



ASSOCIATION OF  
METROPOLITAN  
WATER AGENCIES

# UNITING LEADERS EFFECTING CHANGE

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



## MISSION

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AMWA's primary objective is to be the unified and definitive voice for the nation's largest publicly owned drinking water systems on regulatory, legislative, and security issues. To this end, the association works with Congress and federal agencies to ensure safe and cost-effective federal drinking water laws and regulations and to develop federal-local partnerships to protect water systems and consumers against acts of terrorism and cybercrime.

AMWA is also committed to the collection and exchange of management, scientific, and technical information to support competitive utility operations, effective utility leadership, safe and secure water supplies, and effective public communication on drinking water quality.



Dear Colleagues,

To effect the change required for the success and sustainability of today's drinking water utilities, it's essential that industry leadership be inspired, informed and aligned around a shared direction. In 2018, the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies engaged and supported its members, tapping into their talents and experience to identify and implement transformative approaches to many of the most difficult challenges facing the sector.

In the nation's capital, AMWA played an influential role in the passage of America's Water Infrastructure Act, which features an EPA grant program for adapting utility infrastructure to impacts of climate change and extreme weather, among other important provisions. Our efforts also helped turn back a proposal that would have weakened the WIFIA program, which is just beginning to show its potential.

AMWA committees provide members many opportunities to influence the association's policy perspectives. The Regulatory Committee, for example, worked closely with staff to engage EPA on topics ranging from transparency in regulatory science to lead and copper regulation.

Strong member participation in the 2018 INSIGHT utility financial survey resulted in a robust up-to-date resource for water system management. AMWA also recruited members to provide expertise for national initiatives on peer-to-peer utility cooperation and to address the industry's significant workforce challenges.

AMWA's all-hazards security posture was reflected in its continued strong relationships with key federal security agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security and EPA's Water Security Division. Member utilities were involved in a FEMA-led hurricane exercise, and the association joined forces with EPA for a national summit on resilience to long-duration power outages.

AMWA's achievements in 2018 are a testament to what can be accomplished when water utility leaders are united to effect change. By bringing together diverse perspectives to advance common purposes, we accelerate policies and programs designed to further our commitment to safe and secure drinking water for all our communities. In the coming year, I hope you will consider how you can participate in AMWA so we can continue to leverage our leadership resources on behalf of the nation's drinking water utilities and our customers.

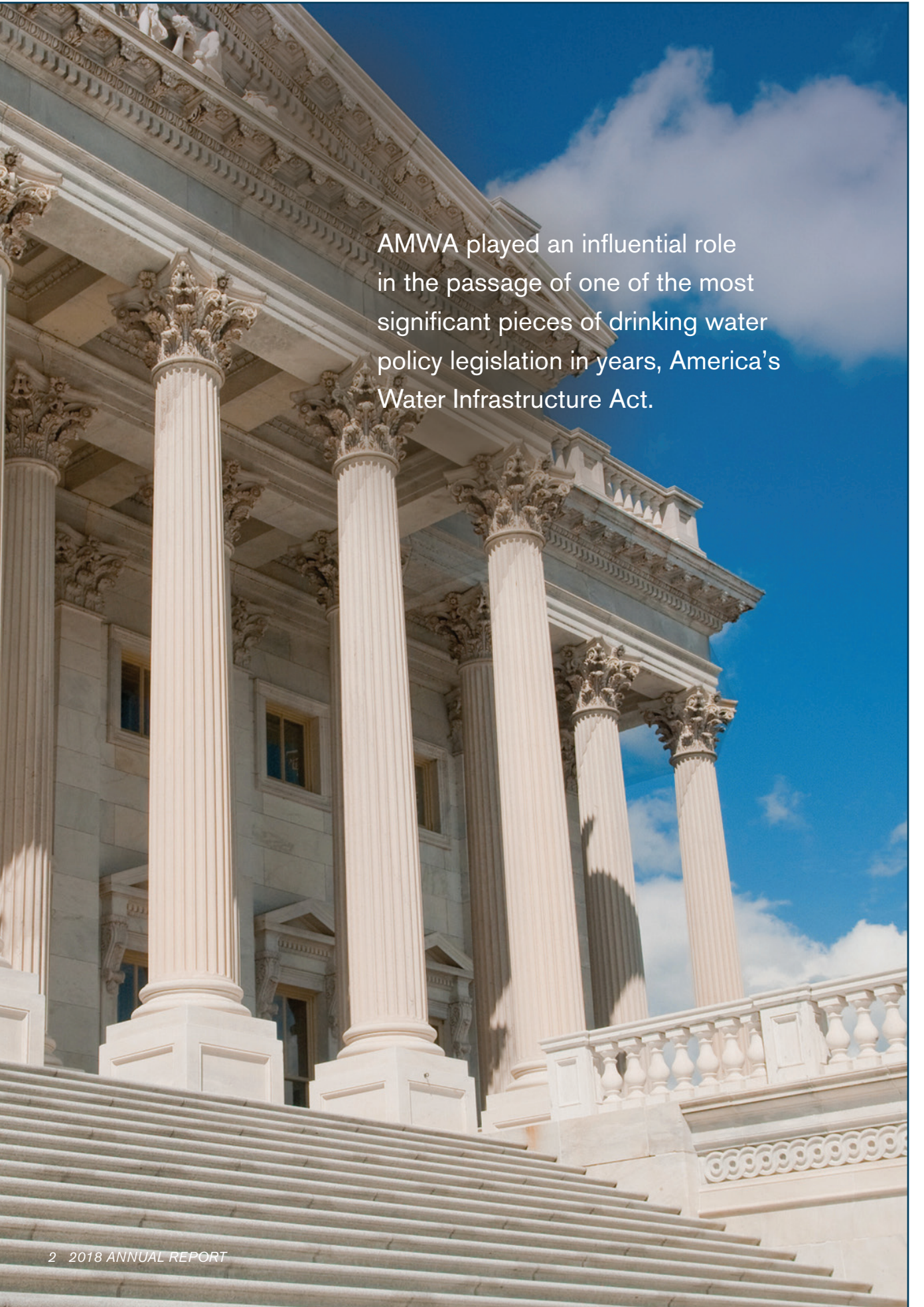


Sincerely,

*Mac Underwood*

Mac Underwood  
*2018 AMWA President*





AMWA played an influential role in the passage of one of the most significant pieces of drinking water policy legislation in years, America's Water Infrastructure Act.



## A UNITED VOICE ON CAPITOL HILL

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While lawmakers on Capitol Hill found plenty to argue over in 2018, the importance of drinking water infrastructure was one notable area of bipartisan agreement that brought the nation's political leaders together. AMWA was proud to play an influential role in developing and supporting one of the most significant pieces of water policy legislation to be enacted in years.

Early hopes for Congress to approve a comprehensive infrastructure bill in 2018 fizzled as the year went on, and instead policymakers turned to a series of somewhat smaller scale – but still meaningful – infrastructure proposals. One of these came to be known as America's Water Infrastructure Act by the time it was signed into law in October. The enacted legislation reflects many of AMWA's highest priorities.

Through ongoing engagement with key congressional leaders, targeted advocacy by AMWA members, and one-on-one meetings with Capitol Hill staff, AMWA promoted support for provisions in America's Water Infrastructure Act that would codify the ability of community water systems to send consumer confidence reports to customers electronically and for the creation of a new EPA grant program that will help drinking water systems adapt their infrastructure to the effects of climate change and extreme weather. Both of these provisions were included in the final legislation primarily because AMWA engaged with leaders on both sides of the aisle.

Moreover, AMWA worked cooperatively with its colleagues in the water sector to unite in opposition to another proposal that would have weakened EPA's Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program. With the help of individual AMWA members who wrote to their representatives and senators to plead for the preservation of WIFIA, the association engaged with dozens of congressional offices to educate lawmakers and staff about how the new proposal would impair the ability of communities in their states to access low-cost water infrastructure financing. Ultimately, America's Water Infrastructure Act excluded virtually all of the most problematic parts of this new proposal, while simultaneously shoring up the immediate future of WIFIA with a new two-year reauthorization.

AMWA looks forward to building on this success in 2019, when debates over infrastructure investment, climate change resiliency, and regulatory oversight will begin anew. The association is eager to once again serve as a uniting force through which metropolitan utility leaders come together to effect positive change.



## A SHARED VISION IN A CHANGING REGULATORY CLIMATE

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The Trump administration's deregulatory agenda moved ahead as myriad proposals were released this year. Rule development for contaminants like lead and perchlorate can take years, however, and AMWA played a vital role in the federal regulatory process by serving as a unified voice for members and by keeping members informed of changes throughout these years-long processes.

At the forefront of the regulatory overhaul is EPA, where a change in leadership this past summer did not change the agency's direction. AMWA staff and its Regulatory Committee engaged EPA every step of the way, holding numerous calls and submitting eight separate comment letters on topics ranging from transparency in regulatory science to lead and copper. The Regulatory Committee also collaborated with AMWA's Security and Sustainability Committees on letters to EPA regarding accidental release prevention requirements and endangered species.


In 2018 AMWA was invited to participate in EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Consultation as well as the PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) National Leadership Summit and Engagement. Each afforded AMWA a unique opportunity to engage EPA early in the regulatory process and allowed utilities' concerns and priorities to be heard. AMWA used these opportunities to advocate for regulatory flexibility and the use of sound science.

The association submitted comment letters to other agencies as well, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Forging and maintaining relationships with all federal regulatory agencies is central to effecting policy changes and ensuring utilities' needs and concerns are heard.

AMWA maintained its involvement as a steering committee member with the Lead Service Line Replacement Collaborative, which will serve as a vital resource for developing the association's policy positions as EPA rolls out the revised Lead and Copper Rule proposal in 2019. The association also continues active membership in the Source Water Collaborative, engaging other member organizations to advocate for and protect source water. These relationships are essential for staying well-informed of new regulatory developments, influencing federal policy, and continuing to strengthen AMWA's standing within the regulatory and scientific communities.

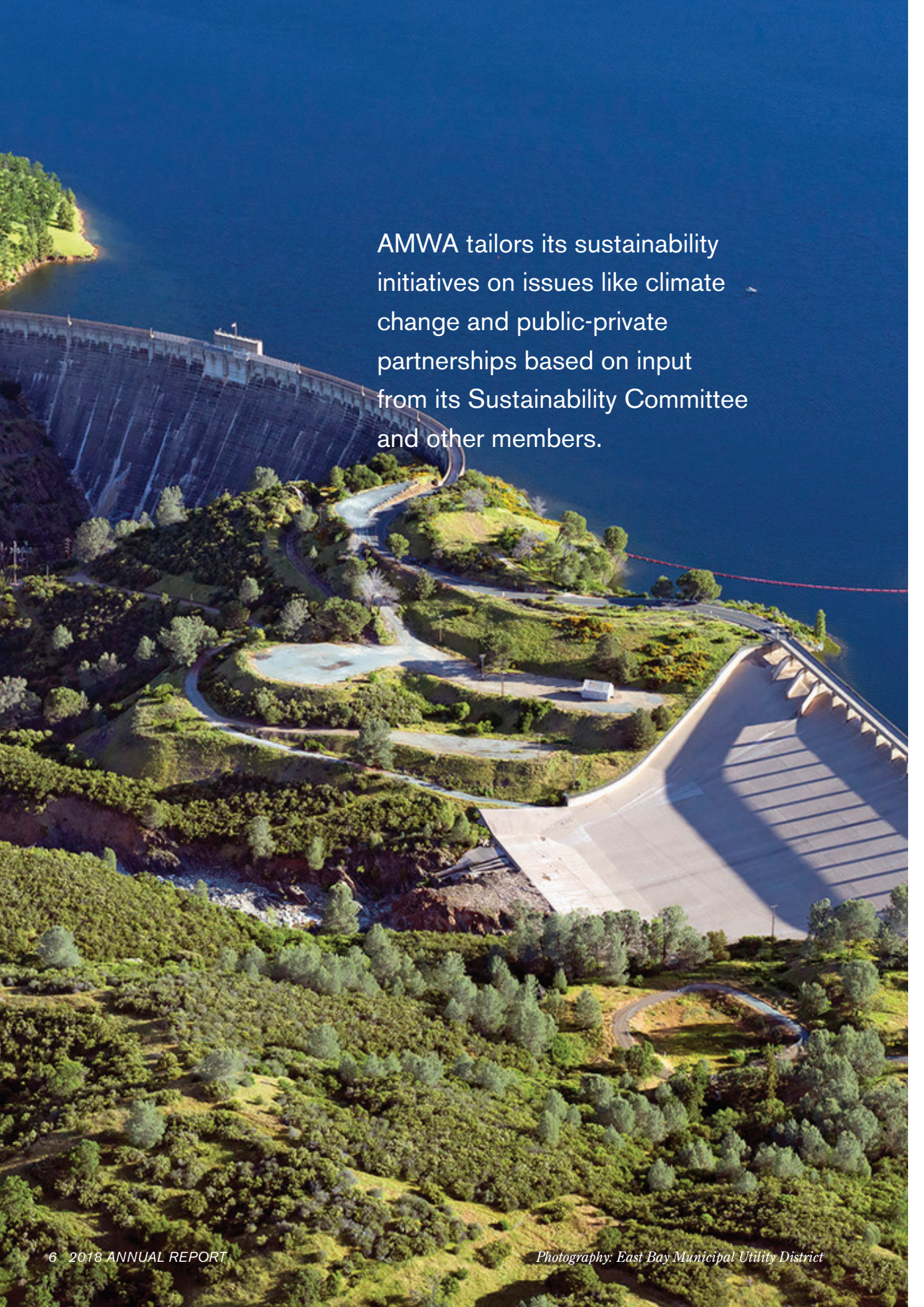
2018 was a busy year for regulatory change. AMWA remains committed to providing insight and engaging both its members and the agencies that regulate them throughout the coming year.



A wide-angle photograph of the Chicago skyline as seen from across Lake Michigan. The water in the foreground is a deep blue with gentle ripples, reflecting the sky and the buildings. The skyline is composed of numerous skyscrapers of varying heights and architectural styles. On the left, a tall, white, rectangular building with vertical lines stands out. Next to it is a large, dark blue glass skyscraper. To the right, the Willis Tower is visible with its two prominent antennas. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The overall scene is bright and clear, suggesting a sunny day.

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AMWA tailors its sustainability initiatives on issues like climate change and public-private partnerships based on input from its Sustainability Committee and other members.



## A COLLECTIVE EFFORT TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

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AMWA works to support its members' pursuit of sustainable strategies and practices, helping ensure each utility can both fulfill its mission in the present and meet its future commitments. Each year, AMWA tailors its sustainability initiatives for member executives based on input from its Sustainability Committee and other members.

Exploring alternative project delivery and public-private partnerships (P3s) was a focus in 2018. AMWA began the year by releasing a white paper about alternative project delivery that defined concepts and terminology. The release of the whitepaper kicked off a year-long initiative called *Exploring Avenues for P3s*. As a result of feedback from two discussion sessions held during the Water Policy Conference, AMWA scheduled three webinars that focused on different aspects of alternative project delivery approaches and developed a webpage with resources about P3s.

The webinars walked members through a spectrum of issues on the P3 topic, from state and local regulatory frameworks for supporting alternative project delivery to the many types of projects other than large infrastructure projects that could be accomplished via alternative delivery methods. Delivery approaches including construction management at risk, contract O&M, progressive design-build, and design-build-finance-operate-maintain were profiled. Alternative project delivery and P3s will remain on the association's radar, and AMWA will consider future initiatives as needed.

AMWA also left its mark on the *Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume 2: Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States*, a federal report that examined the potential impacts of climate change on the environment, society, and individuals. AMWA commented on the document and communicated directly with the water chapter authors ahead of its November release. AMWA's concerns were reflected in the final product, which was better focused on potential impacts to the water sector.

During the summer, AMWA staff developed two comment letters in concert with its Sustainability and Regulatory Committees. In response to the Trump administration's proposed changes to the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, the letters strongly supported both statutes as fundamental environmental protection laws, yet voiced support for efforts to introduce more clarity and regulatory certainty to these rules.

AMWA completed its second year in an administrative support contract with the Water Utility Climate Alliance. This relationship enables AMWA to gain a deeper knowledge of the latest research and decision support approaches utilities are using to adapt to climate change. It also bolsters AMWA's ability to remain at the forefront of climate change issues for the water sector.



## A COOPERATIVE APPROACH TO EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

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To successfully identify and promote sustainable utility management practices, there is no better source than the committed leaders of the nation's best-run water systems. Throughout 2018 AMWA brought together top executives from its member utilities to help develop an impressive range of practical resources to advance management excellence.

2018 marked the sixth biennial INSIGHT utility financial information survey, and more than 100 members provided comprehensive data that underpins this uniquely relevant database for benchmarking, identifying trends, and developing financial reports.

AMWA honored 14 member utilities with its top utility management awards in 2018. Winners of the Sustainable Water Utility Management Award were Boston Water and Sewer Commission, Chicago Department of Water Management, Denver Water, East Bay Municipal Utility District, Las Vegas Valley Water District, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, Scottsdale Water, and Tucson Water. The three winners of the Platinum Award for Utility Excellence were Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, Fort Collins Utilities, and Knoxville Utilities Board. The Gold Award for Exceptional Utility Performance was presented to the City of Ann Arbor Water Utility, Cleveland Water, and Greenville Utilities Commission.

AMWA and its members collaborated extensively with EPA and other water

associations in support of utility management during the year:

- the HUB Utility Task Force's work to establish a network of high-capacity water utilities engaged in peer exchange and to develop a pilot program to test a process for expanding such exchange in the water sector;
- the National Water Sector Convening on Workforce Development, which brought together water utility representatives with training and educational organizations, professional associations, community organizations, and government agencies to address workforce needs and opportunities;
- the Water Research Foundation's project to examine legal, political, institutional, and financial barriers to formation of mutually beneficial partnerships between water systems;
- the Value of Water Campaign's national public opinion poll, Infrastructure Week, and Imagine a Day without Water advocacy initiative; and
- EPA's publication of *Effective Utility Management in Action*, showcasing AMWA member utilities and others that are applying the industry-standard management framework in their operations.

AMWA continued its commitment to the Water and Wastewater Leadership Center, and through 10 Member-to-Member Inquiry surveys provided members access to the insights of colleagues on a variety of specific water management challenges.





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## A COLLABORATION AGAINST ALL HAZARDS

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AMWA continued to play a significant role in 2018 in the water sector's security efforts, making its presence felt in the homeland security community through its relationships with the various divisions of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), EPA's Water Security Division, and other federal agencies. The association also managed the Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center (WaterISAC), the premier center for information related to both physical and cyber threats to the water sector and its assets, and collaborated with multiple partners, including the Electric Infrastructure Security Council, the National Council of ISACs, and industry associations.

AMWA and WaterISAC remained active during the year with the Water Sector Coordinating Council (WSCC), a group that advises government agencies, including EPA and DHS, on federal programs related to water sector security. The association also championed the water sector's listing as a separate entity under DHS's new community lifelines framework and under the current Emergency Support Function framework in an ongoing effort to move water toward an equal footing with the other critical lifeline sectors.

Members of the AMWA staff assisted in planning the FEMA-led National Level Exercise



AMWA made its presence felt in the homeland security community, was active in key national security organizations and robustly participated in the planning and implementation of critical exercises.



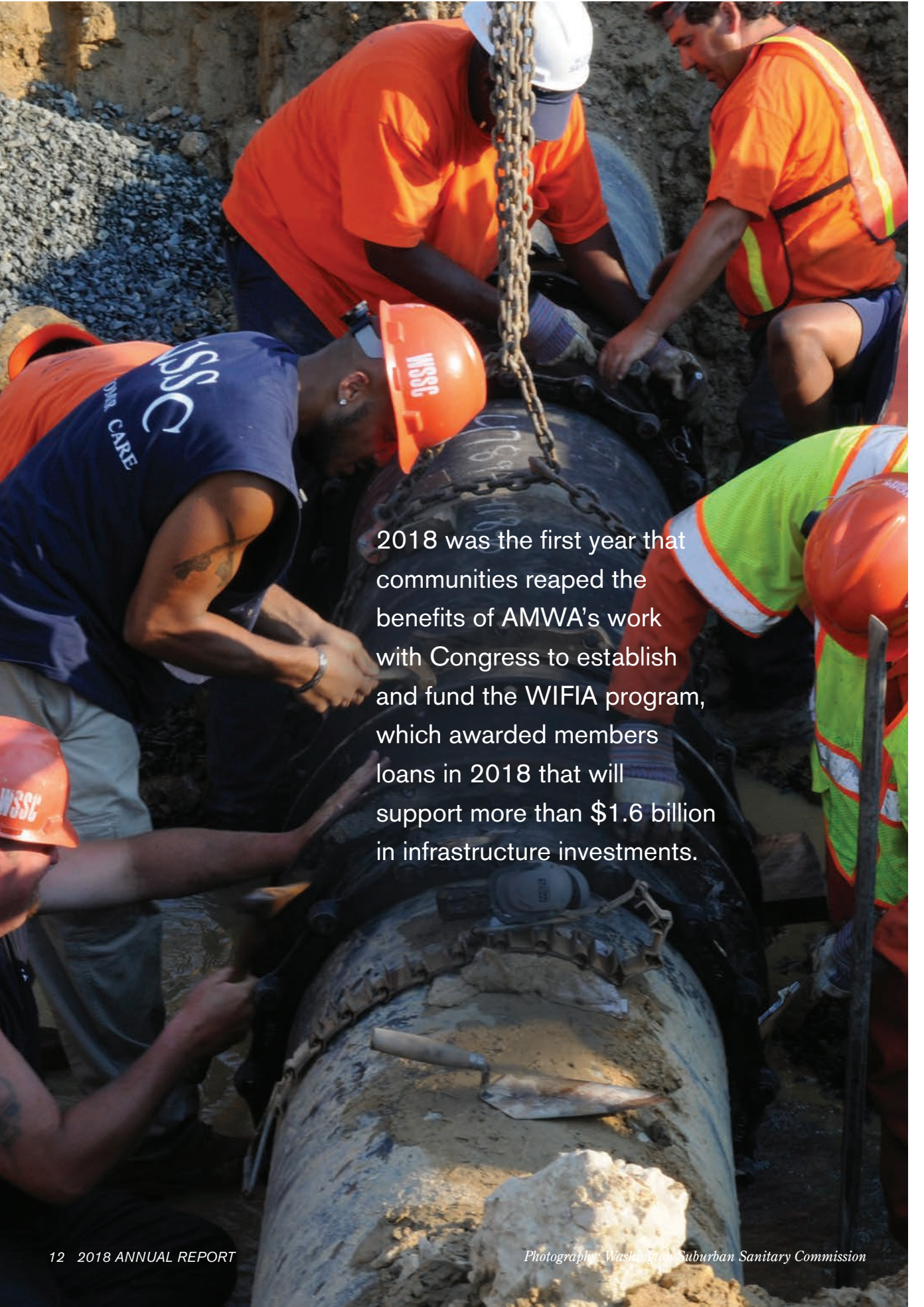
2018 (NLE 2018). The scenario, conducted in May 2018, involved a hurricane making landfall in the mid-Atlantic states. Sixty-seven local jurisdictions and over 12,000 individuals participated in the ten-day exercise, which focused on protective actions, response and recovery planning, continuity, power outages, and critical interdependencies. AMWA also collaborated with EPA and other water sector groups in the planning of a water sector-focused exercise in conjunction with NLE 2018.

AMWA participated in the planning and conduct of an EPA-hosted national summit on developing resilience to long-duration, widespread power

outages. The event was attended by drinking water and wastewater utilities, water and energy associations, electric utilities, and local, state, and federal government agencies. WaterISAC also partnered with the National Association of Water Companies to present two webinars related to long-duration power outages. The first, in January, focused on the risks and consequences of such events while the second, in November, discussed how utilities can develop and implement an emergency fuel supply plan. WaterISAC also continued to host monthly cyber threat briefings to alert the water sector to the latest risks to its systems.







2018 was the first year that communities reaped the benefits of AMWA's work with Congress to establish and fund the WIFIA program, which awarded members loans in 2018 that will support more than \$1.6 billion in infrastructure investments.



## A NATIONAL FOCUS LEADING TO LOCAL BENEFITS

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AMWA affords its members a unified front before Congress and federal agencies to ensure laws and regulations protect public health and address community needs in a cost-effective way. As drinking water utilities are essential partners in their local communities, AMWA took numerous opportunities at the national level during the past year to support members' efforts to positively impact the communities they serve.

2018 was the first year that communities reaped the benefits of AMWA's work with Congress to establish and fund the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), which supports projects that are typically too large for meaningful State Revolving Fund assistance. AMWA members received two of the six WIFIA loans financed in 2018. These loans, totaling over \$740 million, will support more than \$1.6 billion in infrastructure investments. Several other AMWA members were invited to submit applications for WIFIA loans in 2018 and 2019. These loans could total nearly \$1.1 billion and support more than \$2.8 billion in infrastructure projects.

Moreover, in 2018 Congress delivered the first funding for a new EPA grant program that will help communities and low-income homeowners replace lead service lines. AMWA aided in the design of this program, which Congress approved in 2016. With initial funding now in hand, EPA will soon begin to solicit applications from communities.

Local benefits also accrued from AMWA's actions to weigh in on the Trump administration's proposed revisions to streamline the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act. Acknowledging the potential benefits of more efficient assessment processes for its members, the association emphasized that policy changes would have local consequences and stated that revisions must be well-defined to protect utilities from inconsistent process application or unnecessary duplication of effort.

AMWA's continued engagement with the federal government on revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) and techniques for addressing emerging contaminants such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) also supported community benefits for member utilities. The association participated in both EPA's federalism consultation for the LCR early in 2018 and the EPA-hosted PFAS summit in May. Its comments to the agency for both topics were informed by members' experiences with the contaminants in their own communities.





AMWA cohosted an international Executive Resilience Building Forum to provide water and wastewater utilities from around the world an opportunity for a deeper dive into climate-impact subject areas.



## AN INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE TO BUILD EXPERIENCE

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AMWA continued its international involvement in 2018 by hosting W-SMART (Water Security Management Assessment Research and Technology) – an international association of water and wastewater utilities for sustainable water security – at the Executive Management Conference in San Francisco. W-SMART speakers from Portugal, the Netherlands and Israel participated in the program focusing on resilience, smart cities, and extreme events.

Thierry Witkowitz, Senior Vice President of VEOLIA, focused on *Resilient and Smart Cities*. Arie Amsalem, Deputy CEO, Mekorot, Israel, and Avraham Ben Josef, Vice President of System Integration Engineering, also from Mekorot, exchanged ideas and knowledge on *Climate Resilient Strategies for Extreme Water Stress*. And Alexandra Cristóvão, Director, Corporate Sustainability Division, EPAL, Portugal, shared her experiences with a *Year of Extremes* ranging from raging wildfires to severe drought.

In collaboration with the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, the Water Utility Climate Alliance (WUCA), and W-SMART, AMWA also hosted a half-day Executive Resilience Building Forum to provide water and wastewater utilities an opportunity for a deeper dive into climate-impact subject areas such as water reclamation and energy, as well as crisis management and resilience building challenges.

AMWA and WUCA members shared with forum participants their experience with reaching out to community stakeholders as they plan for their future water supply. Lurna Kaatz, Climate Program Director at Denver Water, shared how wildfires and other current events were shaping Denver Water's approach to addressing climate change impacts in its watershed. Daryl Slusher, Assistant Director at Austin Water, shared Austin Water's experience with water reclamation and energy recovery.



## A LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO STRENGTHEN THE WATER SECTOR

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Since its founding in 1981, AMWA has united executives of the nation's largest drinking water utilities in a unique coalition to provide leadership and effect change on issues of importance to their systems and their customers. In 2018 AMWA members continued to exemplify this leadership, and the association provided many opportunities for them to expand their outreach while providing valuable service to the water sector.

AMWA committee chairs in 2018 included:

- Legislative Committee – **Jeff Szabo**, Suffolk County Water Authority;
- Regulatory Committee – **Ron Lovan**, Northern Kentucky Water District;
- Utility Management Committee – **Mark Knudson**, Tualatin Valley Water District, and **John Spatz**, DuPage Water Commission;
- Security Committee – **Dean Dickey**, Prince William County Service Authority, and **Kevin Gertig**, Fort Collins Utilities;
- Sustainability Committee – **Jim Lochhead**, Denver Water, and **Rosemary Menard**, Santa Cruz Water Department;
- Policy Resolutions Committee – **Cathy Bailey**, Greater Cincinnati Water Works; and,
- International Committee – **John Sullivan**, Boston Water and Sewer Commission.

The winner of AMWA's 2018 President's Award, **Douglas Yoder** of Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department, and Donald R. Boyd Award winner **Rudy Chow** of the Baltimore City Department of Public Works, were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the association and the water sector.

AMWA representatives to the Water Research Foundation Board of Trustees were **Ron Lovan** of Northern Kentucky Water District and **John Sullivan** of Boston Water and Sewer Commission.

**Charles Stevens** of Kansas City Water represented AMWA on the American Water Works Association's Water Utility Council.

**John Sullivan** of Boston Water and Sewer Commission chaired the WaterISAC Board of Managers, which also included AMWA members **Sue Schneider** of Spartanburg Water, **Kevin Gertig** of Fort Collins Utilities, and **Rob Teegarden** of Orlando Utilities Commission. **John Sullivan** and **Dean Dickey** of Prince William County Service Authority were AMWA representatives on the Water Sector Coordinating Council.

**Carrie Lewis** of the Portland Water District served as chair of EPA's National Drinking Water Advisory Committee, and **Mac Underwood** of Birmingham Water Works served as a member of the committee. **David Lipsky** of the New York City Department of Environmental



# LIGNMENT OF RESOURCES

AMWA provided its members many opportunities to expand their professional outreach and provide valuable leadership in the water sector.





Protection, **Jeff Swertfeger** of Cincinnati Water Works, and **Stephen Estes-Smargiassi** of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority were representatives to the Lead Service Line Replacement Collaborative. **Andrea Song** of Denver Water represented the association on the Partnership for Safe Water Steering Committee.

Members of the HUB Utilities Task Force were **Mac Underwood** of Birmingham Water Works, **Tim Kraus** of Louisville Water Company, and **Kathryn Sorensen** of Phoenix Water Services Department. National Water Sector Workforce Convening participants included **Kishia Powell** of the Atlanta Department of Watershed Management, **Kevin Gertig** of Fort Collins Utilities, and **Jeanine Reckdenwald** of South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority.

The agenda of AMWA's 2018 Executive Management Conference was highlighted by members willing to share their insights and experiences on challenging water issues:

- *Utility Perspectives on J.D. Power's Market Intelligence* – **Steve Schneider** of Saint Paul Regional Water Services, **Greg Meszaros** of Austin Water, **Douglas Yoder** of Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department, and **Julie Anderson** of Denver Water;
- *The Performance Excellence Journey to Baldrige Award Recognition* – **Kevin Gertig**, Fort Collins Utilities;
- *Leveraging Public Input to Make Difficult Choices for Low-Income Rates* – **Mark Knudson** and **Paul Matthews** of Tualatin Valley Water District;
- *Water System Consolidation – The Good, the Bad and the Lies You May Be Told* – **Mike Hooker**, Onondaga County Water Authority;
- *Panel: Making a Difference Through Innovative Utility Workforce Programs* – **Harlan Kelly** of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, **Kishia Powell** of the Atlanta Department of Watershed Management, and facilitator **Sue McCormick** of the Great Lakes Water Authority;
- *Attitude Reflects Leadership: Only Exceptional Employees Need Apply* – **Tad Bohannon**, Central Arkansas Water;
- *Panel on Workforce Programs That Work: Building a Workforce as Diverse as the Community We Serve* – **Ed Kerwin**, Orange Water and Sewer Authority; *Creating a Highly Specialized Engineering Team* – **Ben Groeneweg**, Fort Wayne Utilities; *Empowering Career Progression to Reduce Turnover* – **Daniel Smith**, WaterOne;
- *Sound Financial Practices for Sound Utilities* – **Bret Weingart**, Oklahoma City Utilities;
- *Calling Out Crews with a Single Click* – **Jeff Szabo**, Suffolk County Water Authority;
- *Emergency Response Planning: The Ongoing Nature of Lessons Learned* – **Bennett Horenstein**, Santa Rosa Utilities; and,
- *Panel: Spotlight on Resilience* – **Marc Cammarata** of Philadelphia Water Department, **Michael Carlin** of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, **Jim Lochhead** of Denver Water, **Angela Licata** of New York City Department of Environmental Protection, and facilitator **David Behar** of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.





AMWA committees harnessed water utility leadership to advance policy in areas of national legislation and regulation, utility management, security, sustainability, and international exchange.



# AMWA 2018 OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Birmingham Water Works*



Robert Davis  
*Cleveland Department of Public Utilities*



Ron Lovan  
*Northern Kentucky Water District*

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*St. Paul Regional Water Services*



Yvonne Forrest  
*Houston Public Utilities Division*



Sue McCormick  
*Great Lakes Water Authority*



Kevin Gertig  
*Fort Collins Utilities*



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*Municipal Water District of Orange County*



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*Boston Water and Sewer Commission*



Shane Chapman  
*Metropolitan Water District of Southern California*



Carrie Lewis  
*Portland Water District*



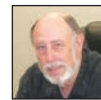
Jeffrey Szabo  
*Suffolk County Water Authority*



Rudolph Chow  
*Baltimore City Department of Public Works*



James S. Lochhead  
*Denver Water*



Douglas Yoder  
*Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department*

## AMWA STAFF

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Erica Brown  
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Dan Hartnett  
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Stephanie Hayes Schlea  
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Mikko McFeely  
*Manager, Resilience and  
Sustainability Affairs*

Eugenia Cadena  
*Senior Manager, Office  
Administration and Conferences*

Tim DeVenney  
*Manager, Website and  
Office Support*

Robert Saner  
*AMWA Counsel*





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1620 I Street, NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 331-2820

[www.amwa.net](http://www.amwa.net)