2025 Unleashing the Power of Technology and AI to Meet Today's Clean Water Challenges Virtual Workshop

September 10 – 11 | 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET | Virtual Event

Current as of August 12

Wednesday, September 10

1:00 – 1:05 **Welcoming & Opening Remarks**

1:05 – 1:20 **Keynote Address**

Jay Bernas, General Manager
Hampton Roads Sanitation District | Virginia Beach, VA

1:20 – 1:50 **Building Federal Momentum & Funding: Navigating the Regulatory Landscape**

Explore current federal initiatives, funding programs, and policy directions driving digital and AI transformation in the water sector. Learn how utilities can position themselves to benefit from available resources.

Moderator

Nathan Gardner-Andrews, Chief Advocacy Officer
NACWA | Washington, DC

Speaker

Josh Mahan, Senior Director, Government and Industry Relations
Xylem | Washington, DC

1:50 – 1:55 **Break**

1:55 – 2:35 **Turning Data into Decisions: Preparing for AI Acceleration**

Discuss approaches to upskilling, reskilling, and retaining talent for a tech-driven future. How can teams achieve more with less, cut time on rote tasks and improve their overall resilience? Hear about successful training programs, partnerships, and competency-based resources that can help build a future-ready workforce.

Speaker

Liam Cavanaugh, Chief Operating Officer
Metro Water Recovery | Denver, CO

2:35 – 3:15 **Clean Water Utilities Driving Innovation Investments: Meeting the Tech and AI Boom**

As data centers and AI-driven industries experience unprecedented growth, clean water utilities are increasingly at the forefront of supporting this surge in demand. This session will explore how water services are a critical enabler of technology sector expansion, from supplying high-quality water to advanced cooling operations to managing increased wastewater flows from rapidly growing data infrastructure. The discussion will focus on challenges for utilities as they respond to the tech sector's evolving needs, how new investments are shaping local infrastructure planning, and the innovative partnerships

being forged between utilities, technology companies, and communities to ensure reliable, sustainable water services in this new era of digital transformation.

3:15 – 3:20 **Break**

3:20 – 4:00 **Bridging the Talent Gap: Workforce Empowerment for the Digital Utility**
Learn how organizations are upskilling, reskilling and retaining top talent to meet the demands of a fast-changing tech-driven future. Discover ways teams can do more with less, cut time on repetitive tasks and strengthen their overall resilience while hearing real-world examples of training programs, partnerships and competency-based solutions that help build a future-ready workforce.

Moderator

Pieter Van Ry, *NACWA Board Member*
Director
South Platte Renew | Englewood, CO

Speakers

Prabhu Chandrasekeran, Intelligent Water National Practice Leader
Arcadis | Hanover, MD

Katie Hall, Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Claira.ai | Grand Rapids, MI

4:00 **Day 1 Wrap-Up**

Thursday, September 11

1:00 – 1:05 **Opening Remarks**

1:05 – 1:45 **Securing the Future: Cybersecurity in the Age of Digital Water**
As digital technologies become central to utility operations, cybersecurity is critical. This session will explore best practices for protecting systems, building resilience, and navigating evolving federal cybersecurity requirements.

1:45 – 1:50 **Break**

1:50 – 2:40 **The Power of a Digital Master Plan: Innovation in Action**
Hear real-world case studies from utilities implementing digital transformation strategies. Learn how AI and digital tools are driving measurable gains in efficiency, resilience, and cost savings.

Jason Sciandra, Assistant Director of Public Utilities
City of Fort Myers | Fort Myers, FL

2:40 – 2:45 **Break**

2:45 – 3:10 **Technology Keynote**

3:10 – 4:00 **Planning for the Future: From IT/OT Convergence to AI-Driven Climate Resilience**
How can water utilities transform digital vision into practical action? Explore integrated strategies for IT (data and computer systems) and OT (physical machines and processes) convergence, governance frameworks, and responsible AI adoption to ensure solutions are ethical, transparent, and community-focused. Featuring real-world case studies and practical steps for implementation, this session will also dive into how AI and advanced technologies

can help predict and respond to climate change impacts, optimize resources, and build resilience against extreme weather.

4:00 **Closing Remarks**