



VANTAGE POINT

2025 AEA Utility Management Conference

**Tuesday, March 11 &
Wednesday, March 12
Caesars, Atlantic City, N.J.**





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Available credits
CEUs, 2 PE, 4 w/ww tchs

Tuesday, March 11

11:00 a.m. | Exhibits - Palladium C

11:30 a.m. | Lunch - Palladium C

12:30 p.m. | Welcome - Palladium B



*Steve Specht, AEA President
Peggy Gallos,
AEA Executive Director
Marc Pfeiffer,
Conference Moderator*

**12:45 p.m. | Renewing Critical Infrastructure: TRWRA Pleasure Bay
Interceptor Tunnel and Main Pump Station Replacement**



*Brian Rischman,
Two River Water Reclamation Authority
Bill Gettings, Hazen and Sawyer*

Two Rivers Water Reclamation Authority (TRWRA) has identified issues concerning the condition of two critical components of its collection system, the Pleasure Bay Interceptor (PBI) and the Main Pump Station (MPS).

➤ **TUESDAY, MARCH 11 CONTINUED**

The PBI and the MPS are both over 50 years old and their condition and reliability are risks to TRWRA's ability to provide reliable service. This presentation will chronologically cover planning, design, permitting, as well as construction progress photos for the new PBI, MPS, as well as other project elements.

17429-1 CPWM 1.0 Technical

1:45 p.m. | Exploring All Options



*Tammy L. Brown,
Conner Strong & Buckelew
Jason Edelman,
Conner Strong & Buckelew
Brian Brach, Manasquan River RSA*

This presentation will explore the State Plan vs. other options in health insurance coverage.

17429-2 CMFO, CCFO 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects, CPWM 1.0 Management, RMW 1.0 PD, QPA 1.0 Office Admin./General Duties

2:45 p.m. | Vantage Points - Generational Perspectives in the Environmental Workforce



*Brian Valentino,
Western
Monmouth UA,
Moderator*

*Samantha
Wittenberger,
Mt. Laurel MUA*

*Michael
DiNinno,
Middlesex
County*

*Anthony
Dimino,
Township of
Ocean*

*Scott
DiBenedetto,
Western
Monmouth UA*

The environmental industry is shaped by a diverse workforce spanning multiple generations, each bringing unique experiences, insights, and approaches to the challenges of today and the innovations of tomorrow. This engaging panel discussion will explore the evolving landscape of environmental work through the eyes of four professionals, each representing a different generation: seasoned industry veterans, mid-career professionals, and the next wave of environmental leaders. Together, they will share their vantage points on critical industry

> TUESDAY, MARCH 11 CONTINUED

issues, including sustainability, technological advancements, regulatory shifts, and workforce development. How have perspectives changed over time? Where do they align, and where do they diverge? And most importantly, how can cross-generational collaboration drive the future of environmental stewardship? Join us for a dynamic conversation that bridges experience with innovation, fostering a deeper understanding of how generational insights shape the environmental sector's path forward.

17429-3 CMFO, CCFO 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects, CPWM 1.0 Management, RMC 1.0 PD, QPA 1.0 Office Admin./General Duties

3:45 p.m. | Break

4:00 p.m. | AI and Water Utilities: Coming Soon to Your Authority



Marc Pfeiffer, Associate Director of Bloustein Local, a unit of the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers

Artificial Intelligence is here and is not going away. Not surprisingly it is a confusing subject which gets more than its share of hype and doom from pundits, real experts, businesses, and researchers. This session will provide an overview of the range of AI technologies and how they are starting to affect potable and wastewater utilities from their administrative offices to their treatment technologies, to managing flows, system and personnel management and maintenance systems.

17429-4 CMFO, CCFO, CPWM, RMC, QPA, 1.0 IT

5:00 p.m. | Networking Reception, Palladium C

Join your colleagues at the networking reception.

Wednesday, March 12

1 w/ww tch

7:30 a.m. | Continental Breakfast - Palladium C



8:45 a.m. | Welcome, Palladium B

*Peggy Gallos, AEA Executive Director
Marc Pfeiffer, Conference Moderator*

9:00 a.m. | Key Points on HR: Sharing Best Practices



Matthew Watkins, NJ Community Solutions, LLC

The presenter will discuss hot HR topics in New Jersey public employment.

17429-5 - CMFO 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects, CCFO - 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects, CTC 1.0 General/Secondary, CPWM 1.0 General/Secondary, RMC 1.0 PD, QPA 1.0 Office Admin./General Duties

10:00 a.m. | Political Landscapes: New Jersey and Beyond



Micah Rasmussen, Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics

With last year's Presidential election and this year's races for Governor and the General Assembly, there's always a big election in New Jersey. In this discussion, we will help you assess the current political landscape and sort out some of the policy and budget ramifications of these races.

17429-6 CMFO, CCFO 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects, CPWM 1.0 Government, RMC 1.0 PD, QPA 1.0 Office Admin./General Duties

11:00 a.m. | Records and Information Management



Karen Perry, Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services Records Management Services

New Jersey Public Agencies face greater recordkeeping demands today more than ever due to OPRA, litigation and audits. Their public records are being retained in multiple formats – hardcopy, the cloud, digital, AI and on the Internet and social media - which compounds concerns for cybersecurity, regulatory compliance, access, retention, document conversion, disaster prevention and recovery & business continuity, preservation and legal disposition. This presentation will address these issues and more.

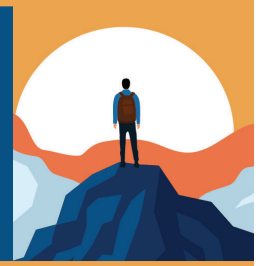
17429-7 CMFO, CCFO 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects, CTC 1.0 General/Secondary, CPWM 1.0 Management, RMC 1.0 Records, QPA 1.0 Office Admin./General Duties

12:00 p.m. | Adjourn

12:15 p.m. | Recognition Luncheon - Palladium C

Wave Award & EPDA certificate presentations

Thank You to Our Exhibitors for Supporting the AEA Utility Management Conference



Kuehne
COMPANY



Engineering
& Design



🌀 ABOUT OUR EXHIBITORS 🌀

CME Associates

CME is a full service environmental consulting engineering firm performing water and wastewater engineering, recycling and solid waste, biosolids, composting, landfill engineering, municipal engineering, transportation and highway design, storm drainage and flood control, environmental consulting services, hazardous waste consulting, brownfields redevelopment, parks and recreation design and project planning and management.

Colliers Engineering & Design

Colliers Engineering & Design is a trusted provider of multi-discipline engineering, design, and consulting services to public and private sector clients. We specialize in providing a comprehensive suite of services through talented professionals in offices nationwide who utilize the most advanced technologies to deliver customized solutions for our clients.

EMEX

EMEX LLC, a division of Mantis Innovation, partners with governmental, commercial, and industrial clients to secure the most competitive pricing for electricity and natural gas supply. Through our advanced proprietary reverse energy auction platform, we drive cost savings by leveraging market dynamics to procure the lowest possible rates for our clients, ensuring efficient and reliable energy solutions.

First Bank

Our purpose is to help our communities and businesses stay strong. We first opened our doors in 2007 to provide banking services that create value, service and results for the businesses and people in our communities. Our core commitment to providing personalized banking services and solutions has remained the same throughout the years. We live in the communities we serve, and our customers are like family to us. We understand your needs and strive to exceed your expectations because community success comes when we all contribute and care for each other.

Kuehne Company

For over a century, Kuehne (pronounced KEY-KNEE) has stood as a leading private chlor alkali producer, recognized for its unwavering commitment to reliability and innovation. With 106 years of expertise, Kuehne has built a reputation for ensuring a consistent supply of the purest chlor alkali products, achieved through cutting-edge process design and a people-first approach to business.

Known for its dedication to quality, sustainability, and continuous improvement, Kuehne sets the benchmark for reliability and purity. By blending innovation with a strong focus on people, the company doesn't just meet industry standards—it redefines them.

Suburban Consulting Engineers

SCE's mission is to provide cost-effective, forward-thinking solutions that effectively assist water/wastewater systems in complying with today's challenging regulatory environment. Our substantial resume of projects range in size, scope and complexity. SCE is also experienced in implementing projects funded through the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (NJIB) and New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust (NJEIT).

Trinity Consultants

Trinity's New Jersey office is located at the heart of Jersey in Princeton, NJ. We serve clients located in New Jersey & New York City. Our team of seasoned environmental professionals are engineers, scientists, and meteorologists that have decades of combined experience providing top-notch service to our diverse client base. Similar to typical Trinity offices, our NJ office is highly skilled in air permitting and compliance services, representing a State leader in permitting, dispersion modeling, and enforcement interaction.



ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

Brian Brach currently serves as Executive Director for the Manasquan River Regional Sewerage Authority and has over 16-years of experience in the water resources industry. Leading the day-to-day operation of a regional sewerage authority, in combination with a decade's worth of consulting engineering experience, has provided Mr. Brach with valuable exposure to all facets of water utility operations and administration. Mr. Brach is a licensed Professional Engineer (NJ PE), Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA) and Certified Municipal Engineer (CME). Mr. Brach leverages his passion for the industry to address challenges in an efficient and innovative manner. Mr. Brach is a member of AEA's executive committee and serves as first vice president.

Tammy Brown has over 35 years of Large Group Underwriting and Account Management experience. Tammy is responsible for developing and implementing the overall strategy for the Public Entity and Health Insurance Fund Practice, including strategic planning, benefit evaluations, financial analysis, and management of all vendor partners with a focus on underwriting and data management. Tammy also oversees training for the firm's employee benefits team members. Under her leadership, the training team built and executed a comprehensive curriculum that provides a solid foundation for the firm's employee benefits team members and supports our client's strategic vision. She has a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics & Economics from Fordham University.

Scott DiBenedetto has 7 years experience as an auditor prior to working at Western Monmouth Utilities Authority. Almost five years in current role as CFO at WMUA. He has a bachelor's degree in accounting from New Jersey City University (NJCU), received his Certified Public Manager's (CPM) designation from Rutgers School of Government Services and is a graduate of EPDA Cohort 6.

Anthony Dimino has 15 years of experience in the wastewater industry and holds an S-3 and C-2 license. He began his career as a trainee at Joint Meeting and has since advanced to his current position of Technical Services Manager and Licensed Operator in Charge for the Township of Ocean Sewerage Authority. In this role, he maintains general supervisory control over the entire wastewater treatment plant, collection system, and project/asset management program. As the Licensed Operator in Charge, he ensures compliance with operational standards and regulatory requirements. He assists the Executive Director with key financial responsibilities, including the preparation and approval of purchase orders, bid advertisements and reviews,

maintenance of the general ledger, and development of the annual budget. Anthony implements and enforces new procedures or modifications to existing processes to enhance operational efficiency. He contributes to board and subcommittee meetings, manages pre-construction meetings for development projects, and oversees laboratory operations as the registered Lab Manager, Quality Assurance Officer, and Technical Director. He is also responsible for filing all required permit reports with state regulatory agencies. He was part of the EPDA Pilot Cohort and now chairs AEA Professional Development Committee.

Michael DiNinno is Administrator of Environmental Quality at the Middlesex County Utilities Authority where he has been employed for the past 30 years. He is responsible for all the Authority's regulatory permits, including NJDEP approved Industrial Pretreatment Program and Certified Laboratory. He is an NJDEP Industrial Wastewater N-2 Licensed Operator. He graduated from Thomas Edison State University with a BS in Environmental Science. He serves on AEA's NJPDES and PFAS committees and is a graduate of the EPDA 2020:01 Cohort.

Jason Edelman is responsible for the development of new strategic services and leading new business development within the Hi Funds. He also plays an active role in consulting with brokers and administration in NJ Public Sector on the latest legislation and provides solutions to best meet their needs. He is engaged in financial evaluation, health and wellness, compliance, communications and other key client-facing areas. He has a Master of Science in Strategic Leadership and Organizational Development from Neumann University and a Bachelor of Science in Professional Studies with a double minor in Secondary Education and History from West Chester University.

William Gettings is a Professional Engineer and a Board-Certified Environmental Engineer with over 33 years of experience in wastewater and drinking water infrastructure. He has managed projects from facility planning through construction for both public and private clients in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Mr. Gettings serves on AEA's Board and chairs the education and conference committee.

Karen Perry is an Administrative Analyst for the Department of the Treasury, Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services, Records Management Services. She serves in a regulatory and advisory capacity regarding the governance of New Jersey's Public Records for New Jersey Public Agencies and is the Coordinator

ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

for the NJ State Records Committee on behalf Records Management Services. Ms. Perry has taught Records and Information Management for over 30 years at Rutgers University's School of Continuing Education. In addition, she also teaches Records and Information Management and Cybersecurity and AI for NJ Public Agencies for the NJ League of Municipalities and the Institute for Professional Development (IPD). Ms. Perry has a Master's Degree in Teaching from The College of New Jersey and holds a NJ Department of Education Certification K-12, a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and Journalism from Rider University, an Associate of Science Degree in IT from Mercer County Community College and a Certified Public Manager Certificate from the New Jersey Certified Public Managers Program.

Marc Pfeiffer retired from a 37-year career in New Jersey local government administration in 2012. He served as a municipal administrator in several municipalities, and 26 years of service in the State's local government oversight agency, the Division of Local Government Services. At DLGS he served as Deputy Director for 14 years, and periodically as Acting Director. He eventually landed at the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University where he serves as Associate Director of Bloustein Local, a unit of the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers. Marc has broad experience in many areas of local government policy and administration, including specific expertise in areas such as finance and property taxation, public procurement, shared services and consolidation, technology management, energy, labor relations, and general government administration. He also has deep experience in the legislative process and as a regulatory officer. He is currently engaged in research concerning the use of technology in local government.

Micah Rasmussen is the director of the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics at Rider University. He served as Governor James E. McGreevey's press secretary, and as communications director for the New Jersey Department of Transportation. He has worked in the New Jersey General Assembly and managed several political campaigns. Rasmussen previously served as vice president for executive communications at Chubb, and as director of corporate communications for New Jersey Resources. After completing his undergraduate studies at Rider under his mentor David Rebovich, the namesake of the institute he now leads, Rasmussen earned his Master of Arts in Political Science from the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University.

Brian Rischman is the Deputy Executive Director of the Two Rivers Water Reclamation Authority and has seventeen years of experience in the industry. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree in civil engineering from Rowan University, a New Jersey Professional Engineer's license and NJDEP S4, C3 wastewater operator licenses. He also chairs AEA's NJPDES committee.

Brian Valentino is executive director of the Western Monmouth Utilities Authority. He holds a bachelor's degree from Marymount University and a masters from American University. He spent nearly 20 years as a local government administrator in New Jersey municipalities. He is the founding director of the AEA Environmental Professional Development Academy and a member of the AEA professional development and education and conference committees. He is one of nine local government professionals in New Jersey to have earned an ICMA-credentialed Manager designation from the International City/County Management Association. Brian is a member of AEA's executive committee and serves as treasurer.

Matthew Watkins is a City Manager with over 40 years of experience in municipal and state administration. Matt has been a leading advocate for efficient, responsible local government that spans the areas of labor relations, financial planning and delivering outstanding services to the public. Mr. Watkins brings a unique experience and prospective having served as Administrator to local governments in both suburban and urban communities, President of NJ Municipal Management Association, NJ PERC Commissioner and NJ Director of Local Government Services. Additionally, Mr. Watkins has extensive experience with the complicated redevelopment issues.

Samantha Wittenberger began her career at Middlesex Water Company as a lab technician right out of Stockton University with a biology degree. She trained with the plant operators and obtained a T2 before moving between subsidiaries of Middlesex Water Company to assist with laboratory and utility worker duties. She ended up at the subsidiary Pinelands Water and Wastewater where the most assistance was required and became the operations coordinator. After her time in the private industry, she began at Mount Laurel Township Municipal Utilities Authority, as the assistant laboratory supervisor. After a short time in that position, the operations director retired, and that role was divided into a Sewer Division Chief and her role as Water Division Chief. Samantha is also a part of the EPDA Cohort being recognized. ■

WAVE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Outstanding Commissioner



Robert McCray, Township of Hillsborough Municipal Utilities Authority

Robert McCray has served on the Township of Hillsborough Municipal Utilities Authority since February of 2002. He was

also a Commissioner of the Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority from 2005 through 2013 and is a United States Navy veteran.

As a commissioner, Mr. McCray brings a wealth of knowledge to the Board, as he served as the Administrator for the Readington-Lebanon Sewerage Authority from 1983 through 2015. Mr. McCray is a steady and pragmatic resource, thanks to his vast knowledge of wastewater treatment and conveyance. Not shy to share his comments and perspective, it is always done in a professional and respectful manner.

Whether it is a tour of the facilities, attending a special meeting with a contractor, or breaking bread with staff at the annual holiday luncheon, Mr. McCray attracts conversations with everyone he meets because of the many stories he has to share

from his vast experience. He exemplifies in both his personal and professional life what a valuable commissioner looks like, which is why he is being awarded as an Outstanding Commissioner.

Life Member Award



Richard Brand, East Windsor Municipal Utilities Authority

Richard Brand is receiving the Life Member designation to honor the many ways he has

contributed to AEA over the years. Rich is a Past President of AEA and has been an active member of the AEA Water Committee, sharing his knowledge with other drinking water professionals, alerting others to important regulatory developments, and sharing the perspective he has gained working in both authorities and for investor-owned utilities.

Rich has also generously invited members to training events and for tours at his plant and has hosted many AEA board meetings and EPDA cohorts. As a water committee member and legislative committee member, Rich has reviewed proposed regulations and legislation,



providing input for comments and testimony, and at times has represented AEA at the Legislature.

It is not unusual to find Rich stopping in at AEA office early in the morning to share news, sign checks, and even to do occasional handyman tasks like mounting a screen for Zoom meetings or installing a wall sconce. Designating Rich as a Life Member is a recognition of all he has done for AEA.



Pam Carolan, Mount Laurel Township Municipal Utilities Authority

Pam Carolan is being chosen for a Life Member award to honor the many ways she has contributed to the well-being of AEA and

its members. Pam has been an extraordinary leader as a President of AEA; as an active and engaged member of the legislative, water and NJPDES committees; and as chair of the NJPDES committee. Pam has given many presentations, attended many legislative hearings, and hosted AEA board meetings, AEA’s EPDA and many other AEA events.

Pam can always be counted on to provide detailed and thoughtful analyses of bills, often recognizing the unintended consequences and implications of the legislation. Pam has devoted hours to providing input to help inform AEA’s activity with Jersey Water Works, the NJDEP, and with other stakeholders and groups. She has also shared her extensive experience advocating for her own customers in New Jersey Board of Public

Utilities rate cases.

Pam is not only a skilled engineer and water/wastewater utility manager, she is also a keen observer of politics, trends, and business matters. Her insights have made a crucial difference to AEA’s effectiveness on behalf of its members. Because of this incredible record of involvement, Pam has more than earned a Life Member award.



Stephen Specht, Brick Township Municipal Utilities Authority

Stephen Specht is Deputy Executive Director and Director of Engineering/Operations at Brick MUA, where he has served for 27

years, and is also our AEA President. He has generously shared his knowledge of drinking water production, authority management, regulatory matters, engineering, and much more with AEA.

He has been a dedicated member, and in recent years, chair of the Water Committee, helping establish that group as a resource about all things drinking water for the two dozen AEA members that provide drinking water service. Under Steve, the Water Committee has provided input on bills and proposed regulations. He has also been an important liaison for AEA to AWWA-NJ and the New Jersey Utilities Association, helping facilitate collaboration when a united front made all the difference.

Steve’s respect for his AEA colleagues is well-illustrated in the many instances when he has

traveled to retirements and other types of events to represent the entire AEA leadership. Steve has also welcomed several of the EPDA cohorts and encouraged them to get involved in the association and join a committee. Steve Specht richly deserves a Life Member award.

Individual Wave Achievement



**Michael Kane,
Western Monmouth
Utilities Authority**

The Western Monmouth Utilities Authority's Confined Space Rescue Program, led by Mike Kane, has proven to be a proactive approach to ensuring safety. Mike is also collaborating with local sewerage authorities to spread this knowledge, an excellent example of how these efforts are helping create a broader culture of safety and preparedness.

The Confined Space Rescue Program is a set of standard operating procedures and guidelines to be used during confined space rescue situations. The purpose is to establish guidelines for conducting rescue operations in situations involving manholes, pump stations tunnels, pipes, tanks, and any other locations where ventilation and access are restricted.

Mike and the Western Monmouth Utilities Authority have made a big impact locally through this safety program and are committed to not just implementing the program, but also to teaching and training others in its use.



**Harry Ladisheff,
Bayshore Regional
Sewerage Authority**

Harry Ladisheff has been an operator with BRSA since 2008, after previously working with Long Hill Township Public Works

and Bernards Township Sewerage Authority. He soon assumed the added role of safety coordinator.

Harry continued his involvement in safety by becoming a member of the Authority Safety Committee. Additionally, he became a certified backflow inspector in 2010. During the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, he was an integral member of the Authority response, recovery, and rehabilitation team.


When the Authority began preparing to celebrate 50 years of service, Harry enthusiastically joined the planning committee and contributed enormously to culling decades of photographic and narrative history of the Authority. For his 20-plus years of service to the wastewater industry, and the environment, Harry Ladisheff is being awarded this AEA Individual Wave Award.

Up-And-Comer



**Scott DiBenedetto,
Western Monmouth
Utilities Authority**

Scott DiBenedetto is a proactive and influential individual who plays a crucial role in improving business



operations and financial management at Western Monmouth Utilities Authority. Employees of WMUA frequently rely on Scott's advice on financial and budgetary regulations. Of note to AEA members, he founded and hosts a regular Finance Group call with our membership.

Scott values collaboration and information-sharing to help other companies streamline their finance departments. He has an excellent skill set for optimizing financial processes and structures.

In addition, he is a regular presenter for the Environmental Professional Development Academy (EPDA) and has a significant impact on the organization's success and operations. Overall, Scott DiBenedetto is a dynamic and knowledgeable individual who actively provides insights on best business practices. His involvement in professional groups, presentations, and his role as a trusted advisor highlight his dedication to both personal and organizational growth and earns him this Up and Coming award.

Best Management Practices



Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority

The Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority (SRVSA) is a regional sewerage authority which provides treatment to

Bridgewater Township, Raritan Borough, Somerville Borough, Hillsborough Township, Branchburg Township, Warren Township, and Manville Borough.

Like many systems, SRVSA has battled with pump station flooding, particularly at its Storm Control Pumping Station. This station has been battered by severe flooding due to hurricanes and has been gutted and rebuilt three times since 1999. These successive rebuilds resulted in the station being out of service for several months after each event.

The SRVSA Board and staff have come up with a multi-stage plan to reconfigure the station in a way that the vulnerable components will be located above the floodplain. The plan includes new equipment, new pumps, and more, which will allow the station to withstand severe flooding without being damaged and resulting in no loss of service. Grants are covering portions of the cost. For these reasons, the SRVSA Board of Commissioners and Staff are deserving of a Wave Award for Best Management Practice.


Township of Stafford



In 2019, Stafford Township launched a project to replace segments of the collection system in Beach Haven West, a section of town with over 3,000 homes, where original

pipes had never been replaced since the homes in the area were built.

To date, about half of the 12-year plan has been completed, with all but the first phase funded by the NJ I-Bank. The Township coordinated the sewer project with electric and gas utilities, its own Water & Sewer Utility, and



the NJ Department of Transportation to help limit the number of times the road is opened and resurfaced. The Township also kept the community well-informed about progress, and about the operational and environmental benefits being achieved.

To date, Stafford's stewardship has improved over 186 acres of Barnegat Bay. The environmental strides have enabled Stafford to qualify for principal forgiveness for its I-Bank loans. For the project's Phase 6 alone, Stafford has qualified for \$2.5 million in principal forgiveness. The ongoing success of the project is a testament to why Stafford deserves recognition for this fine example of infrastructure management.

Forward Thinking Award



Atlantic County Utilities Authority

The PolyGone Systems microplastic removal pilot project at Atlantic County Utilities Authority is part of a startup created by Princeton University graduates who developed a microplastic filtration system, known as the "artificial root filter," to capture particles from treated wastewater before it is released into the ocean.

The project is the first of its kind to be installed at a wastewater treatment facility in the U.S. If successful, it can be replicated at other treatment facilities. The pilot program's educational pavilion also provides an opportunity to educate the facility's more than 2,000 annual visitors about the dangers of

microplastics and this potential solution.

The ACUA is potentially helping set the stage for a revolutionary way to limit microplastics in the environment, earning them this Forward Thinking award.



Bayshore Regional Sewerage Authority

Bayshore Regional Sewerage Authority's Raritan Valley Force Main Replacement Project was constructed in 2023 and 2024. The goal of the project was to replace an existing and aging force main with a new pipeline to continue to provide reliable and safe wastewater treatment services at the lowest possible cost.

The existing force main had multiple failures in the past. The new force main would be constructed via a horizontal directional drill and with HDPE pipe, a much more reliable construction material than the existing 50-year-old ductile iron pipe. The construction of a valve chamber, which would allow BRSA to operate either force main as needed, provided operational flexibility, and now allows BRSA to inspect the entire length of the original force main for further evaluation.

The project enables the Authority to continue to maintain efficient and safe wastewater treatment services with a fully functional force main and pumping station and has earned them this wave award in the Forward Thinking category.



Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission

As a co-regulator implementing and enforcing an industrial pretreatment program, Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission

(PVSC) has aggressively explored source identification and minimization of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, or “PFAS.” Rather than wait for a federal or state-issued mandate, PVSC has taken a proactive approach towards understating PFAS both at its facilities and from industrial dischargers whose wastes are treated at PVSC.

While an approved analytical method for wastewater and biosolids was still being worked on by federal or state regulatory agencies, PVSC’s Process Control Department developed a project-specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (“QAPP”). Working with one of the few PFAS certified laboratories in the country, PVSC started sampling plant influent, effluent and biosolids on a regular basis in January 2021.

PVSC also continued to stay up to date with federal agencies developing more reliable sampling and testing methodologies. Meanwhile, PVSC’s industrial pretreatment program identified major industrial users within its system and aggressively initiated notification to those users. PVSC continues to evaluate PFAS in its collection system and develop a deeper understanding of PFAS in the wastewater process, proving that this organization is Forward Thinking in nature.

Mutual Aid Achievement



Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority

The culture at Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority (SRVSA) was built by Mr. Ronald Anastasio, their Executive

Director. Whether it is a question on a particular station design, analyzing flow capacity, or just general industry knowledge, Mr. Anastasio is a tremendous resource to his fellow agencies, authorities, and public servants.

His staff is always willing to help, too. For example, when the Township of Hillsborough Municipal Utilities Authority needed to borrow flow meters from SRVSA, Mr. Sherwin Ulep was the point of contact for the request and was expeditious in following up. He even offered training to TTHMUA staff.

Mr. Anastasio has been with SRVSA since 2000, and it is through his extensive experience and knowledge that he has been able to build a culture of service among SRVSA. The Authority is deserving of a Mutual Aid Achievement Award for their dedication to the entire service area and member municipalities as well as to their support and ongoing dedication to AEA. ■

Thank you to Ron Anastasio, Mike Wynne, Keith Marcoon and Tom Laustsen for serving on the award review committee.

Congratulations to the 2024 EPDA Cohort

Gabriela Arevalo, Middlesex County UA
Zachary Brandt, Ocean County UA
Jonny Carvajal, Rockaway Valley RSA
Timothy Cross, Ocean County UA
Anthony D'Andrea, Atlantic County UA
Daniel Desoucey, Twp. Ocean SA
Michael Dickinson, Ocean County UA
John Ennis, Ocean County UA
Tony Fisher, Mount Holly MUA
Joseph Grabowski, Western Monmouth UA
Athina Gramuglia, PVSC
Matt Henry, Mount Laurel Twp. MUA
Ridley Joseph, Middletown Township SA
Chris Kasyjanski, South Monmouth RSA
Walter Kolpaczyk, Ocean County UA
Yan Liu, Atlantic County UA
Craig Maybury, Mount Holly MUA
Jolanta Mazurkiewicz, PVSC
Christopher Novellino, Ocean County UA
Jeff Nutt, Mount Laurel Twp. MUA
Ericka Paredes, Linden Roselle SA
Brittany Poplawski, Atlantic County UA
Ray Simmons, Rockaway Valley RSA
Samantha Wittenberger, Mount Laurel Twp. MUA



Thank you to the AEA Education and Conference Committee for putting together a timely and informative conference program.

The committee members are:

Bill Gettings, chair, Alexa Alverio, Ron Anastasio, Brian Brach, Bernie Bujak, Tom Horn, Jill Plesnarski, Manuel Ponte, Dr. Apryl Roach, John Scheri, and Brian Valentino.

The committee was supported by AEA staff, Peggy Gallos, executive director, and Karen Burris, office manager, and by Lorna O'Hara and Tammi Kleszics from Princeton Public Affairs Group.

Conference Chairs:

Brian Brach, 1st Vice President
Ron Anastasio, 2nd Vice President

