As director of operations, Zabolio works with state and federal agencies to ensure regulatory compliance. He is also involved in long-term strategic planning, design, and construction of new facilities, water supply management, customer support, and contracts.

He meets with plant managers and superintendents weekly, visits each plant rotating to understand any issues, and supports operations and maintenance staff.

Zabolio’s involvement with WEAT and WEF goes back to the early 1990s when he began assisting with the production and distribution of the local North Texas Section newsletter. He chaired numerous committees at the local level, including the February Seminar, and Stockholm Junior

Water Prize, and served on the section board as secretary, vice-president, president-elect, and president.

Zabolio considers the highlight of his presidency the creation of the Daryl Hall Memorial Scholarship, which offers opportunities for career advancement to operators and maintenance personnel in our sector.

At the state level, Zabolio served as a member of the Long-Range Planning Committee and chaired the Utility Management, Strategic Planning, and Student Chapters Committees.

He served as Secretary, Vice-President, President-Elect, and WEAT President from 2010-2011. Jody was a WEF Delegate following his Presidency, and was active on two committees in the WEF House of Delegates. He has also participated in the WEF Leadership Training and WEFMAX meetings.

Zabolio’s service at the local, state and national levels of WEAT & WEF are a shining example of dedication and leadership. That this volunteer leadership has dovetailed with professional growth is a testament to his ability and reputation in the clean water sector.

WEAT and UTRWD’s success is dependent on outstanding professionals like him doing their best every day, and he is a deserving winner of the 2023 William D. Hatfield Award.

(Continued)

**WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS
WILLIAM D. HATFIELD AWARD WINNERS**

1958	A. L. Allison	1982	W. W. Right	2003	Meg Conner
1959	W.N. Wells	1983	Basil S. Housewright, Jr.	2005	Michael A. Young
1961	Haskell R. Street	1984	Robert T. McMillon	2006	John Bennett
1962	Cecil H. Williams	1985	Kenneth R. Jackson	2007	Edmund R. Mach
1963	Mansel Smith	1986	Joe G. Taylor	2008	Orren West
1965	James D. Goff	1987	Donald D. Spurrier	2009	Gurdip S. Hyare
1967	J. Les Robinson	1988	Wesley N. MacKenzie	2010	Clifford W. Beaver
1968	Robert E. Derrington	1989	Lynn Norton	2011	Frederick R. Moore
1969	Leo Wood	1990	Curtis L. Smalley	2012	Gary LaGassey
1970	C.H. Schere	1991	Teresa Battenfield	2013	Larry Rowe
1971	W. E. Gibson	1992	William T. Manning	2014	Jerry Pressley
1972	Albert Breaux	1993	Gary W. Burton	2015	Tim Morgan
1973	S.A. Webb	1994	Olga Rodriquez	2016	Ben Hodges
1974	George H. Powell	1995	Enrique Woo	2017	Sterling Lee
1975	Foster Crowell	1996	David Mask	2018	Clifford Creeks
1976	Joe P. Teller	1997	Oscar Guerrero	2019	Lance Philips
1977	M. Truett Garrett, Jr.	1998	Alfonso Carmona	2020	Rey Davila
1978	Charles Ganze	1999	Stephen Hodge	2021	Dynnie Mitchell
1979	M. Dolan McKnight	2000	David Hackley	2022	LaTia Jutan
1980	Martin J. Manning	2001	Robert A. Rowell		
1981	Octavio A. Ramirez	2002	William Lewis (Bill) Tatum		

**WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS
DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION AWARD**

...recognizes the people and organizations behind DE&I approaches and programs in the Texas water sector.

Charmaine Jackson

Charmaine Jackson is the director of diversity, equity and inclusion, communications, and community affairs for SouthWest Water Company.

In this position, she works with employees at all levels to develop and implement innovative strategies and processes to advance organizational change, foster a positive and inclusive work environment, and ensure that diversity, equity,

and inclusion considerations are incorporated into SouthWest Water's work with their service communities.

Jackson is a seminal thought leader with 20 years of experience building a culture where differences are valued and recognized as a positive influence on our nation's workforce. Throughout her career, she has sought to question, reimagine, and

(Continued)

redesign systems and practices to ensure inclusion and equitable access.

Jackson is a San Jose State University graduate and holds a DEI certification from Cornell University. She cultivated her expertise in positions such as senior director, diversity initiatives at InGenesis; manager of corporate community outreach and inclusive business initiatives at San Jose Water Company; and senior diversity manager at Pacific Gas & Electric. In these roles, she led stakeholder training and internal and external communications.

Her commitment to excellence garnered her the Outstanding Service Award from the California Water Association. She has received recognition from the Northern California Supplier Development Council and the Diversity Professional Magazine.

For her consistent support of DE&I initiatives across the clean water sector and her immense impact in her current position at SouthWest Water, Jackson is the recipient of WEAT's 2023 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION AWARD

...recognizes the people and organizations behind DEI approaches in the water sector in Texas.

Arlington Water Utilities

Arlington Water Utilities provides safe, high-quality drinking water to Arlington's more than 394,000 residents, 14.5 million yearly visitors, and thousands of people served by the department's wholesale water customers in Tarrant County. Arlington operates two water treatment plants with a combined daily production capacity of 172.5 million gallons per day. The department is responsible for maintaining and operating more than 1,250 miles of sanitary sewer main and more than 1,460 miles of water main. The department has 205 employees throughout seven divisions.

AWU is a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, focusing on providing equitable access to opportunities in the water industry.

AWU demonstrates this commitment by extending its own customer financial aid programs in concert with local nonprofits that have proven track records of meeting the needs of a diverse

population. An example is the Minor Plumbing Repair Assistance Program, which provides plumbing repairs to low-income homeowners, uses two MWBE contractors.

AWU has also initiated a successful department-wide internship program, in partnership with Tarrant County nonprofit ACH Child and Family Services and Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County. The program addresses the workforce development needs of young people aging out of foster care and adults from traditionally underrepresented groups in our workforce. A total of 41 interns have been placed in this program since 2020.

Arlington Water Utilities is a leader in implementing DE&I programs both within their workforce and in their community, at large. We are proud to recognize their leadership with the 2023 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award.

WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION

LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

...recognizes individuals who have been a member of WEF for 35 or more consecutive years, and are of the age 65 or older.

David Allen	Scott Hawkins	Nasser Oshkoohi
Patricia M. Cleveland	Henry J. Hervol	Gordon Pederson
William Cyrus	William Bart Hines	Dave Reed
James H. Forbes, Jr.	Ahmed Kadry	Robert J. Russell
David Gudal	John Knight	Gary M. Smith
Rhonda Elaine Harris	James Miertschin	Subra Srinanthakumar

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC OFFICIAL AWARD

...recognizes an elected official or regulator who actively promotes sound science in environmental policy and regulations.

Stan Kitzman

State Representative, District 85

Hailing from Pattison in Waller County, Stan Kitzman is currently serving his first term as the State Representative for Texas House District 85. With territory along the famous Brazos, San Bernard, and Colorado rivers, HD 85 covers a large portion of the original Austin's Colony, including the colonial capital of Texas, San Felipe de Austin. The district serves Austin, Colorado, Fayette, Waller, Wharton, and a portion of Fort Bend counties. Rep. Kitzman is a sixth-generation Texan and a descendent of Stephen F. Austin's "Old Three Hundred", among the original grantees that purchased land in Mexican Texas in the early 1820s.

Retired after serving for 21 years in the Texas Army National Guard, Kitzman deployed three times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and was awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge, Bronze Star Medal, and the Texas Faithful Service Medal.

Representative Kitzman is a board member of the Texas Water Conservation Association, a past board member of the National Guard

Association of Texas, a past president of the West I-10 Chamber of Commerce, a past master of Brookshire Lodge #1066, and a past commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars – Post 4007. He was a founding member and former president of the Waller County Veterans Memorial, a former board member of Waller County Crime Stoppers, and a past president of the Waller County Sheriff's Office Training Advisory Board.

Kitzman is an Eagle Scout and a member of many organizations, including the Brookshire-Pattison Lions Club, American Legion, Texas Aggie Band Association, Texas Aggie Corps of Cadets Association, Texas A&M Association of Former Students, National Rifle Association, and Texas State Rifle Association. Representative Kitzman is a small business owner, former Waller County commissioner, and former public school teacher. He graduated from Royal High School and earned a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Systems Management from Texas A&M University, Class of 1988.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

W. WALTER CHIANG LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

...recognizes a current or past WEAT member who has demonstrated continual and tireless contributions toward the improvement of the water environment throughout a long, distinguished career in the wastewater treatment industry and in WEAT/WEF.

Gordon Wayne Pederson Jr.

Gordon Wayne Pederson Jr. is the definition of a public servant in the water and wastewater sectors. Over the course of his 33-year career at Gulf Coast Authority as superintendent of Wastewater Operation, Pederson has managed domestic and industrial treatment facilities in Houston, Texas City and Pasadena.

Pederson oversaw the acquisition of GCA's industrial facility in Odessa, Texas and development of their first water reuse facility at that location. He has also served as supervisor of the clean fleet program, security manager, telecommunications manager, and information technology manager at GCA.

Pederson is currently GCA's chief technical officer. As CTO, he oversees the technical, process, and project engineering functions of municipal wastewater operations in the Houston area, as well as the industrial wastewater operations in Odessa. This role involves directing and developing a staff of engineers and support personnel, as well as ensuring regulatory compliance.

He also manages GCA's Municipal Operations, which include a 9.25 MGD regional wastewater treatment plant that serves the City of Friendswood, Harris County MUD 55, the City of Houston, and Baybrook MUD 1. The industrial plant in Odessa is a 5.6 MGD facility that treats the waste streams from two power plants and two chemical plants, as well as trucked septic waste. The Odessa facility also provides 2 MGD of reuse water to the oil field industry.

Pederson is a past member of the U.S Composting Council, where he served as co-chair of the Standards and Practice Committee. He has served as secretary of the Texas Compost Advisory Council, as well as past president of the Texas Association of Clean Water Agencies. Currently, he is a board member of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

As a respected subject matter expert in wastewater management, Gordon is involved with several committees and work groups across Texas that focus on stream quality and wastewater operations. He previously served on a study of biosolids management at small wastewater treatment plants in the Houston area. This study was designed to assess the effects of biosolids on the receiving streams using independent samples taken by Harris County Pollution Control.

A long-time member of WEAT and WEF, Pederson helped grow GCA and mentored many young professionals in the clean water sector. Known for his stoic demeanor, he also has maintained a reputation for dependability, wit and ability to consume vast amounts of information in a short period of time. Regarded by some as GCA's historian, he has also contributed significantly to developing wastewater policy at national, state, and regional levels.

Pederson's enduring commitment to leadership, mentorship, and excellence in the clean water sector make his receipt of WEAT's Lifetime Achievement Award well warranted.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

EARNEST F. GLOYNA PILLARS OF THE PROFESSION AWARD

...recognizes an individual with a long and distinguished career in the wastewater treatment or water quality industry who has demonstrated meaningful and substantial contributions toward the improvement of the water environment and who has a positive impact on the success and growth of WEAT.

Mike Young

Mike Young defines what it means to be an excellent wastewater operator. His over 40 years of service to the clean water sector are the product of dedication, technical knowledge, passion, commitment, and servant leadership. He is both an example and embodiment of what this prestigious award represents.

Young began his career with TRA as a solids operator trainee and in five short years quickly advanced to solids operator I, II, senior solids operator and solids chief operator. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Young advanced and steadily gained hands-on knowledge of advanced treatment processes by overseeing both liquids and solids operations.

In 2020, Young was promoted to senior manager of system operation and maintenance, a position he still holds. Throughout his ascent up the ranks at TRA, Young maintained his stalwart support of Operations Challenge, including starting and overseeing the development of the TRA CReWSers Operations Challenge team, which won 23 straight state titles and seven national championships.

As a technical leader, Young helped shape and influence wastewater treatment across Texas and the United States. Examples of his influence are numerous and include ground breaking process control changes such as implementing low dissolved oxygen and ammonium-based aeration control for nutrient removal. He was also directly involved in experiments with the densification of activated sludge for intensification of infrastructure and the incorporation of thermal hydrolysis and anaerobic digestion for solids processing service.

Under Young's guidance and leadership to the TRA CReWSers Operations Challenge team, he personally opened the door of opportunity that resulted in the progression of one executive manager, four managers, six supervisors and countless advancements in responsibility for the operators and technical staff that he has guided. During his 25 years of participation in the Ops Challenge program, he helped train countless teams from across the United States, South America, and Europe.

In addition, Young served as a recruiter amongst WEAT utilities, assisting in the formation and training of four new teams in Texas alone. And with Young, often cheering the loudest and proudest during Operations Challenge competitions, is Tamie Young, his self-confessed better half, whom he first met at TRA.

At his core, Young is an educator. For the past 25 years, he has demonstrated his dedication and technical expertise by facilitating over 800 hours of advanced operator training courses. In this role, he has advanced knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the art and science of wastewater treatment among countless operators. In addition, he has co-authored 36 conference presentations and three peer-reviewed articles published in scientific journals.

Young's life's work has been dedicated to his family, employer, his staff, our sector and the environment we endeavor to protect. He has been a major influence on the careers of myriad operators, technicians and engineers. We are all better off for having the opportunity to work with, learn from and be mentored by Young. Thank you.

WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION
ARTHUR SIDNEY BEDELL AWARD

...to acknowledge extraordinary personal service to the Water Environment Association of Texas.

Jeffrey Haby, P.E.

Jeff Haby is San Antonio Water System's (SAWS) senior vice president of production & treatment operations. Haby is regarded as a mentor and friend by many both within SAWS and the larger Texas clean water community, and he is known by his peers and colleagues for a sense of humility and self-sacrifice along with a formidable intellect. He is known for sharing his gratitude and boosting morale. A natural leader with an unending dedication to both the SAWS mission of sustainable, affordable water services and the WEAT mission of protecting and enhancing the environment by providing education and awareness on the value of water.

Haby is a native son of San Antonio, with heritage in the area that dates back to the 1840s. Raised on the northwest side of the city by a working-class family, he graduated from Oliver Wendell Holmes High School in 1982. His high school years included a focus on football and academics. He was a starting member of the varsity football team for three years, enjoying tremendous academic and athletic success. He learned to be "one of the team" and set the expectations of hard work and commitment for the team. Haby graduated fifth academically out of a class of 650 students. Holmes was very socio-economically and racially diverse, which allowed Jeff to develop friendships with people from different backgrounds that persist to this day.

After high school, Haby attended Texas A&M University because of the engineering curriculum and the opportunity to play football. An injury ended his football career shortly after entering the university. Haby majored in civil engineering and participated in the Cooperative Education

Program working for ARCO Oil and Gas Company. This program allowed him to work one semester and go to school one semester, enabling him to earn money to pay for school. In May of 1987, he became the first person in his family to earn a four-year college degree.

After starting his engineering career with Burns and McDonnell and enjoying professional growth through mentorship at an excellent firm, Haby took a leave of absence to pursue a graduate degree focused on environmental engineering. He eventually found his way back to San Antonio, and eventually SAWS.

In his current role at SAWS, Haby oversees nearly 300 people that ensure the 2 million people of San Antonio have potable water and that their wastewater is treated to protect the environment. His areas of responsibility include water production and treatment, wastewater treatment and recycled water, lift station operations and maintenance, electrical maintenance and predictive maintenance. Haby also has successfully led SAWS through nearly 10-years of an EPA Consent Decree that is nearing completion.

Haby has a long history of extraordinary personal service and contributions to WEAT. As far back as 1996, he started working with other San Antonio water leaders to develop a local WEAT section so they could share ideas and network. Haby is a founding member of the San Antonio WEAT Section! Since then, he has participated at the local, state, and national levels by sharing his broad knowledge in all things water and wastewater in well over 100 presentations at conferences, seminars, and section meetings.

(Continued)

A recent accolade of Haby's was his success as WEAT's Texas Water 2022 Local Host Committee chair. With the goal of 2022 being the biggest and best Texas Water ever, he ensured that SAWS provided all the needed volunteers and support as host utility. The time and energy he committed to the conference is yet another example of his ability leading large teams in achieving lofty goals.

Haby is a WEAT Executive Board member currently serving as member-at-large and actively participates in the WEAT Section Engagement and Advanced Operator Training Committees. In his role as member-at-large, he has presented at section meetings in Laredo and McAllen, among

others. And last but not least, Haby took home ultimate bragging rights at the Texas Water™ 2022 Operations Challenge Texas Shootout competition and showed that he is still competitive and isn't afraid to roll up his sleeves and cut pipe - really really fast!

Haby personifies the Arthur Sidney Bedell award of extraordinary service. His career and service are as extraordinary as his humility. Always preferring to highlight his team over himself, WEAT is honored to have him as a member and leader, and this year's recipient of the Arthur Sidney Bedell Award.

**WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS
ARTHUR SIDNEY BEDELL AWARD WINNERS**

1949	Victor Marcus Ehlers	1980	S. A. Garza	2002	Betty Carol Mayo
1952	Winfield S. Mahlie	1981	Robert L. Nichols	2003	Mary Evans
1955	J. H. Sorrels	1982	P. D. Parks	2004	Cathy Henderson
1958	Roger Moehlman	1983	Dick Whittington	2005	Raymond R. Longoria
1959	C. H. Connell	1984	Joseph F. Malins, Jr.	2006	Jim Taafe
1961	A. C. Bryan	1985	Marshall L. Haney	2007	Carolyn Ahrens Wieland
1963	David F. Smallhorst	1986	Sharon D'Orsie	2008	Richard Eason
1964	David G. Chase	1987	Bert H. Bates, Jr.	2009	Carol Batterton
1965	John P. Wold	1988	William Goloby	2010	Brad Castleberry
1967	Albert H. Ullrich	1989	Rhonda Harris	2011	John Bennett
1968	G. R. Herzik, Jr.	1990	Earnest F. Gloyna	2012	Ronald Dale Carlson
1969	Pearl Goodwin	1991	Stephen M. Jenkins	2013	Jody Zabolio
1970	Jack E. Huppert	1992	Robert T. McMillon	2014	Dawn Anderson
1971	Sam L. Warrington	1993	Ron L. Mayo	2015	David Briggs
1972	Clayton H. Billings	1994	Paul Roach	2016	Julie Nahrgang
1973	Joe Driskell	1995	Joe King II	2017	Jenna Covington
1974	Joe P. Teller	1996	Patricia M. Cleveland	2018	Jeffrey L. Sober
1975	J. L. Robinson	1997	Foster Crowell	2019	Steve Coonan
1976	John B. Scott	1998	Raj Bhattarai	2020	David Jackson
1977	A. E. Holcomb	1999	Alan Plummer	2021	Leigh Thomas
1978	Ernest F. Cross	2000	Ron Sieger	2022	Rick Hidalgo
1979	W. S. Sam Hutton	2001	Betty Jordon		

Awards Celebration

April 13, 2023, noon

Exhibit Hall, Meter Challenge Area

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER AWARDS

Local Chapters play an essential role in the achievement of Texas Section AWWA goals and objectives. The local chapters organize a multitude of professional and social programs, conduct membership recruitment and retention drives, support technical activities striving to advance the water community, and market AWWA as “dedicated to the world’s most important resource.”

Through the annual Chapter Awards program, Texas Section AWWA has the opportunity to recognize

the valuable contributions of local chapters as they strive to enrich, educate, and enlighten the AWWA membership.

Included in the Chapter Awards program are five (5) individual categories in which awards are presented to the chapters: Chapter Communications, Community Service and Public Outreach, Chapter Educational Offerings, Fundraising, and Membership Recruitment and Retention.

CHAPTER COMMUNICATIONS

... recognizes excellence in communication through active and regular interaction with their members, and through outreach to their community.

Capital Area Chapter

The Capital Area Chapter communicated with their members through six, bi-monthly newsletters that reached over 1,000 individuals. The chapter used other tools such as LinkedIn to extend its outreach, posting monthly to advertise events, meetings, newsletters, and sponsors. In 2022, its LinkedIn following grew by 85 people and had over 8,000 organic impressions.

The Capital Area Chapter also used a young professionals (YP) homepage to introduce members to the YP group and as an avenue to get involved in events. During creation of the YP homepage, past TAWWA Capital Area Chapter newsletters were reviewed to pull events and photos dating as far back as February 2013 to

populate the time line of past events. Aside from serving as a chapter reference, having an easily accessible visual history of YP activities also serves to recognize past YP members, to provide inspiration for future events, to entice current and future YP members to get involved, and to increase visibility of our members and promote sharing of activities.

In an effort to engage its members, the Capital Area Chapter sent a survey to members requesting feedback on communication preferences and event types, locations, and timing. The survey received 57 responses and provided valuable input that the chapter plans to use for future communication and event planning.

(Continued)

Community Service and Public Outreach

... recognizes the chapter that has been an ambassador for the water industry and TAWWA in their community.

North Central Texas Chapter

The North Central Texas Chapter continued participation in the Conference for the Advancement of Science Teaching (CAST) and established a new initiative of interactive water trivia at local businesses.

North Central Texas Chapter's Education and Outreach activities included supporting the 2022 Science Teacher's Association of Texas annual CAST Conference during November 10th-12th in Dallas. Multiple TAWWA and WEAT volunteers were hit by the flu immediately before the conference, but members responded to an urgent call and volunteered last-minute to share their time and talents at the booth.

In partnership with local water conservation educators, the chapter used interactive trivia at small businesses to share the value of water at nontraditional venues where water is essential. The chapter provided "No Water No Beer" branded items, promotional support, and sponsorship.

The Education and Outreach Committee hosted two water trivia nights that included over 120 players. A step-by-step planning guide, along with access to the questions, was shared with the Texas AWWA Education Division so this model can be replicated by others. So far, the water trivia template has been downloaded and used by five other organizations.

EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

... recognizes the chapter that provided exceptional training and continuing education opportunities for members.

Southeast Chapter

The Southeast Chapter conducted or sponsored a variety of events of varying format, venue, and target audience to provide the local water community a range of options for engagement and learning.

One of their biggest events is the Half-Day Seminar, an annual symposium co-sponsored by the Southeast TAWWA Chapter and the local chapter of the Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT). This event brings together the region's water and wastewater communities, and provides a forum for networking and interaction, while also providing informative technical content. The seminar offered four continuing education credits to over 200 attendees.

The chapter held an in-person and virtual Open House to introduce the chapter and its committees to a wider community and expand membership. The goal of this event was to educate interested individuals from the water community about what the chapter does and ways to get involved through chapter committees.

The Young Professionals Committee organized several events, including a tour of the Houston Alfa Laval factory, a tour of the City of Houston's Northeast Water Purification Plant (NEWPP), and a YP Seminar that offered 2 continuing education credits.

(Continued)

FUNDRAISING

... recognizes the chapter that has effectively raised money to support the mission of TAWWA.

North Central Texas Chapter

The North Central Texas Chapter organized several successful fundraising events, including their Annual Holiday Dinner, the Drinking Water Seminar, and the Young Professional Ugly Sweater Party.

These fundraising events donated 100% of their proceeds to student scholarships or water-related charities, such as TxWARN and Water Equation.

In total, the North Central Texas Chapter raised \$5,000 for state scholarships, \$13,000 for local scholarships, and \$12,520 each for both TxWARN and Water Equation.

Additionally, annual sponsorships were at an all-time high with \$18,000 donated in support of NCT TAWWA.

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

... recognizes the chapter that led the way in membership campaigns, engaged new members, and implemented new initiatives to expand outreach.

Southeast Chapter

The Southeast Chapter held an in-person and virtual Open House to introduce the chapter and its committees to a wider community and expand membership. This event directly resulted in several new memberships and expansion of several chapter committees, most notably the Young Professionals (YP) Committee.

A second new effort by the chapter to aid in recruitment and retention was the development of

an informational flyer about the chapter to share with new and prospective members. The Southeast Chapter president noted that the strongest recruitment and retention tool that the Chapter offers is likely the quantity and quality of the events it organizes.

Through these efforts, the Southeast Chapter increased membership by 20% by adding 193 new members and 51 membership transfers.

Use #TXwater23 when posting about the conference on social media.

Texts sent to 281-317-6104 will display on the conference's social media feed.

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

WATER CONSERVATION AND REUSE AWARDS

Each year, the Texas Section AWWA Conservation and Reuse Division recognizes those who have demonstrated excellence in Water Conservation and Reuse Practices.

Medium Utility Direct

City of Sugar Land

Innovative Leak Detection Program

The City of Sugar Land took a strategic approach to managing its water resources through an Integrated Water Resources Plan (IWRP), which includes a variety of recommendations such as conducting a strategic leak detection pilot program.

Sugar Land's New Territory system has had continually high water loss since its annexation in 2017, with water loss of 17.3% in 2021. City staff sought out a strategic leak detection program that could address water loss. Satellite imagery technology through ASTERRA offered the benefits of being cost effective and non-invasive.

In spring 2022, the City of Sugar Land completed a leak detection project with ASTERRA. From the analysis, ASTERRA found 75 points of interest, and subsequent acoustic field survey found 40 leaks in 10 work days. Of the 40 leaks, 38 were subsurface and 17 were on the city-side.

City crews investigated the 17 leaks and found and repaired seven active leaks. The leak repairs have an estimated water savings of 16.92 million gallons a year.

The pilot project was successful in helping staff better understand the continued water loss control needs of the areas analyzed.

Large Utility Direct

City of Frisco

Leak Outreach Program

The City of Frisco's Public Works Department distributes approximately 12.2 billion gallons of water annually to more than 64,000 connections. As of 2022, Frisco's meter team finished upgrading the city's systems to AMI smart meters. Using the new smart meter systems, Frisco could accurately track where the 12.2 billion gallons of water were going and identify where it was being lost.

Of the 64,000 connections in the city, it was discovered that the system was flagging nearly 2,800 as showing signs of continuous flow. If even a fraction of those 2,800 reports represented leaks, millions of gallons of water were being lost each month.

During the months of September 2022 through December 2022 the City of Frisco WaterWise team piloted a new educational program focused on leaks. It identified 50 commercial and 50 residential sites showing continuous flow on their meters.

Using varying contact methods, the team reached out to the owners of all 100 sites. Through a series of educational correspondences over the phone, via e-mail, and in-person visits, 39 property owners located and repaired leaks on their property. These fixed leaks resulted in a net savings of approximately 5.3 million gallons per month.

(Continued)

Large Utility Indirect

Arlington Water Utilities Lake Arlington Native Plant and Pollinator Garden

Arlington Water Utilities and Tarrant Regional Water District broke ground in early 2022 on the Lake Arlington Native Plant and Pollinator Garden. It is located on 3 acres of city-owned land near the Lake Arlington Dam.

The garden includes 20,000 square feet of uniquely designed beds with native plants suitable for home landscapes, and a large area for group events. Each bed has its own theme to demonstrate the diversity of drought-resistant plant options – a pollinator-friendly garden, a cottage garden, a traditional garden, a rain garden, and a xeriscape garden.

Three acres of the surrounding meadow is also being converted from non-native, invasive grasses to native grasses and wildflowers. Plans are also being made for the construction of a 500 linear feet of 8 ft. wide trail that provides an immersive experience for residents visiting the Native Plant and Pollinator Garden.

The project was conceived with the following goals:

- to demonstrate water conservation by landscaping with native plants;
- create pollinator habitat to support city initiatives such as the Mayor’s Monarch Initiative;
- educate adults on sustainable landscaping with native plants; educate youth on water conservation and local plants and wildlife; and
- build collaboration with community partners to build expertise and educate the public about native plant landscapes.

With more than 100 volunteers already working at the site in 2022 and twice-monthly events throughout the year, the Lake Arlington Native Plant and Pollinator Garden is well on its way to becoming a valuable asset to the city’s water conservation education efforts.

Non-utility Indirect

Tarrant Regional Water District Save Tarrant Water Landscape Consultation Program

Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) is a raw water supplier to municipalities in Tarrant County, Texas. TRWD’s water conservation programs support its customer cities’ conservation efforts, raise public awareness, and educate on efficient practices.

In 2022, a new program was implemented with the goal of educating participants on outdoor water conservation methods and reducing outdoor water use for participants.

The Save Tarrant Water Landscape Consultation Program was developed to provide a landscape expert to visit participants’ home landscapes to offer specialized advice and influence them to use less water by educating them on water conservation practices.

During the first year, 126 free landscape consultations were provided to Tarrant County residents and program outcomes were gauged by surveying the participants before and after their consultations to indicate participant satisfaction and achievement of conservation education and water-saving goals. Survey responses indicated that the overall objectives of educating on conservation landscaping practices and reducing outdoor water consumption were achieved for majority of participants.

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Bob Derrington Reclamation Award

City of Weatherford Indirect Potable Reclaimed Water System

The Bob Derrington Reuse Award is named after the visionary and innovative Odessa Texas Utility Manager who, in the 1980s, expanded Odessa's existing water reuse program. As a strong advocate for reuse long before it was popular, Bob Derrington understood that the beneficial use of treated effluent and water conservation would not only increase water supplies for Odessa but help develop the expansion of reuse in Texas.

After a decade of planning, permitting, design and construction, the City of Weatherford established a 4.5-million gallons per day indirect potable reclaimed water system to the Lake Weatherford water supply, providing an additional sustainable water source for Weatherford. To bring reclaimed

water to the city, improvements at the Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) were required to meet a 0.5 mg/L phosphorus limit and dissolved oxygen of 6.0 mg/L at the new outfall. The city's WRF is currently permitted for a 4.5 MGD annual average daily flow and a 12.2 MGD peak 2-hour flow with effluent limits of 5/15/2 for BOD5/TSS/NH3-N. The more stringent effluent limits were achieved through biological and chemical phosphorus removal and biosolids treatment improvements.

The project includes a 5.0 MGD pump station, a 6¼-mile transmission main, and an outfall structure at Lake Weatherford. The pump station is designed to capture most of the effluent from the WRF while maintaining the downstream flow requirements. The pump station uses variable frequency drives which allow the pumps to pace flow output to match the diurnal effluent flow conditions of the WRF. The city was a key leader in project execution, challenging the team to find cost-effective and innovative solutions while meeting the project objectives.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

CLEAN SHORES CHALLENGE AWARDS

CLEAN SHORES MOST SPIRITED SECTION AWARD

... recognizes the the most enthusiastic WEAT Section during the Clean Shores Challenge.

WEAT Southeast Texas Section

The Southeast Texas Section joined forces with the TAWWA section volunteers to clean up approximately 2 miles of trails adjacent to Buffalo Bayou/Terry Hershey park in west Houston. A group of 25 volunteers collected 20 bags of trash, including abandoned PVC pipes, plastic bags, toys, bottles, and more. This event, which the

Southeast Texas Section participates in yearly, was part of the River Lakes Bays and Bayous Trash Bash. The "Most Spirited Section" award goes to the Southeast Section for successfully teaming with TAWWA chapter volunteers and participating in the trash bash event every year.

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CLEAN SHORES TRASHIEST SECTION AWARD

... recognizes the WEAT Section with the highest count of trash bags collected during the Clean Shores Challenge.

&

CLEAN SHORES MOST INTERESTING TRASH AWARD

... recognizes the WEAT Section that collected the most diverse and interesting trash during the Clean Shores Challenge.

WEAT San Antonio Section

The San Antonio Section teamed up with TAWWA section volunteers to clean up Olmos Creek as part of an all-day “Basura Bash” volunteer event. Olmos Creek runs through northwest San Antonio and meets the San Antonio River just north of downtown.

Over 50 volunteers participated and gathered 80 bags of trash and recyclable materials, including

plastic, metals and tires, wooden pieces, and bags. For collecting those 80 bags, the San Antonio Section is the winner of the “Trashiest Section” Award.

In addition, the award for the “Most Interesting Trash” goes to the San Antonio Section for finding unexpected trash, including a brand new tent, carry-on luggage, and a sound box!

CLEAN SHORES MOST CREATIVEST SECTION AWARD

... recognizes the WEAT Section that conducts the cleanup in the most creative manner during the Clean Shores Challenge.

WEAT Central Texas Section

The Central Texas Section participated in two cleanup events in the Spring and Fall of 2022. In April, a small but mighty group of YPs cleaned the Little Walnut Creek trail on Earth Day weekend.

They collected 8 bags of trash and noticed areas with suspected illegal construction debris, such as building materials, and paint cans. They promptly notified the City of Austin, who closed the trail, blocked public access, and initiated cleanup.

In October, volunteers dressed in their scariest-best Halloween costumes and paddled kayaks up and down Lady Bird Lake, removing a staggering 216.43 lbs of trash. The team found a creative way to enjoy the mundane task of cleaning trash by combining a costume contest with kayak rides and Halloween themed goodies and snacks. The “Most Creative Section” award goes to the Central Texas Section for their Halloween-themed ‘Monster Trash Bash.’

Clean Shores Honorable Mention

WEAT North Texas Section

The North Texas Section hosted a cleanup event at LB Houston Nature Trails Wildwood Trailhead in November 2022. A group of 10 volunteers collected a whopping 43 bags of trash, 125 pounds

of debris, and 20 tires for a total of 2,480 pounds of trash. That’s 248 pounds per person! Volunteers also received free t-shirts as an appreciation for their efforts.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

SELECT SOCIETY OF SANITARY SLUDGE SHOVELERS

The Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers was founded by the Arizona Member Association in 1940. It originated to encourage members to get involved. You cannot join the society – you must be “selected” on the basis of merit. Within WEAT, induction into the prestigious society is based on “outstanding, meritorious service above and beyond the call of duty by recruiting at least five new members.” Shovels may also be awarded for exceptional service as established by the WEAT Board.

- **Tim Allen, Fort Worth Water**
- **Christie Benintendi, Fort Worth Water**
- **Swapnil Dusane, Gulf Coast Authority**
- **Elizabeth Fazio Hale, Gulf Coast Authority**
- **Alondra Hernandez, WEAT**
- **Ignacio Hinojosa, Ardurra**
- **Migdalia Jackson, Fort Worth Water**
- **Pam Jordan, Fort Worth Water**
- **Angel Leon, City of Laredo**
- **Chris Meeks, San Jacinto River Authority**
- **Kenny Wilson, Fort Worth Water**
- **Laura Wilson, Fort Worth Water**

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

SIDNEY L. ALLISON AWARD

...recognizes a person (or entity) who has made significant contributions to the engineering, science, and/or operation and maintenance of wastewater collection and pumping stations with the mission to transport wastewater to a treatment plant.

Angel Leon

Angel Leon is a seasoned professional in the field of wastewater collection and management. He has worked for the City of Laredo for over 15 years. Currently, he serves as the wastewater collections superintendent, overseeing the city’s municipal sewer system, which includes approximately 754 miles of sewer lines and 70 lift stations.

Leon is a strong advocate for the health and well-being of the community he serves. He believes maintaining a healthy and efficient wastewater collection system is crucial to ensuring public health.

This passion extends to educating the public on the importance of proper collection system

management, including issues related to wipes, rehab and repair, and lift station management.

Leon’s academic background includes a Bachelor’s in Mechanical Engineering from Universidad La Salle, A.C. He holds multiple licenses and certifications, including Wastewater Collection III and Wastewater Treatment B licenses from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the NASSCO PACP Certification and BAMI-I Asset Management Certification.

Leon is a skilled operations professional with a strong research, management, and customer service background. He is actively involved in several industry organizations, including serving on the

(Continued)

WEAT Middle Rio Grande Section board and as a WEAT Collections Committee member. Leon is past president of the UCTA South Texas Chapter. His dedication to his work and his community has earned him the respect and admiration of his colleagues and peers.

For his abiding commitment to excellence, volunteer spirit, willingness to share his knowledge across the sector, and leadership within WEAT, we are honored to recognize Angel Leon as the 2023 WEAT Sidney L. Allison Award Winner.

**TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION
&
WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS**

KEN MILLER WATER FOR PEOPLE FOUNDER'S AWARD

The Kenneth J. Miller Founder's Award was established in 2001 by the board of directors of Water For People to honor outstanding volunteer service to this international humanitarian effort. Water For People was conceived as a North American response to the water, sanitation and health needs of millions living in the developing world.

From its beginnings, Water For People was envisioned to be a volunteer effort of the North American water community. The American Water Works Association leaders who organized Water For People believed that water professionals would recognize the urgent necessity to support such a

cause by contributing their financial assistance, organizational skills and professional expertise. As the organization grew and began accomplishing its vision, it became evident that extraordinary volunteer efforts were being made at the local level that should be publicly acknowledged and honored. The Ken Miller Water for People Founder's Award was established to do this.

This award is given jointly by the Texas Section AWWA and WEAT. The winner is kept secret until announced. Also, the recipient is recognized by Water for People at the AWWA Annual Conference and Exposition.

**Water Environment Association of Texas
Competitions**

- **Fatest Saw Cut Competition (Wednesday)**
- **Operations Challenge (Wednesday & Thursday)**
 - **Process Control**
 - **Laboratory**
 - **Pump Maintenance**
 - **Safety**
 - **Collection System**
 - **Electrical**

The awards ceremony is at 2:45 p.m. Wednesday in the Meter Challenge/Awards Celebration area in Exhibit Hall.

TEXAS SECTION - AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION
&
WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

WATERMARK AWARDS
FOR COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE

MEMBER AWARDS

The Watermark Award for communications excellence recognizes Texas Section AWWA and WEAT members who have produced top quality communications. Effective internal and external communication is essential to a member's ability to provide excellent service. Today's water resource professionals must communicate with a variety of audiences to achieve success. Through these awards, Texas Section AWWA and WEAT hope to heighten awareness among all water resource professionals about the importance of effective communication.

Category I:

**Communications programs: internal campaigns,
external campaigns, crisis communications**

Large Utility

City of Sugar Land

Sugar Land Rain Barrel Program

Creating a new water conservation rebate program takes thorough planning to make it a success. But just as important as the programming itself, is the way the program is communicated to the public.

City of Sugar Land implemented a discounted rain barrel program in spring of 2022; the first of several conservation rebate programs outlined in the City's Integrated Water Resource Plan (IWRP). The goals of the rebate programs are to educate the community about ways to be more efficient with outdoor water use, and quantifiably reduce water usage.

The program goal for rain barrel rebates was to sell 50 barrels per year. This program would focus on residential customers. The communication plan included a social media outreach campaign through various platforms including Facebook, NextDoor, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and special listserv notifications through the City's E-News reports.

Community response to the rain barrel sale relaunch was positive. A video announcing the relaunch was posted to Instagram and Facebook, styled like a vintage perfume commercial. On Facebook, the video received over 6.9K views and reached 11.5K people. The program was successful, totaling almost 500 barrels distributed to residents in 2022.

Small Utility

**Wells Branch Municipal Utility District
*Water Conservation Campaign***

With an impending drought looming over 2022, Wells Branch MUD dedicated more space and time than ever encouraging residents to conserve water and form water-saving habits by developing its water conservation campaign. It reached the community through physical events, print media, and digital publications.

At the 2022 Eco Fair, Wells Branch MUD brought its best environmental experts to better educate its populace and integrated fun activities and water-saving giveaways to reach inhabitants of all ages.

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It digitally published informative pieces, including social media campaigns running alongside educational and fun water holidays like National Toilet Day, where the utility gave out free toilet leak detection tablets in conjunction with its online postings.

The newsletter was also an integral piece in the campaign, including articles about drought history and prevention, checking for leaks in households, and more.

Compared to the 68.4 gallons per capita per day used in 2011's drought year, residents used 59.8 GPCD in 2022. In its Drought Contingency Plan, Wells Branch MUD laid out a goal of reducing per capita use by .5 percent annually. It managed to more than double its reduction rate between the two drought years. The MUD's expectations were blown out of the water, and it continues to pursue water-saving initiatives in Wells Branch.

River Authorities or Water Districts:

North Fort Bend Water Authority ***Sub-sigh-who? OH! Sub-sid-ence!***

The North Fort Bend Water Authority was created in 2005 with the main goal of reducing subsidence in the northern Fort Bend County.

The lack of awareness on who the NFBWA is, what subsidence is, and the miscommunication on why there is a regional water authority fee on consumer water bills came to light through retail leadership surveys conducted in 2020.

The NFBWA launched a large-scale website redesign, where user experience and content create a more consumer-friendly resource and it better connects with the audiences.

This has led to a drastic decrease in the site's bounce rate (56.26% to 2.46%), meaning that the site is now much more engaging for users—making it less likely to exit the site without action. The website had a total of 20,117 new users for the 2022 calendar year. This is an 85.8% increase on previous years.

The Water Force Campaign has been a major success when it comes to understanding who the NFBWA is and its impact on the local community. In 2022, there were 121,921 users reached through Meta ads. There have been 641 new Facebook followers (started at 678, now 1,319) and 192 new Instagram followers.

Ultimately, the NFBWA can now serve as the regional water educator it strives to be. It is a source that all the communities within northern Fort Bend County may use for valuable and accurate information

Honorable Mentions:

San Antonio Water System ***SAWS Pipes Don't Lie***

In 2022, San Antonio Water System unveiled Pipes Don't Lie, a new sewer program to educate customers on the importance of caring for our sewer system.

The program consists of a webpage featuring educational information, a video that helps visitors "learn the truth" about wipes and grease, as well as outreach materials that get distributed to customers when a sewer spill occurs in their neighborhood.

SAWS launched the campaign in summer 2022 and plans to rollout additional phases of Pipes Don't Lie through 2023.

(Continued)

Hope to see everyone next year!

Texas Water™ 2024 — April 8-11 — Fort Worth

Category II:
**Publications: annual reports, water quality reports,
brochures, postcards, etc.**

Small Utility

City of Richmond

Consumer Confidence Report

The United States Environmental Protection Agency requires all drinking water providers in the nation give a water quality report to their residents on a yearly premise.

Historically, Richmond’s CCR only provided basic information about required testing and mandatory wording. The city was aware that there are innovative approaches to conveying this fundamentally important information in a more user-friendly format.

As part of the CCR redesign process, staff worked hard to make the publication into something fresh

and exciting, as well as providing educational and informative content.

As a result, a new 6-page color document was created. Previous reports that were prepared to only included TCEQ’s mandatory language and reporting requirements. This new document format gave staff the opportunity to use our Core Values of Pride as a basis for their work.

The first page employed eye-catching graphics, as well as a letter from the city manager, pictures of staff, and a map of the service area.

As part of its educational program, the report also included tips on how to report water leaks, conserve water, and avoid sanitary sewer backups.

Category III:
Digital Content: websites, social media, infographics, logos, etc.

Large Utility

San Antonio Water System

SAWS Be Ready for the Unexpected

In 2022, SAWS launched “Be Ready for the Unexpected,” an external campaign to help the community prepare for water emergencies.

The goal was to help customers understand what they could do during a freeze, under a boil water notice, or other water-related emergencies.

The main component of the campaign was an online resource page with step-by-step videos and infographics detailing exactly what to do in various scenarios. The content was created in English and Spanish.

As San Antonio prepared for its first freeze 2022, SAWS worked with the City of San Antonio

and local community partners to distribute the information – sometimes even in hardcopy form, for those who lack regular Internet access.

River Authorities or Districts:

San Jacinto River Authority

SJRA Website

As part of the San Jacinto River Authority’s efforts to communicate with the public and better serve the community, SJRA launched a new website that can be found at www.sjra.net.

The website includes SJRA’s new logo and color scheme which debuted in Fall 2021. The goal of the new website design and organization is to simplify the content for users. By condensing duplicate information and using simpler navigation tools, the site is more user friendly.

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SJRA also incorporated new visual content of operations, infrastructure, local nature, and employees. The new site shows SJRA's pride in being a part of the community and helping steward the best water in Texas.

Non-Utility

Texas Water Development Board
“Deep in the Heart” Texas Water Photo Campaign

Water is an important issue across the state, and the Texas Water Development Board continues to lead the state's efforts in ensuring a secure water future for Texas. TWDB uses a range of communications tactics to reach its audiences, including social media, public engagement, media outreach, and digital communications.

Its Instagram account, @waterfortexas, has enabled the TWDB communications team to reach

stakeholders through photos, stories, reels, and videos.

The TWDB partnered with the Texas Water Foundation's statewide water campaign, Texas Runs on Water (TROW), to host the “Deep in the Heart” Texas Water Photo Campaign throughout June in the summer of 2022.

The goal was to highlight the state's unique water features and inspire Texans to draw a connection to water by reflecting on the pride and personal connections deep in the hearts of all Texans.

The first “Deep in the Heart” campaign was a resounding success. A total of 366 photos, stories, videos, and reels were submitted. Both organizations saw a significant increase in Instagram followers, TWDB by 46.4 percent and TROW by 163 percent. Both also gained a significant number of Twitter and Facebook fans.

Category IV:

Community Outreach & Education Programs: events, curriculums, programs

Large Utility:

City of Frisco
Weekly WaterWise E-Newsletter

The City of Frisco has sent out a water conservation-focused e-newsletter every Monday since 2013. Subscriptions to this e-newsletter have slowly grown over the years, but with an average open rate of 32% it hasn't been as successful as the WaterWise team had hoped it would be.

So in December 2021, the team decided the newsletter needed a new look to be released in January 2022.

The new Weekly WaterWise e-Newsletter was extremely well received, with the number of subscribers doubling over the last year and open rates jumping up to 51%!

The new version of the newsletter consists of updated graphics, freshly written articles covering

a range of topics, and an “Ask an Irrigator” advice column from the City of Frisco's licensed irrigators.

The success of the new e-newsletter has been so great that other departments have requested to have information distributed in it. Examples of communication requests from other departments are changes to the Environmental Services pick-up routes and large Public Works projects affecting daily life in the City.

River Authorities or Districts:

North Texas Municipal Water District
Water Conservation STEM Clinics

The North Texas Municipal Water District always seeks new, innovative ways to engage the youth within the communities it serves to educate them on water conservation and develop conservation ambassadors.

(Continued)

NTMWD and the Dallas Maverick's minor league affiliate, the Texas Legends, created a new program of water conservation STEM Basketball Clinics. Using the team's turnkey basketball clinic model and a STEM-based school curriculum, a program was developed to teach the fundamentals of basketball, teamwork, and water conservation.

The partnership also provided a forum for NTMWD at Texas Legends home games to engage with families for fun, in-game experiences on the arena concourse.

NTMWD hosted eight STEM clinics in seven different cities over a nine-month span to teach more than 150 kids about being good stewards of our most precious natural resource - water.

Honorable Mentions:

City of Georgetown

Painted Rain Barrel Project

To cool down from a hot, dry summer the City of Georgetown Water Conservation Team wanted to end peak season with a vibrant event that also reinforced the water conservation message. The Painted Rain Barrel Project launched with a call for artists on August 10 and a barrel debut date on Oct. 22 at the South Main Arts Festival.

The project consisted of nine artists who painted ten rain barrels with varying themes from water conservation to Texas wildlife. It was promoted on all city socials, website, and was also featured in local newspapers to help gain community interest.

The barrels were placed at host businesses around Georgetown Square and downtown for a week before the festival with information about the project and how to bid on the barrels at the festival.

A portion of the proceeds from the auction went back to the artists for their time. The remainder is being held to help cover the costs of water conservation education and outreach initiatives in surrounding school districts.

McAllen Public Utility

Water Education Camps

McAllen Public Utility is proud to host educational camps for students of all ages.

These camps are several days of learning, fun, and adventure through hands-on experiments, activities and tours.

Campers have loads of fun learning about the importance of water and how it relates to the environment and come away with a life-long passion for nature and a dedication to stewardship of our natural resources.

North Texas Municipal Water District

No Water Trivia

The North Texas Municipal Water District public education manager sought alternative methods to communicate the importance of water conservation, and the value of water and wastewater services. Its long-standing tactic of tabling at festivals involved extensive time and staff resources with little return on investment.

A new approach was needed. NTMWD joined forces with a few of its peer water educators and the North Central Texas TAWWA chapter to create "water trivia events" in our service area which is one of the fastest-growing regions in the country.

These innovative trivia nights at nontraditional venues helped share the value of water in fun, interactive ways. Access to safe, reliable water is essential for breweries to operate and made the perfect fit to expand NTMWD's outreach.

"No Water Trivia" launched at two local breweries with engaging, interactive evenings of beer, fun questions, and laughter which brought people together to learn about the importance of water and water conservation, plus other topics related to our most precious resource. These initial brewery trivia nights have expanded into more locations, including our newest upcoming event - whiskey trivia nights! NTMWD makes learning fun!

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Category V:

OpEds and Features: guest editorials or columns, feature stories or series

Small Utility:

City of College Station Water Services ***Waterful Wednesday radio spots***

Waterful Wednesday is partnership between the City of College Station and KAMU, “public media for Texas A&M University and the Brazos Valley” owned and operated by Texas A&M University.

Each Wednesday morning on KAMU 90.9 FM, “Aggieland’s Public Radio,” the Waterful Wednesday segment discusses “all things water:

how it gets from the ground to your faucet, how to ensure that we don’t waste it, and more.”

The brief, under two-minute spots serve as a simple way to raise awareness about local and national water issues.

Starting in 2022, the ending tag line was changed from “water is precious, don’t waste it,” to “tune in next week to learn more ways to level up and be a Water Geek,” as a tie-in to TAWWA Education Division’s “Water Geek” branding.

Category VI:

Multimedia: video and photography

Large Utility:

City of Plano ***“Wipe-Out” Animated Wipes*** ***Abatement Video***

Whoa, man! Wipes can’t surf, but they can clog.

With wipes wreaking havoc on sewer pipes, the City of Plano’s Sustainability and Environmental Education Division (SEED), created a catchy media campaign aimed at deterring residents from flushing them.

Inspired by the classic surf tune, the animated video entitled “Wipe-Out” was born from SEED’s open-minded leadership, a partnership with an animation-savvy design firm and “bodacious” creativity.

A mashup of pop culture and sustainability, “Wipe-Out” resonates with multiple generations with timeless music and colorful animation.

It provides a visual of the impacts of wipes on pipes in a brief, impactful package. Still a new tool, “Wipe-Out” will be more broadly deployed this year using targeted marketing strategies to reach specific neighborhoods and zip codes where clogs, backups and sanitary sewer overflows occur.

SEED hopes to change this “gnarly” behavior with its “far out” new video.

Now, when YOU hear “Wipe-Out”, we hope you’ll remember to keep WIPES OUT of pipes!

River Authorities or Districts:

Upper Trinity Regional Water District ***Lake Ralph Hall One Year Later Video***

Upper Trinity Regional Water District was established by the Texas Legislature in 1989 as a wholesale drinking water and wastewater treatment provider. It currently provides drinking water to over 360,000 residents in 29 growing communities in Denton and Collin counties.

(Continued)

In June 2021, UTRWD broke ground on North Texas' newest lake, Lake Ralph Hall near Ladonia in northeast Texas. As construction continued, UTRWD desired to share progress being made on the project with local stakeholders, UTRWD Members and local elected officials.

UTRWD produced their "Lake Ralph Hall – One Year Later" video to cover a broad range of communication needs. The video serves to highlight the project, provide construction updates on the Leon Hurse Dam and the various roads and bridges, and to highlight the recreational benefits of the new lake, including the temporary fossil park.

The video is posted to UTRWD's YouTube channel and embedded on the Lake Ralph Hall website. The video also was shared across all social media channels for both UTRWD and Lake Ralph Hall.

It has been widely viewed and well-received, with over 2,000 views on YouTube alone. The video has also been incorporated into various presentations to boards, civic groups, trade associations and others.

Honorable Mention:

**Texas Water Development Board
*SWIFT program: No Texas miracle
without Texas water***

As the state's population continues to grow, so does the need to effectively plan for and manage water supplies for the future. T

To help with this, the Texas Water Development Board facilitates the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT). The Texas Legislature created the fund to provide affordable, ongoing state financial assistance for projects in the state water plan.

The SWIFT program can assist with projects of all sizes, such as conservation and reuse projects, desalination projects, pipelines, major reservoirs, water treatment plants, groundwater wells, and water meter replacements.

The goal of this video was to help market the TWDB's fall 2022 bond transaction by highlighting the Texas Water Development Board's one-of-a-kind SWIFT program and examples of SWIFT-funded projects.

The fall 2022 SWIRFT bond sale exceeded expectations, and we believe the video helped differentiate the TWDB's bond offering from others at the time.

*Congratulations
to all our winners!*

WEAT Operations Awards Ceremony

April 13, 2022, 2:45 p.m.

Exhibit Hall, Meter Challenge/Awards Celebration Area

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

SUSAN B. HIER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION & LICENSING

...recognizes an individual who has demonstrated passion and service to the operators of Texas.

Jason Williams

Jason Williams is the utility enterprise operations & maintenance manager for the San Jacinto River Authority - Woodlands Division. A TCEQ-licensed operator for over 25 years, he leads a team of fifty employees. He is admired for his knowledge of operations, willingness to learn, and commitment to maintaining regulatory compliance in his system operations. He is known for his dedication to training and continuing education for his staff and for his enthusiasm for educating the public about the clean water sector.

Over the course of his career at SJRA, Williams has progressed through the ranks, starting as an evening shift operator and working his way up to his current position, where he supervises fifty employees at three facilities.

He is always willing to learn and offers advice, mentorship, and direction to his colleagues. His leadership has helped the SJRA plants under his supervision maintain a reputation throughout the state for exceptional maintenance and cleanliness and has earned him the respect and admiration of his peers.

His long-standing interest in improving processes and caring for his team is evident through his willingness to lend his expertise to consultants and vendors to ensure the best design and long-term use of SJRA resources. This drive for excellence is reflected in the organization's excellent history of compliance with its permits, resulting in several awards from national organizations such as the National Association of Clean Water Agencies and WEAT. He has participated in events hosted by WEAT, including the WEAT Leadership Summit.

In the words of those who have worked with him, "he exemplifies what it means to be an outstanding operator and manager" and "has made significant contributions to the SJRA and the communities it serves." He is a consummate professional who consistently demonstrates his passion for improving processes and caring for his team.

That passion for training and education on behalf of his entire team is recognized with the 2023 Susan B. Hier Award for Excellence in Education & Licensing.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OF THE YEAR Category 1 (less than 1 MGD)

...acknowledges a municipal wastewater treatment plant in Texas that has consistently exhibited outstanding performance of daily activities beyond the normal call of duty.

Wastewater Treatment Plant No. 3 San Jacinto River Authority

SJRA Wastewater Treatment Plant No. 3 is a complete mix, single-stage nitrification facility in MUD 39 of Montgomery County. The plant receives influent from residential dwellings, a few commercial businesses, and one industrial user, with an average daily flow of 0.550 MGD and a permitted flow of 0.9 MGD.

The plant's headworks include an automatic mechanical fine screen and aeration flow splitter. Wastewater flows to two aeration basins and two secondary clarifiers. Clarifier effluent is disinfected with chlorine and discharged to an unnamed tributary that flows into the West Fork of the San Jacinto River. WWTP No. 3 has a dedicated staff of five licensed wastewater operators, five in supervisory/management positions, and four additional maintenance personnel who hold Class D wastewater licenses.

Classroom training is provided to employees to build a baseline understanding of the subject matter, followed by mentoring and other development methods to assist the employee in reaching their full potential. The SJRA also encourages attending conferences and seminars to expand the operational staff's knowledge and networking base.

The plant has a voluntary industrial pretreatment program that has successfully tracked and reduced pollutants in the wastewater system through the cooperation of industrial and commercial users and food service providers.

The SJRA also utilizes an EAM CMMS system to efficiently capture maintenance data for ease of reviewing asset data when developing budgets and CIPs. The SJRA is currently working to improve asset management and useful life expectancies through the development of a program that will tie together multiple program platforms and allow for detailed outlook and planning for asset replacement.

The operations team's dedication to continuous improvement and innovation is commendable, and their dedication to providing high-quality wastewater treatment services to the community is exemplary.

The commitment to excellence is evidenced by zero compliance violations and no lost time claims in the last five years. For this impeccable record, they are the winner of WEAT's 2023 Municipal Treatment Plant of the Year Award (Category 1).

Water Quality Month
August 2023

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OF THE YEAR Category 2 (1 MGD to <15 MGD)

...acknowledges a municipal wastewater treatment plant in Texas that has consistently exhibited outstanding performance of daily activities beyond the normal call of duty.

Wastewater Treatment Plant No. 1 San Jacinto River Authority

The San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) owns and operates Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) No. 1 in The Woodlands, Texas. WWTP No. 1 has a design capacity of 7.8 million gallons per day (MGD) with a permitted two-hour peak flow of 18.0 MGD. The WWTP receives influent primarily from residential dwellings and commercial properties, as well as several industrial users.

Wastewater treatment at this facility consists of mechanical and manual bar screens, a grit removal unit, four aeration basins, three secondary clarifiers, two low-head cloth media filters, and three chlorine contact basins. The treated effluent is discharged to Spring Creek in the San Jacinto River Basin.

SJRA has a combined total of 24 licensed wastewater operators. Of those 24 operators, five have direct responsibilities with WWTP No. 1, four are maintenance personnel with Class D wastewater licenses, and five are in supervisory / management positions. Maintenance staff do not operate the treatment plants but have acquired and maintained the license to allow them a better understanding of the plant's process. Operators hold a daily operations meeting to discuss process control, policy, and procedures and conduct refresher training on process, safety, or other items of concern.

SJRA strives to ensure they have enough licensed and trained operators and maintenance staff to handle the tasks at hand. SJRA employs a

combination of classroom training and on-the-job mentoring to assist employees to reach their full potential. They also encourage and support the attendance of operational staff at conferences and seminars and expand their knowledge and networking base. They are currently looking to have in-house staff trained to administer continuing education classes.

SJRA has voluntarily conducted an Industrial Pretreatment Program for the last 20 years. Through the cooperation of industrial and commercial users, SJRA has successfully tracked and reduced pollutants within its wastewater system. Additionally, in the two years preceding this submittal, WWTP No. 1 has recorded only one violation and is a NACWA Gold Award recipient.

SJRA looks for ways to reduce water demand while supporting the needs of its customers. Since 2009 WWTP No. 1 has supplied reuse water to nearby Lake Harrison for golf course irrigation, with conversations ongoing to determine the feasibility of supplying additional reuse from this facility to nearby locations. Since making this available, the discharge has had an annual rolling average of 166,000 gallons per month, with variations between seasons and temperatures.

For their sterling record in employee development, environmental matters, reliable operations, and outstanding teamwork, SJRA WWTP No. 1 is our Municipal Treatment Plant of the Year (Category 2).

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OF THE YEAR Category 3 (>15 MGD)

...acknowledges a municipal wastewater treatment plant in Texas that has consistently exhibited outstanding performance of daily activities beyond the normal call of duty.

Ten Mile Creek Regional Wastewater System Trinity River Authority

The Ten Mile Creek Regional Wastewater System (TMCRWS) provides wastewater collection and treatment services on a regional level for five cities in southern Dallas County and northern Ellis County. The cities of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville, Ferris, and Lancaster are the members of this multi-jurisdictional wastewater system, which is currently rated for 24 MGD and 65 MGD peak two-hour flow and encompasses approximately 62,732 acres of the service area. Of the plant's 24 personnel, 15 are certified TCEQ Wastewater Operators.

The plant consists of three independent treatment trains. Each is an activated sludge treatment system that employs primary clarification, complete-mix aeration/nitrification, and final clarification, filtration, and ultraviolet disinfection prior to discharge to Ten Mile Creek.

The TMCRWS has a well-documented and regularly updated safety program. The seven-

person Safety Committee meets monthly to review a regular Safety Inspection Audit and distribute Safety Work Orders. This year TMCRWS celebrates 20 years of Platinum awards from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. Platinum awards are given in recognition of complete and consistent TPDES permit compliance.

During power outages, severe storms, and inclement weather, personnel volunteer to 'shelter in place', setting up bunks to stay at the plant for any unanticipated emergencies and avoid unsafe travel and road conditions in case they are needed. They maintain a vigilant watch, performing their rounds in order to identify any problems.

For their staff's commitment to safety, permit compliance, and overall outstanding performance, we are honored to recognize them as WEAT's Municipal Treatment Plant of the Year (Category 3).



WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

OPERATIONS TEAM OF THE YEAR

...recognizes a wastewater treatment plant operations team for meritorious efforts above and beyond the call of duty

Martinez IV Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations Team San Antonio River Authority

SARA's Martinez IV Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) operations team is led by Sterling Lee (training and treatment superintendent) and consists of following operators: Joe Martinez (chief operator I), Amado Zambrano (operations crewleader), Ernest Munoz (operations crewleader), and Kyle Knight (operations technician I). These operations professionals have gone above and beyond the call of duty to protect our environment, and do so day in and day out by meeting strenuous permit limits and incredible expansion over the last three years.

The Martinez IV WWTP was commissioned in 2019 with a permitted average daily flow (ADF) of 0.25 million gallons per day (MGD). The plant soon saw a heightened demand as residential development spiked in the service area. The expansion of the plant began design in 2020, and construction in 2021 to bring the plant to the ADF of 2.0 MGD.

The plant has regularly exceeded the current 0.25 MGD permit since 2021 to the current degree of 300%+ over permit. However, the talented operations staff has managed to limit the number of effluent quality parameter excursions under these extreme conditions.

The plant expansion has experienced delays due to supply chain disruptions on multiple occasions, and the operators have done an amazing job in working to ensure that the quality of effluent that is discharged from the plant is safe for the receiving stream. This has entailed temporary work-arounds to try to increase treatment capacity, and working to distribute flow to other facilities to reduce the impact at Martinez IV.

Under these challenges, the operations team has worked continuously to ensure the receiving stream is protected, while grappling with the challenges posed by the rapid growth in its service area.

It is anticipated that the next expansion of this plant is right around the corner, and these operators will continue to face challenges with serving one of the fastest growing areas in the San Antonio metro. In facing rapid growth in the service area while protecting the water quality of the receiving stream, working to meet permit requirements is the hallmark of the talent and dedication of this year's Operations Team of the Year at Martinez IV Wastewater Treatment Plant. Thank you for being Texas water's unsung heroes.

*Gavel Passing Ceremony
Wednesday, April 13, 6 :15 p.m.
Pitch 25*

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

OUTSTANDING OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

...recognizes a wastewater treatment plant operator (municipal or industrial) in the State of Texas who has demonstrated outstanding professionalism at his/her facility and has performed his/her duties tirelessly and with dedication to the betterment of the water environment.

Gilberto Aguilar

Gilberto Aguilar dedicated more than 34 years to the water/wastewater industry, making significant contributions to the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) and its mission to protect and enhance the environment. Aguilar began his career at SAWS in 1988 as a data entry clerk/warehouse worker at the newly constructed Dos Rios Water Recycling Center (WRC). However, it was only when he was approached by one of the treatment plant operators about the upcoming opportunities in treatment operations that he found what he would be passionate about for the rest of his career. On July 1, 1990, Aguilar was promoted to plant operator I at the Dos Rios WRC and quickly gained the experience and knowledge to be promoted to plant operator II only two years later.

In March 1993, Aguilar was promoted to plant operator III and obtained his Class “B” Wastewater Treatment Operator license shortly after that. He continued to advance his skills and obtained his Class “A” license in 1996, which led to his promotion to shift superintendent. He would eventually complete over 1,300 hours of continuing education credit by the time of his retirement.

Recognized as a key resource to SAWS for his excellent operational, organizational, and leadership skills, Aguilar was part of a special team created in 1998 to address challenges at the Leon Creek WRC and to facilitate the start-up of the recycled water system. He was able to resolve complex issues and ensure the success of the recycled water system, which is a cornerstone of SAWS’ water supply portfolio now and will be for many years into the future.

In 2003, SAWS was constructing an aquifer storage and recovery facility (ASR), and Aguilar was promoted to superintendent at the Twin Oaks ASR facility. He was responsible for hiring all the staff, establishing all the operational, maintenance, and laboratory procedures, as well as starting up the facility. This project has been one of the most successful projects in SAWS’ history, and Aguilar played a key part in this success. However, in 2007, Aguilar recognized that he had missed his true passion, wastewater treatment, and transferred from ASR to the Leon Creek WRC. He stayed at Leon Creek until his retirement and played a key role in its success, recognized by multiple NACWA Peak Performance Awards.

Aguilar was one of the original members of the SAWS Operations Challenge Team. In 2006, the SAWS Team won the Division II Championship at the Water Environment Federation Conference in Dallas. Aguilar and the SAWS team continued with much success over the next four years, winning a number of individual event competitions.

Aguilar’s dedication to the clean water sector and the people of San Antonio is exemplary, and it is without a doubt that he dedicated his career to the WEAT Mission to “...benefit society through protecting and enhancing the environment...”.

On Dec. 31, 2022, Aguilar retired, leaving behind a hard work and dedication legacy. To the operators who worked alongside him, he was known as the “go-to guy” who made a point to help everyone do their best work. He played a key role in the success of SAWS’ recycled water system, Aquifer Storage and Recovery Facility, and the

(Continued)

Leon Creek WRC. His passion and dedication to the clean water sector have been recognized with the WEAT's Outstanding Operator of the Year

Award, a well-deserved honor for someone who dedicated a career to ensuring the people of San Antonio have access to clean and safe water.

WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

OUTSTANDING OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

...recognizes a wastewater treatment plant operator (municipal or industrial) in the State of Texas who has demonstrated outstanding professionalism at his/her facility and has performed his/her duties tirelessly and with dedication to the betterment of the water environment.

Sterling Lee

Sterling Lee is the training and treatment superintendent for the San Antonio River Authority (SARA). He oversees the daily operations of the River Authority's wastewater treatment plants, including two additional contracted plants. Lee is committed to sharing the importance of the work and the resulting health and safety benefits to our communities. He leads nearly all educational tours at the River Authority's plants.

An experienced professional who has worked in wastewater operations for over 35 years, he has built a workplace culture that prioritizes accountability, respect, and teamwork. Lee takes time to work with young operators one-on-one, helping them understand the treatment process, develop critical thinking skills, and diagnose issues. He is known for exceptional problem-solving skills when presented with emergency or urgent plant operational issues, and consistently makes the right decisions and process control adjustments needed to ensure that discharged effluent helps maintain a healthy receiving stream.

Lee makes a point of supporting operations staff during special circumstances, such as while aeration basins are drained and cleaned, and during emergencies like rain events with dangerously high flows, he has directed operations over the phone and even joined his team at late hours to help coach less experienced operators.

As a result of his hands-on management, the

quality of water discharged from the plants under Lee's supervision is excellent, and permit compliance violations are minimal. Lee's passion for the wastewater treatment industry is evident in his dedication to educating young up-and-coming operators. He is responsible for overseeing the training of all operators at the river authority and supporting their pursuit of TCEQ Operators' licensure.

Lee has trained many successful operators in his tenure and continues to work with the local Alamo Colleges District to grow the clean water workforce. His peers know him as a person of high integrity who cares about the career development of his staff and understands the value of higher education for the technical capacity and career trajectory of the young men and women under his supervision.

Lee is an active member of WEAT and has served in various capacities since 2006, including as an officer of the WEAT San Antonio Section as vice-president, president, and past president. In 2021, Lee was nominated by the San Antonio WEAT and South Central Texas AWWA chapters as the Distinguished Member for his commitment to the success of the joint chapter.

Lee is an outstanding leader, mentor to his team members, and praiseworthy representative for the SARA and the clean water sector. WEAT proudly honors Lee with the 2023 Outstanding Operator of the Year Award.

Thank you to our sponsors!

Conference Awards Lunch - Wednesday, April 12

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Tt TETRA TECH

Awards Celebration - Thursday, April 13

**Bartlett
& West**

Conference Night Out - Thursday, April 13

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