


## UIM Hosts Unique, Well-Received Water Finance Conference

September 10, 2015

BRECKSVILLE, Ohio — More than 100 finance professionals in the areas of water, wastewater and stormwater gathered last week in Cleveland, Ohio, for the inaugural Water Finance Conference. Organized and hosted by UIM: Water Utility Infrastructure Management, the leading journal of finance and management for water and wastewater professionals, the event was a huge success.



The theme of the two-day conference, held Sept. 1-2, was “Innovative Strategies for Funding Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Infrastructure” and was aimed at reaching municipal finance officers, utility CFOs and financial consultants in those three areas.

The conference agenda featured presentations and panel discussions covering three main topic areas: rate setting and affordability; private financing and private capital investment for public utilities; and trends in public utility financing.

“Without a doubt, finding money to solve our water infrastructure problems is one of the biggest challenges facing our cities,” said Bernie Krzys, publisher of UIM. “There are many innovative ways to address these finance issues, but we felt there was not a conference fully dedicated to providing a forum for discussion on money geared specifically toward finance professionals. To bring a focus to this, we organized the first annual Water Finance Conference.”

MWH Global served as the main event sponsor, with many other companies helping support the event, including Echologics, Cleveland Water Alliance, RePipe 4710, Squire Patton Boggs, Tyler Technologies, SplashLink and Key Bank.

Several industry organizations were involved in the event as supporting associations, including the National Association of Water Companies (NAWC), the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), the U.S. Water Alliance, the Sustainable Water Infrastructure Coalition (SWIC), the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), the National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA), the Ohio Government Finance Officers Association (Ohio GFOA), the Clean Water Council and the International Private Water Association (IPWA).

The conference was held at the Great Lakes Science Center in downtown Cleveland. The location attracted prominent water industry leaders in the region, including Alex Margevicius, interim commissioner of Cleveland Water, Julius Ciaccia, CEO of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS), Jennifer Demmerle, CFO of NEORS and Yvette Downs, CFO of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC).

The event also drew leaders of some of the most largest water/wastewater policy advocacy groups in the United States, including Michael Deane, executive director of the NAWC, Adam Krantz, CEO of NACWA and Radhika Fox, CEO of the U.S. Water Alliance and director of the Value of Water Coalition.

George Hawkins, general manager of DC Water, served as the keynote speaker, delivering an intriguing talk to conference attendees on the evening of Sept. 1 during a networking reception. Hawkins’ impressive background makes him one of the most knowledgeable

experts in the water, wastewater and stormwater industry. During his time at DC Water, Hawkins has implemented a 10-year program to improve aging infrastructure while complying with ever-developing regulatory requirements.

Planning is currently underway for the 2016 Water Finance Conference. For updates and to view information about this year's conference, visit [www.waterfinanceconference.com](http://www.waterfinanceconference.com).

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*UIM: Water Utility Infrastructure Management*, published by Benjamin Media, Inc., is a bi-monthly professional journal covering finance and management in the municipal water, wastewater and stormwater sector. UIM has also hosted the popular Water Asset Management Conference in conjunction with the Sustainable Water Infrastructure Management (SWIM) Center at Virginia Tech for 15 years.

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Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies  
1620 I Street, NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20006

Tel: 202.331.2820 | Fax: 202.785.1845

[info@amwa.net](mailto:info@amwa.net) | [privacy policy](#)