



**2026 Fall Conference
November 16 & 17
Caesars, Atlantic City, N.J.**

Draft Agenda

Mon. - 1 w/ww tch

Tues. - 5 w/ww tch

CEUs – listed at end of agenda

Monday, November 16

4:00p.m.

Welcome

Brian Brach, President AEA

4:15 pm

Key Note Speaker

“Building a Resilient and Reliable Future for New Jersey’s Drinking Water and Solid Waste.”

Commissioner Ed Potosnak

Commissioner Potosnak will share his perspective on the future for clean water, wastewater and solid waste utility service in New Jersey.

5:15 pm

EPDA Certificate Presentations

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Palladium C

Networking Reception

Tuesday, November 17

8:30 a.m.

Annual Business Meeting

AEA Past

Moderator Joseph Maraziti, Maraziti Falcon, LLP

9:15 a.m.

History of AEA Presentation

10:15 a.m.

Safe in the Deep End: Confined Space Entry and Gas Monitoring in Wastewater Operations

Janette Kessler, ACUA

This session covers essential safety rules for entering dangerous underground areas at wastewater plants. Attendees will learn how to test the air for toxic and explosive gases, use portable monitors correctly, and follow OSHA guidelines to prevent tragic accidents in low-oxygen environments. Session Highlights include Hazard Identification: Spot toxic gases

like hydrogen sulfide. Monitor Usage and terms: Calibration, bump test, and reading portable gas detectors. Entry Rules: Permit requirements and rescue plans. Best Practices: Protect workers during daily plant maintenance.

11:00 a.m.

PFAS Past to Present

AEA Board Member

Historically, PFAS ("forever chemicals") were widely used in industrial processes and consumer products throughout New Jersey before their persistence and potential health risks were fully understood, resulting in contamination of some groundwater and drinking water supplies. Today, New Jersey is a national leader in PFAS regulation, with enforceable drinking water standards, expanded monitoring requirements, treatment upgrades, and ongoing remediation efforts to reduce public exposure and protect water quality.

11:30 a.m. **Break**

Moderator Present

11:45 a.m.

Lithium-Ion Battery Safety: Protecting Solid Waste, Drinking Water, and Wastewater Utilities

Lithium-ion battery safety continues to be a trending issue for solid waste utilities. This topic is also relevant to drinking water and wastewater utilities, the presentation includes best practices for the safe handling and disposal of lithium-ion batteries.

12:15 p.m.

Lunch – Palladium B

Moderator Future

1:45 p.m.

Pursuing Congressional Funding: Strategies for Success

Mike Witt, PVSC

TBA

Presentation will explain process for applying for congressional funding which typically begins with identifying a federal program or appropriations account that aligns with the proposed project. Applicants submit a detailed request to the appropriate congressional office, including a project description, budget, justification, and evidence of community benefit, after which the Member of Congress evaluates the request for potential inclusion in the annual appropriations process. For projects seeking Community Project Funding (House) or Congressionally Directed Spending (Senate), applicants must also meet chamber-specific eligibility, transparency, and disclosure requirements.

2:30 p.m.

AI in Water Operations: What's Actually Working - and What Isn't

Jennifer Riddell, KLIR

AI is everywhere in the water sector. But for utility leaders, the challenge isn't deciding whether AI matters - it's separating what is genuinely useful from what is simply hype. Rather than focusing on futuristic use cases or technical demonstrations, Jennifer will explore what AI adoption actually looks like in water operations today: where it is creating meaningful value, where expectations are getting ahead of reality, and what utilities need to have in place to benefit from it.

3:15 p.m. Palladium C

The Hidden Profit of a Multi-Generational Workforce: Strengthening the Human Infrastructure Behind Every Environmental Authority

Krishna Powell, Founder & CEO, HR 4 Your Small Biz

While environmental authorities are investing in infrastructure, technology, and regulatory excellence, one of their greatest challenges is ensuring they have the leadership capacity and workforce to sustain that infrastructure for years to come. Across the country, environmental authorities are navigating a historic workforce transition. Experienced employees are retiring, institutional knowledge is walking out the door, supervisors are leading four generations with different expectations and communication styles, and organizations are expected to embrace innovation while maintaining operational excellence, public trust, and regulatory compliance. These aren't simply workforce challenges. They're organizational performance challenges. The presenter is here to talk about those challenges.

4:30 p.m.

Door Prizes

Association of Environmental Authorities (AEA) Annual Meeting and Conference

November 16-17, 2026

Course # 18191

CMFO 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects, CCFO 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects, CTC 1.0 General/Secondary, CPWM 1.0 Government, RMC 1.0 Professional Development, QPA 1.0 Office Admin./General Duties

18191-1 - Keynote Speaker - Commissioner Ed Potosnak

18191-2 - History of AES Presentation

18191-3 – Safety Presentation

18191-4 – PFAS Past to Present

18191-5 - Lithium-Ion Battery Safety: Protecting Solid Waste, Drinking Water and Wastewater Utilities

18191-6 - Pursuing Congressional Funding: Strategies for Success

18191-7 - AI in Water Operations: What's Actually Working - and What Isn't

18191-8 - The Hidden Profit of a Multi-Generational Workforce: Strengthening the Human Infrastructure Behind Every Environmental Authority