

2026
AEA
Spring
Meeting

April 23, 2026
The Heldrich,
New Brunswick, NJ



Association of Environmental Authorities

AEA *Spring* Meeting Agenda

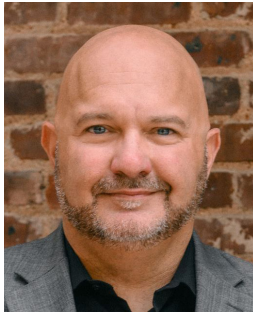
TCHs - 5 w/ww

CEUs - Course #17958 -CMFO/CCFO, 4.5 office management and ancillary subjects; CPWM, 3.5 government, 1.0 management; RMC, 4.5 professional development; QPA, 4.5 office admin./general duties.

8:45 a.m. | Welcome



Brian Brach, AEA President



Dan Kennedy, Moderator, NAIOP New Jersey

9:15 a.m. | New Administration's Priorities



Elizabeth Noll, Senior Strategist for Energy

This presentation by the Senior Strategist for Energy for the State of New Jersey, will provide an in-depth look at the state's evolving energy landscape and strategic priorities delivered under the leadership of Governor Mikie Sherrill. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of how Governor Sherrill's leadership is shaping strategic energy planning in New Jersey, fostering collaboration across agencies, and preparing the state for future energy challenges and opportunities as it relates to the water/wastewater industry.

10:00 a.m. | Legislative Perspectives



Senator Bob Smith, Chair Environment & Energy Committee

Our presenter will continue dialogue between operators, engineers, regulators, and lawmakers. Our frontline experience informs smarter policy. When regulations are grounded in operational reality and scientific evidence, compliance becomes achievable and outcomes improve. Looking ahead, climate resilience must remain central to our strategy. Sea level rise, stronger storm systems, and prolonged drought conditions will continue to test our infrastructure. Planning for resilience today will save taxpayers far greater costs tomorrow.

10:45 a.m. | Break

11:00 a.m. | DEP Priorities



Deputy Commissioner Joseph Seebode, Susan Rosenwinkel and Charles Jenkins, NJDEP

As New Jersey begins 2026 with new Governor and focuses oversight of drinking water and wastewater systems, the Deputy Commissioner

will outline priorities of the new Administration. The DEP Division of Water Quality Director will discuss the success of the CSO program, the licensed operating rules, and the PFAS DLA sampling program. The presentation will also touch on the SRF program and construction funding.

12:00 p.m. | Recognition Luncheon

Wave Award presentations

1:30 p.m. | PFAS Update



Diane Alexander, Maraziti Falcon

This presentation will update attendees on the proposed 3M and DuPont Judicial Consent Orders, how they affect members and the continuing efforts AEA is taking to convey our concerns to the appropriate people.

2:15 p.m. | Open Forum with AEA Board



Peggy Gallos, AEA

Brian Brach, Manasquan River RSA

Brian Valentino, Western Monmouth UA

This town hall style format will provide our members and attendees the opportunity to discuss AEA's preferred futures.

3:00 p.m. | Adjourn

About *the* Presenters

Diane Alexander has advised public and private sector clients regarding local government, environmental, infrastructure and resiliency-related issues and has successfully litigated matters involving a wide variety of environmental laws and regulations concerning water, wastewater, stormwater and air permitting issues, as well as water and wastewater planning, compliance, user fee and connection fee issues. She participated in the Stakeholders Group convened by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to revise the NJPDES Regulations, Planning Rules and Surface Water Quality Standards. She participated in the drafting of legislation relevant to connection fees and the creation of stormwater utilities. Ms. Alexander also served a six-year term on the Board of Directors of the Association of Environmental Authorities of New Jersey (and loved every single minute of it).

Brian Brach 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 president.

Peggy Gallos is the executive director of the Association of Environmental Authorities of NJ. Ms. Gallos began her career as a journalist, covering New Jersey local, county and state issues. She ran her own communications consulting firm, working for local governments, associations, and corporate clients. In 2005, she joined the staff of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities as a speechwriter and lat-

er working on energy policy. Ms. Gallos worked on federal energy efficiency matters through the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and helped launch a sustainability consulting firm. Her public service includes six years on the Milford Board of Education, three as its president. She served on the boards of the Milford Public Library and Literacy Volunteers of Hunterdon County. Peggy has a bachelor's degree from New York University and a master's degree in public administration from Rutgers University.

Charles Jenkins is Assistant Director, Municipal Finance & Construction Element at NJ Department of Environmental Protection. He is an environmental engineering and policy professional with 38 years of experience serving as overall manager of programs including implementation of State and Federal environmental infrastructure policies, initiatives, and requirements.

Dan Kennedy is chief executive officer at NAIOP New Jersey. Mr. Kennedy is an accomplished leader who brings an extensive background in association management, public affairs and government relations, strategic planning, coalition building, and policy. Prior to joining NAIOP NJ, he was senior director/director of Environmental and Utility Operations for the Utility and Transportation Contractors Association of New Jersey. He previously served as a senior official in New Jersey State government. He holds a master's degree in City and Regional Planning from the Rutgers Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, and a New Jersey Professional Planner license. He has devoted his career to promoting smart growth in the state.

Elizabeth Noll is the senior strategist for energy Governor Sherrill's Office. She has spent her career enabling policy solutions to tackle our nation's energy system challenges and address the climate crisis. Most recently Elizabeth was the Vice President

About *the* Presenters

at the Coefficient Group and before that worked for the Natural Resources Defense Council where she oversaw federal clean energy policy for the building, transportation and power sectors, working with Congress, the administration and clean energy industry partners. A native of Alabama, Elizabeth received her B.S. from Clemson University and her M.S. in Public Policy from Georgia Institute of Technology.

Susan Rosenwinkel is the Director of the Division of Water Quality at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The Division of Water Quality has a primary responsibility for protecting New Jersey's surface and ground waters from pollution caused by improperly treated wastewater and its residuals through the New Jersey Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program. The Division of Water Quality also administers financial assistance programs for wastewater treatment facilities as well as the Treatment Works Approval, Capacity Assurance, and Sewer Ban Programs. Susan has been with the Department for 36 years. Susan is a graduate of the College of Engineering at Rutgers University.

Senator Bob Smith was elected to the Senate in November 2001. He previously served in the Assembly from 1986-2002, where he was Deputy Minority Leader from 1994-1995 and Parliamentarian from 1988-1989. Senator Smith has served on the State House Commission since 2008. He was previously involved in the government of Piscataway, serving as its mayor from 1981-1986, a councilman from 1977-1980, and an Environmental Commission and Planning Board member from 1975-1986. He was its chair in 1976. The senator is an attorney and owns Bob Smith and Associates, a Piscataway law firm. He earned a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in chemistry from the University of Scranton, a master's degree in

environmental science from Rutgers University, and a juris doctor from Seton Hall Law School.

Joseph Seebode serves as DEP Deputy Commissioner, supporting Acting Commissioner Ed Potosnak in the Department's efforts to address New Jersey's environmental needs. He is experienced in engineering program management, water resource engineering, military and interagency construction planning and execution, environmental restoration and remediation, solid waste management, natural resource protection, watershed planning, emergency preparedness and response, and federal and state regulatory programs. He served as a DEP Assistant Commissioner from 2004 to 2006, with responsibilities including cleanup of contaminated sites, managing New Jersey's brownfields reuse program, leading emergency response to discharges of hazardous substances and wastes, managing solid and hazardous waste permitting and planning, and overseeing recycling efforts.

Brian J. Valentino is executive director of the Western Monmouth Utilities Authority. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Marymount University (VA) and a Master of Public Administration from The American University (DC). Mr. Valentino joined the environmental sector after nearly twenty years in the municipal sector, serving as a local government chief administrator in six communities throughout New Jersey. In addition to his services at WMUA, he serves the AEA as director of the Environmental Professional Development Academy and as a member of the Board of Directors, Professional Development and Education & Conference Committees. He is one of only nine local government professionals in New Jersey to have earned the globally recognized "ICMA -Credentialed Manager" designation by the International City/County Management Association. *

Thank you for your expertise in our Spring 2026 meeting!

Wave *Award* Recipients

Outstanding Commissioner



Michael Avolio

Michael Avolio is being given a 2026 Wave Award in recognition of his long-standing dedication and leadership

as a commissioner with the Township of Hillsborough Municipal Utilities Authority (TTHMUA). Over the course of 23 years of service, Mr. Avolio has demonstrated consistent commitment to the public, balancing strategic vision with practical decision-making to benefit the Hillsborough community.

After serving as a commissioner, he was selected as Vice-Chairman in 2005 and was later chosen to serve as Chairman, a role he held through 2023. Colleagues note that what truly distinguishes Mr. Avolio is his accessibility and responsiveness; he actively listens to others and thoughtfully considers issues affecting the Authority while bringing sound business judgment and fiscal responsibility to decision-making.

A long-time resident and business owner, he has operated a family business since 1972 and has been active in numerous community and volunteer organizations. He has also served in the Army Reserves and has been recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Hillsborough. His community involvement, leadership, and continued

dedication to the Authority demonstrate the qualities of an exemplary public servant.

This is why Michael Avolio has earned a Wave Award in Outstanding Commissioner.



Steve Kurs

Steve Kurs has served as a commissioner with the East Windsor Municipal Utilities Authority (EWMUA) since September

1984, demonstrating more than four decades of dedicated public service. Over his 42 years on the board, he has held several leadership positions, including Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. In addition to his service with the Authority, Mr. Kurs has maintained lifelong membership with the East Windsor Township Rescue Squad.

Mr. Kurs brings significant professional expertise to his role, having spent 38 years at AT&T as a Manager of Major Projects before retiring in 2014. During his tenure with EWMUA, he has played a key role in several major infrastructure initiatives, including expansions of the Old Cranbury Road Water Treatment Plant and upgrades to the Millstone Road Wastewater Treatment Plant. He was also instrumental in installing a 2-megawatt solar array that now fully powers the facility.

Known for his professionalism, insight, and

commitment, Mr. Kurs remains an active and respected presence within the Authority and the township he serves.

This is why Steve Kurs is being recognized with a Wave Award in Outstanding Commissioner.



Linda Moore

Linda Moore has served the East Windsor Municipal Utilities Authority (EWMUA) since September 1999 and has spent 27 years

as its Chairperson. Her long record of public service also includes serving as Mayor and Councilwoman of East Windsor. She also volunteered with Woman Space, assisting local police departments by counseling victims of domestic violence throughout Mercer County. Through these roles and her involvement with the Association of Environmental Authorities, she has demonstrated a sustained commitment to serving her community.

Mrs. Moore brings extensive leadership and administrative experience to the Authority. She worked as an administrator for independent schools, developing expertise in governance and operations. During her tenure, she has played an important role in major infrastructure improvements including water treatment plant expansions and wastewater treatment upgrades. She was also instrumental in installing a solar array that now fully powers the facility.

Known for her thoughtful leadership and strong connection with staff and residents, she continues to guide the Authority and support its mission.

This is why Linda Moore is being honored with a Wave Award in Outstanding Commissioner.

Wave Achievement



Brian Valentino

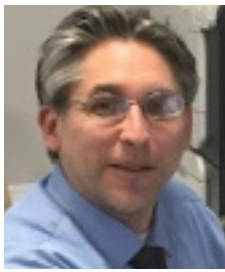
Brian Valentino, Executive Director and CEO of the Western Monmouth Utilities Authority, has demonstrated exceptional leadership and

dedication to New Jersey’s environmental utility sector and the Association of Environmental Authorities (AEA). Over the past decade, his work reflects a sustained commitment to strengthening the environmental services industry and ensuring that utilities are equipped with knowledgeable and capable leadership.

Brian conceived and led the Environmental Professional Development Academy (EPDA). What began as an internal initiative has grown into a statewide professional development academy that builds leadership capacity across AEA member agencies. Brian helped develop a comprehensive curriculum, mentorship opportunities, and cross-disciplinary training that supports the growth of utility professionals throughout the industry.

Brian's commitment to collaboration and service extends beyond training and mentorship. He leads the Monmouth County Coordination Group, a weekly forum where wastewater professionals discuss operational issues, share solutions, and strengthen regional cooperation. In addition, he serves on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), contributing to national discussions that shape the future of the clean water profession and is currently second vice president on the AEA Board of Directors.

This is why Brian Valentino is being honored with a Wave Achievement Award.



Matthew von der Hayden

Matthew von der Hayden has played a significant leadership role in Stafford Township since becoming

Township Administrator and Director of Water & Sewer in 2019. He has led initiatives that strengthened infrastructure, sustainability, and community well-being, including raising the Township's bond rating twice and securing over \$50 million in grants. He also contributes to education as an adjunct faculty member and is a Ph.D. candidate. His leadership has been recognized with multiple honors including Outstanding Manager and Top 100 Government Influencer.

Through initiatives like Resilient Stafford, he has led environmental improvements, including cleaning waterways and replacing sewer infrastructure, improving water quality, and serving as a model for other utilities.

Matt is very active in AEA by participating on the bi-monthly checkins and is the municipal member representative on AEA's Board of Directors. This is why Matthew von der Hayden has earned this Wave Achievement Award.

Up and Comer



Karen Oliver

Karen Oliver of South Monmouth Regional Sewerage Authority (SMRSA) has demonstrated outstanding dedication

to the Association of Environmental Authorities (AEA) through her work with the AEA Safety Committee. The committee was formed in early 2019 following discussions that originated during the Environmental Professional Development Academy. Its purpose is to provide a forum for AEA members to discuss a wide range of safety-related issues, identify training needs, and contribute an industry perspective on proposed OSHA safety regulations.

The Safety Committee also serves as a valuable resource for AEA members by enabling them to share best practices and written programs so organizations

do not have to develop safety resources independently. Members exchange information on safety training programs, workplace self-inspections, accident investigations, insurance procurement, and claims handling.

Since January 2023, Karen has been the driving force behind the committee’s monthly Safety Committee newsletters. Through these publications, she consistently provides timely information on safety, health, and wellness topics that benefit AEA members.

Karen is also an active participant on the human resource and finance committees as well as a graduate of the EPDA Cohort 2. Her dedication to educating others has made her an invaluable contributor to both SMRSA and the AEA membership.

This work is why Karen Oliver is being recognized with an Up and Comer Wave Award.



Ellie Hoffman

Since joining Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority (SRVSA) in 2016, Ellie Hoffman, P.E., Regulatory Compliance

Engineer, has demonstrated strong leadership, resourcefulness, and dedication to both the Authority and the Association of Environmental Authorities (AEA).

Her responsibilities at SRVSA have expanded significantly over time. She began by managing the Authority’s Industrial Pretreatment Program and has since taken on

oversight of sludge incinerator compliance, DPCC and Right-to-Know programs, and is now assisting with NJPDES permit compliance while leading PFAS testing efforts. Through her growing expertise and dedication to regulatory compliance and environmental protection, Ms. Hoffman continues to make a meaningful impact on the Authority and the industry.

Ms. Hoffman has played a significant role in addressing complex environmental challenges, particularly related to PFAS. She has actively participated in the AEA NJPDES PFAS Working Group and its subcommittees, while also contributing to the filing of amicus briefs associated with PFAS Judicial Consent Orders involving major chemical manufacturers. Through this work, she has helped advance AEA’s efforts on PFAS issues and contributed to initiatives that may positively impact sewer ratepayers.

This is why Ellie Hoffman is being honored with an Up-and-Comer Wave Award.

Life Member



Thomas Horn

Tom is being honored with life member designation for his longstanding commitment to AEA. He retired as executive director

of Lambertville MUA in December 2025. From 1999 to 2000, Tom served as AEA

president and remained highly involved on the Education and Conference Committee, as well as the TCH Review Committee. He has regularly presented at AEA conferences over the years and participated in AEA's session at NJWEA Tech Transfer. Whenever needed, Tom has stepped in as past president and delivered the nominations report during the annual business meeting in Atlantic City. In earlier times, Tom could be found hanging pictures at the AEA headquarters.



Michael Wynne

Mike is the retiring executive director of Hanover Sewerage Authority and is being honored with Life Member recognition

because of his steadfast support of AEA through many, many years. Mike has consistently attended AEA conferences for years, and he has hosted AEA workshops and commissioners' workshops, and has been a backbone member of the AEA NJPDES Committee. In that capacity and more recently as a board of directors' member, Mike has been able to draw on past experiences as an operator/manager and his past experiences with regulators in situations whether he agreed with them or not, to help provide insight for AEA when we were discussing legislative matters, regulatory matters, or policy positions. Under his leadership, Hanover SA has

been a key supporter of AEA's current legal action objecting to a part of the State of New Jersey's PFAS settlement with 3M and DuPont. Under Mike's leadership, Hanover SA has won many Wave Awards, including one recognizing the Hanover's excellent asset management plan.

Best Management Practices



Cumberland County Utilities Authority

Phase 1 of the Cumberland County Utilities Authority (CCUA) Treatment Plant

Rehabilitation Project focused on improving critical infrastructure at its existing wastewater treatment facility to ensure reliable operations and extend the life of essential equipment. The plant serves a population of approximately 30,000 people in Bridgeton, Fairfield, Hopewell, Upper Deerfield, and Shiloh.

The CCUA facility was originally constructed in the late 1970s and had experienced limited major rehabilitation, resulting in many structural components exceeding their useful service life. The project addressed these issues by rehabilitating concrete surfaces in structures such as the headworks building, primary and secondary clarifiers, aeration tanks, and chlorine contact tanks. Work also included replacing degraded piping, applying corrosion inhibitors, placing new concrete floors, replacing structural steel, and more.

A key challenge was completing the rehabilitation while the treatment plant remained fully operational, including coordinating work around seasonal treatment requirements. Despite these challenges, the project successfully extended the useful life of the treatment infrastructure while allowing the plant to continue normal operations, without creating a financial burden for ratepayers.

This is why Cumberland County Utilities Authority has been recognized with a Wave Award in Best Management Practices.



Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority

Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority's

(SRVSA) Plantwide Electrical Rehabilitation Project and its Plantwide Mechanical Rehabilitation Project represent a comprehensive effort to modernize a wastewater treatment facility that dates back to 1958.

The Electrical Rehabilitation Project, completed in 2022, involved the removal and replacement of nearly all motor control centers throughout the plant, many of which dated back to the facility's original construction. This work also included cleaning up outdated electrical conduits and equipment, bringing the plant's systems up to current safety standards, and improving overall reliability. The ongoing Mechanical Rehabilitation Project focuses on replacing

aging mechanical equipment, piping, and systems with more durable materials such as stainless steel, as well as constructing a new Headworks Building designed to accommodate future expansion and improve treatment processes.

These projects are being carried out with the leadership of key staff members, including Assistant Executive Director and Manager of Engineering Sherwin Ulep and Plant Superintendent Anthony Tambasco, whose combined expertise in engineering, operations, and maintenance has been critical to the success of these complex initiatives.

It's projects like this that led to Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority being recognized with a Wave Award in Best Management Practices.

Forward Thinking Award



Willingboro Municipal Utilities Authority

The Willingboro Municipal Utilities

Authority (WMUA) H2Opportunity Pre-Apprenticeship Program is an innovative workforce initiative introducing students to careers in water and wastewater. Recognized as the first of its kind in the nation, it prepares students through technical education and career readiness training.

The program includes instruction, hands-on

learning, and partnerships with schools and community organizations to build a pipeline into the industry.

The program addresses two critical challenges: the aging workforce within the water utility sector and the need to provide young people with access to skilled technical career opportunities. The initiative demonstrates how municipal utilities can play a proactive role in developing the next generation of environmental and infrastructure professionals benefiting the Authority, industry, and community .

Commissioners Lindsay-Harvey and Diggs gave a presentation on this program at last years' annual meeting and conference.

This is why Willingboro Municipal Utilities Authority has earned a Wave Award in Forward Thinking.

Public Education Award



Willingboro Municipal Utilities Authority

The Willingboro
Municipal Utilities

Authority (WMUA) developed a comprehensive public education and community engagement campaign to increase awareness of water and wastewater services and their importance to public health. Recognizing that many residents

are unfamiliar with the complexity of utility infrastructure, the Authority partnered with a professional public relations firm to create its program. This campaign incorporated digital communications, media outreach, and public awareness initiatives.

A key component of the campaign focused on informing residents and local officials about the potential impacts of the NJDEP v. 3M and DuPont PFAS settlement, helping the public understand how contamination and treatment costs could affect municipal water systems. WMUA also launched a monthly educational social media series to translate complex technical topics—such as water conservation, infrastructure, and wastewater treatment—into accessible information for the public.

Through these efforts, WMUA successfully increased public awareness, improved transparency, and fostered stronger community engagement around water and environmental issues. By overcoming challenges such as simplifying technical information and engaging the public on often overlooked infrastructure topics, WMUA created a replicable model for effective public education.

This is why Willingboro Municipal Utilities Authority is being recognized with a Wave Award in Public Education. ✨

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, Manuel Ponte,
Dr. Apryl Roach, John Scheri, Bob Shertenlieb
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:

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

