



2025 Utility Leadership Conference and 55th Annual Meeting Making the Business Case for Clean Water: Solutions for Uncertain Times

July 22 - 25 | Cheyenne Mountain Resort | Colorado Springs, CO

All meetings are on the Conference level unless otherwise noted.

Δ Board of Directors Committee

As of June 11, 2025

Tuesday, July 22

Morning

9:00 – 1:00

White River Ballroom

Women's Water Network Forum *(Optional - Separate Registration Required)*

11:45 – 1:45

Shoshoni Room

Executive Committee Meeting and Lunch Δ

Afternoon

2:00 – 4:30

*Conference Level
Foyer*

Registration

2:30 – 5:00

Colorado Ballroom

Committee Discussion Sessions

All Conference attendees are welcome to attend the committee meetings, whether or not they are members of the committee.

2:30 – 3:30

Colorado Ballroom

Water Quality Committee

All Conference attendees are welcome to attend the committee meetings, whether or not they are members of the committee.

Committee Leaders

Martin Griffin, *Co-Chair, Water Quality Committee*

Director of Ecosystem Services

Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District | Madison, WI

Jamie Heisig-Mitchell, *Co-Chair, Water Quality Committee*

Chief of Water Quality

Hampton Roads Sanitation District | Virginia Beach, VA

3:30 – 4:00

Networking Break

4:00 – 5:00

Colorado Ballroom

Legal Affairs Committee

From federal grant cancellations and PFAS liability to new digital accessibility requirements, Supreme Court rulings, and everything in between, clean water utility lawyers have a lot on their plates. The Legal Affairs Committee will be discussing some of the most pressing issues facing utilities today and sharing insights on what you – and NACWA – can be doing to tackle them!

Committee Leaders

Devon Goodrich, *Co-Chair, Legal Affairs Committee*
Senior Counsel, Environmental Law Division
New York City Department of Law | New York, NY

Emily Jackson, *Co-Chair, Legal Affairs Committee*
Chief Legal Officer
Metro Water Recovery | Denver, CO

Evening

5:00 – 6:00

*Cheyenne Courtyard,
Lower Level*

Registration

5:30 – 6:30

*Cheyenne Courtyard,
Lower Level*

Welcoming Happy Hour

Kick off the *Conference* by joining us at the Welcoming Happy Hour. Connect with fellow attendees, rekindle old connections, and network in a relaxed atmosphere. Happy Hour is open to all so enjoy a quick bite and meet us there!

Wednesday, July 23

Morning

7:30 – 9:00

Shoshoni Room

Award Committee Meeting and Breakfast A

9:00 – 11:30

*Conference Level
Foyer*

Registration

9:00 – 10:00

*Remington I,
Main Level*

Spouse & Guest Lounge

9:00 – 5:00

*Remington II,
Main Level*

NACWA Networking Lounge

The lounge provides an opportunity to connect with your peers during the conference.

9:30 – 12:00

Colorado Ballroom

Committee Discussion Sessions

All Conference attendees are welcome to attend the committee meetings, whether or not they are members of the committee.

9:30 – 10:30

Colorado Ballroom

Biosolids Management Committee Discussion

The Committee will discuss recent federal actions and how delays on the PFAS front are continuing to give states the "green light" to spur their own efforts, practical or not. The Committee will provide updates on NACWA's conversations with this Administration on its draft biosolids risk assessment and our development of a "choose your own adventure" legislative playbook for utilities to use.

Committee Leaders

Kurt Fremont, *Co-Chair, Biosolids Management Committee*
Division Manager, Business Operations
City of Tacoma, Environmental Services Department | Tacoma, WA

Brent Herring, *Co-Chair, Biosolids Management Committee*
Deputy Director
KC Water | Kansas City, MO

Guest Speaker

Amanda Berger, National PFAS Lead
Arcadis | Cary, NC

10:30 – 11:00

Networking Break

11:00 – 12:00

Colorado Ballroom

Communications & Public Affairs Committee

Join us for a focused and energizing Communications Committee meeting as we reflect on key takeaways from this year's Strategic Communications: H2O Workshop. Also learn more about NACWA's national communications initiative aimed at elevating the visibility, influence, and trust in public clean water utilities.

Committee Leaders

Bess McCoy, Co-Chair, Communications & Public Affairs Committee
Manager of Public Affairs
Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District | St. Louis, MO

Jeannie Smith, Co-Chair, Communications & Public Affairs Committee
Director of Administration & External Affairs
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District | Cleveland, OH

Afternoon

12:00 – 2:30

Lunch on Your Own

12:15 – 2:00

White River Ballroom

Optional Lunch – Water Collaborative Delivery Association

Better Projects, Together: Organizational Readiness for

Collaborative Delivery Success (Free; Separate RSVP Required)

Is your utility ready to deliver a successful collaborative delivery project? Similar to other types of water sector innovation, utilities are at various levels of maturity with respect to their experience with collaborative delivery and successful project implementation. Recent research to identify and address critical utility readiness factors driving collaborative delivery implementation success found that readiness factors can be grouped into the three categories of people, processes, and tools. Join the Water Collaborative Delivery Association for a free lunch session to learn more about how utilities can prepare, assess, and align to address readiness gaps for successful collaborative delivery project implementation. All attendees will receive a copy of WCDA's *Water and Wastewater Collaborative Delivery Handbook, 6th Edition*.

Please complete [this form](#) by **July 7** to RSVP for this event.

2:00 – 4:30

*Conference Level
Foyer*

Registration

2:30 – 5:00

Colorado Ballroom

Committee Discussion Sessions

All Conference attendees are welcome to attend the committee meetings, whether or not they are members of the committee.

2:30 – 3:30

Colorado Ballroom

Environmental Justice Committee Discussion

All Conference attendees are welcome to attend the committee meetings, whether or not they are members of the committee.

Committee Leaders

Sharise Horne, Co-Chair, Environmental Justice Committee
Chief of Equity & Community Partnerships
Louisville & Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District | Louisville, KY

Emanuel Briggs, *Co-Chair, Environmental Justice Committee*
Director, Community Affairs
DC Water | Washington, DC

3:30 – 4:00

Networking Break

4:00 – 5:00

Colorado Ballroom

Utility & Resource Management Committee Discussion

All Conference attendees are welcome to attend the committee meetings, whether or not they are members of the committee.

Committee Leader

Nathan Qualls, *Co-Chair, Utility & Resource Management Committee*
Executive Director
NEW Water | Green Bay, WI

Speakers

Andrew Sawyers, Director, Office of Wastewater Management
US Environmental Protection Agency | Washington, DC

Anthony Kane, President and Chief Executive Officer
Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure | Washington, DC

Evening

6:00 – 7:30

*Centennial Ballroom,
Main Level*

Awards Ceremony & Reception

Join us for a celebratory evening honoring exceptional NACWA utility facilities for their outstanding achievements in compliance, and individuals for their unmeasured service to NACWA. Following the Ceremony, we invite you to join your colleagues in celebrating the evening's honorees at the Awards Reception.

Thursday, July 24

Morning

8:30 – 11:30

*Conference Level
Foyer*

Registration

9:00 – 10:00

*Remington I,
Main Level*

Spouse & Guest Lounge

9:00 – 5:00

*Remington II,
Main Level*

NACWA Networking Lounge

The lounge provides an opportunity to connect with your peers during the conference.

9:00 – 11:40

Colorado Ballroom

Plenary Session I

9:00 – 9:15

Opening Remarks

Mickey Conway, *NACWA President*
Chief Executive Officer
Metro Water Recovery | Denver, CO

Welcoming Remarks

Somer Mese, Chief Operations Officer
Colorado Springs Utilities | Colorado Springs, CO

9:15 – 10:15

Keynote Address

From Complexity to Clarity: Setting the Standard for Systems Thinking Practice and Science

Opening Remarks

Leisa Thompson, NACWA Board Member

General Manager

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services | Saint Paul, MN

Keynote Speaker

Laura Cabrera, Professor

Cornell University | Ithaca, NY

10:15 – 10:30

Networking Break

10:30 – 11:40

Success in Uncertainty: Leadership, Systems Thinking, and the Future-Ready Utility

Uncertainty is becoming the new normal for clean water utilities who are on the front lines delivering exceptional environmental and public health protection 24/7/365. Whether it's shifting regulations, workforce changes, extreme weather or emerging contaminants, with the right mindset and tools, these challenges can become opportunities for leaders to re-think how the work gets done. Through real-world examples and candid discussion, speakers will share how they are turning uncertainty into opportunity, building more resilient organizations, and delivering lasting improvements for the communities they serve.

Moderator

Pam Elardo, Senior Utility Performance Advisor

Brown and Caldwell | Seattle, WA

Panelists

Leisa Thompson, NACWA Board Member

Priscilla Howell, Director of Utility Services

City of Henderson | Henderson, NV

Tim Ruggaber, Principal

HydroDigital | South Bend, IN

Laura Cabrera, Cornell University

11:40 – 11:55

Colorado Ballroom

Annual Association Business Meeting

- Report of the President
- Report of the Treasurer
- Election of Directors
- Report of the Chief Executive Officer

11:55 – 12:00

Closing Remarks

Afternoon

12:00 – 3:00

Lunch on Your Own

12:15 – 2:45

White River Ballroom

Board of Directors Meeting Δ

2:00 – 4:00

Conference Level
Foyer

Registration

3:00 – 5:00
Colorado Ballroom

Plenary Session II

3:00 – 3:02

Opening Remarks

3:02 – 3:15

Stronger Together: Managing Costs, Protecting Funding, and Building Smarter

Featured Speaker

John McCarthy, President, Water Business Line
Arcadis | Orange County, CA

3:15 – 4:15

Smarter Together: Rethinking Governance for Utility Success

Behind every successful clean water utility is a governance model that works. Yet, politics and infrastructure are interlinked – and the way clean water utilities are governed often reflects competing priorities, unclear authorities, and shifting public expectations. This panel will explore candidly how governance structures – the good and the bad – empower or inhibit progress for communities.

Moderator

Charlotte Katzenmoyer, NACWA Board Member
Chief Executive Officer
Capital Region Water | Harrisburg, PA

Panelists

Bill Teichmiller, Chief Executive Officer
EJ Water Cooperative, Inc. | Dieteric, IL

George Hawkins, Founder and President
Moonshot Missions | Bethesda, MD

Andrew Sawyers, US Environmental Protection Agency

4:15 – 5:15

Taking Care of the Heart, Brain & Engine of Our Utility: Investing in Our People

Public wastewater utilities are at a critical juncture with close to half of the workforce eligible for retirement in the next decade. Hiring qualified staff before losing institutional knowledge is paramount and it's past time to think outside the box on how we attract, retain, and cultivate our next generation of leaders. Panelists will share real world examples and practical tactics they are using now to help future proof their workforce and sustain their utility's mission for decades to come.

Discussion Leader

Beate Wright, Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Wright for You, LLC | Conifer, CO

Panelists

David Persinger, General Manager
Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility | Anchorage, AK

Eddie Abisaab, Chief Operating Officer
Hampton Roads Sanitation District | Virginia Beach, VA

Cathy Bernardino Bailey, Executive Director
Greater Cincinnati Water Works | Cincinnati, OH

5:15

Closing Remarks

Evening

6:00 – 7:00

Beach Pavilion

President's Reception

Please join us at Beach Pavilion to celebrate President Mickey Conway! Enjoy the breathtaking views of the Mountains. The reception will be outside.

Friday, July 25

Morning

9:00 – 10:30

Conference Level
Foyer

Registration

9:30 – 11:30

Colorado Ballroom

Plenary Session III

9:30 – 9:32

Opening Remarks

9:32 – 10:30

When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get Going: Making the Business Case for Clean Water

This year's conference theme hits home – with shrinking federal budgets, infrastructure that is aging, increasing regulatory requirements, and experienced workers who are exiting, we are definitely in uncertain times. So how do you make the business case that clean water solutions aren't just necessary, but more than worth the investment? This panel brings together private sector leaders to share how they are helping utilities stay resilient by making a strong, clear business case for clean water.

Moderator

Laura Briefer, NACWA Treasurer 2025-2026

Director of Public Utilities

Salt Lake City Corporation | Salt Lake City, UT

Panelists

Beverley Stinson, Executive Vice President, Global Water Business Line Leader
AECOM | Chelmsford, MA

Susan Moisio, Senior Vice President and Global Water Director
Jacobs | Reno, NV

Daven Oswalt, Executive Vice President
GFT, Inc. | Pittsburgh, PA

Hampik Dekermenjian, Vice President
Hazen and Sawyer | Los Angeles, CA

10:30 – 11:25

Tech It to the Limit: From Innovation to Impact

Technology is supposed to make things easier, but it often takes time, adaptation, and grit to get there. With today's realities, clean water utility leaders are under extreme pressure to make smart decisions and do so with less. But how do utility leaders know what technologies are best? This session dives into how forward-thinking utilities and partners are pushing past those barriers and putting new technology to work to make lasting impacts in communities.

Moderator

Tim Braun, Founder

BluTerra, LLC | Cassopolis, MI

Speakers

Cristina Ahmadpour, President
Isle Utilities | Palo Alto, CA

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

Mahesh Lunani, Founder and Chief Executive Officer
AquaSight | Troy, MI

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

11:25 – 11:30

Closing Remarks