Solution H_2O

SPRING 2020

inside:

Providing solutions for Kansas to effectively manage water, the state's most important resource.

Why Be Nice? Customer Service at Water Utilities

by Michelle DeHaven, Wichita State University

Customer service in the public sector is often underrated. Governments must provide certain services to their communities regardless of how the public views the entity; however, that doesn't mean that customer service is not important.

Good customer service can engage the community, provide resources, and build relationships and trust. The public is used to a certain level of customer service in the private sector. Think Amazon, Hulu, Netflix, etc. If there is a problem, a private company generally will do what they can to improve the customer experience.

Governments, including water utilities, must take a holistic approach to providing services and creating a positive customer experience. Utilities

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American Water Works Association
Kansas Section

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News from the Chair

by Andrew Hansen, KsAWWA Chair

Wow! We are only three months into the year, and I'm certain that the year 2020 is going to be one of the most memorable for our generation due to COVID-19. Who would have ever predicted a pandemic of this magnitude and the disruption it has caused to our life? Well, Bill Gates got it pretty close back in March 2015 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Af6b_wyiwI). Just as Gates demonstrated with his survival barrel, we as professionals in the water industry are accustomed to dealing with challenges, so we come armed with some pretty strong tools of our own. Grounded on our core principal of protecting public health, we have vulnerability assessments, emergency response plans, and risk and resilience (R&R) assessments just to name a few. It would be interesting to know how many utilities included the threat of a highly infectious virus in their recent R&R assessments. If it wasn't, it certainly will be in the future after this life changing event.

The pandemic touches pretty much every faucet of our life, and AWWA is not immune. I was able to participate in an AWWA webinar March 13 titled "Dealing with the Coronavirus in your Section." The highlights of the call included discussion concerning insurance provisions, force majeure, and the feasibility of canceling versus postponing their state conferences. The reality is that our annual conference is the financial engine of the Kansas Section. As a board, we will continue to monitor the situation closely with hopes that the pandemic subsides before our conference in September.

Regarding our 12th Annual KWEA/KsAWWA Joint Conference on Sept. 1-3, 2020, at the Hyatt Regency in Wichita, planning continues full steam ahead. KsAWWA Chair-Elect Durward Johnson and KWEA President-Elect Jason Patty have been working closely with Hank Boyer and Tina Leitzel to develop a solid technical program. They have been thinking outside the box relative to the Meet & Greet and other events which make the conference an enjoyable and educational experience.

The keynote speaker this year will be Gregg Marshall, the head basketball coach for Wichita State University. Coach Marshall has transformed the Shockers into a nationally-respected program consistently ranked in the Top 25.

One last plug relative to the conference. Corporate and vendor sponsorship plays a big role in making the conference successful, so please visit the conference website and get this done. The sooner the better relative to priority placement of your logo on shirts, tables, and signage around the conference. Visit the conference website at https://kswaterwastewater.com.

A closing thought as we continue to deal with COVID-19. One of the guiding principles in my work life is "At Your Best." The underlying concept is that in order to be a high performer, you need to operate with positive intent and cast negative things aside. I would challenge each of you to be "At Your Best" as we strive to maintain public health through this pandemic.

Andrew Hansen, KsAWWA Chair
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Section Manager's Report

by Hank Corcoran Boyer, KsAWWA Section Manager

As I sit staring at my computer it is hard to find the words to write—while all of us have been dealing with COVID-19 over the past week (which feels like a month) I have rewritten my comments for Solution H2O several times. I looked back to see what I had written in 2019 for the spring issue and I was commenting on the weather and the amount of moisture we did or did not have. That seems mundane considering what is happening in our world today.

But with all that being said KsAWWA is moving forward with our planning of the 12th Annual Joint Conference in Wichita on Sept. 1-3, 2020. On Monday of this week (seems like years ago), Tina and I were at the Hyatt in Wichita with Jason and DJ on conference call doing some more planning for the conference. We have extended the papers deadline, and once we get those late papers, we will be meeting to put together the program as we pray it happens.

We are still looking for sponsorships for the conference and if you go to https://www.kswaterwastewater.com/exhibitors-sponsors/sponsorship-opportunities.html you can see the different levels of sponsorships and what they offer for you and your company. This is a large revenue generator for the joint conference and helps the associations bring you a class conference. The program committee this year has some great ideas and are looking to liven up the Exhibit Hall as well as give you some great and informative sessions to attend and update you on the latest and greatest in technology.

I know many of us are looking forward to ACE20 ,but as things have been happening AWWA has had many difficult decisions to make regarding RMSOs, workshops, etc. They are keeping a daily lookout as to what to do about ACE20 and will notify us as quickly as they decide on this convention. At the last communication I had from Ashley Longmore, our Section Services Representative, all systems are still go but that does change daily.

One item of interest about ACE20 is AWWA has asked the Sections not book any lunches or activities during the lunch hour and encourage our attendees to use their tickets for a lunch in the Exhibit Hall and then visit the many vendors who sponsor ACE. KsAWWA has traditionally held a lunch at a local venue on Monday of ACE and invited our attendees, AWWA personnel, etc. This year, we were going to do a 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. reception because the COVID-19 outbreak became so large so quickly I have not done any planning on that to save having to cancel at the last minute. If I see that things are going to

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Director's Report

by Stephen Randtke, KsAWWA Director

In January I attended the Winter Meeting of AWWA's Board of Directors in San Juan, Puerto Rico. This was my first visit to Puerto Rico and I found it to be a very beautiful place filled with warm, friendly people. The Puerto Rico Section was a great host and we had both a very enjoyable visit and a highly productive meeting. I was pleasantly surprised to run into Hector Julian Camareno, a KU chemical engineering alum serving as Chair Elect of the Puerto Rico Water and Environment Association.

Our meeting began on a somber note as we shared memories of Keli Jackson, an Executive Administrator at AWWA who was CEO David LaFrance's personal assistant and the primary contact person for AWWA's Board of Directors. She was murdered on New Year's Day in an act of domestic violence. There was a tremendous outpouring of love and support for Keli and her family from members of AWWA. Her brother, Kristoffer Jackson, told David LaFrance that she loved her work at AWWA because she loved the people of AWWA. He set up a GoFundMe site so people could "honor Keli and her legacy of giving and love … by supporting Project Pave," a local Colorado nonprofit organization seeking to end the cycle of relationship violence through education and action with youth. Over $22,000 was raised, and a great many of the donors were affiliated with AWWA.

As I'm sure many of you know, Puerto Rico was recently hit hard by two severe storms and a series of earthquakes. Our hotel showed no signs of damage, but a nearby hotel was badly damaged and closed for business. Water and sewer services had been completely restored in San Juan, but some rural areas were still being supplied with water delivered to large bladder tanks. Eli Diaz, Chairman of the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA), gave a lunchtime presentation describing the widespread infrastructure damage, the emergency measures taken, progress to date, and how very proud he was of the resilience of the people and their determined rebuilding efforts.

The month before the Board meeting in Puerto Rico, I spoke with Jonathan Yoder of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about a presentation at an upcoming conference at KU. He mentioned that a colleague had been working on a "hurricane recovery project" in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico focusing water quality in household water stored in cisterns, that CDC recently completed a study having implications for improving water storage and treatment in emergency settings, and that CDC has developed several drinking water advisory and other communication tools. Jonathan

graciously agreed to speak during our Board dinner and gave an outstanding presentation that held the interest of the entire audience and provided an excellent opportunity for AWWA to strengthen its ties with CDC, an organization that also has public health protection as its first and foremost goal.

AWWA's accomplishments in 2019 include:

- Increasing membership to 52,073, the first time above 52,000 in more than five years
- Net operating income $1 million over budget
- A strong ACE19 and a very successful D.C. Fly-In
- Refreshing the Association-Section Affiliation Agreements
- Advancing communities of interest (Finance, Legal, and IT)
- Securing over $2 million in grant funds for small system training
- Adding new training services
- The PFAS report, LCR updates, and AWIA tools

AWWA Goals for 2020 include:

- Evaluate an enterprise membership model (i.e., one considering all employees of an enterprise (e.g., a utility member) as AWWA members.
- Finish updating AWWA's Strategic Plan (then encourage Sections to review their strategic plans and consider aligning them with AWWA's)
- Launch Envoi, a platform that will provide AWWA members convenient online access to AWWA publications (journals, manuals, standards)
- Increase video streaming
- Add a wastewater package to Exam Prep
- Continue focusing on the Association-Section Business Model, including Section leadership training and collaboration guidelines
- Develop a strategy to help utilities build public trust in water
- Develop a grants management capacity strategy
- Continue closely following LT-LCR and PFAS developments and help utilities to comply and to communicate with the public

Elections

During the winter Board meeting, Chi Ho Sham, the visiting officer from AWWA at our Joint Conference in 2019 and a member of the New England Section, was voted in as President-Elect of AWWA. John Eaton (Minnesota Section) was elected Treasurer; Jennifer Elms (Texas Section), Patrick Staskiewicz (Michigan Section), and yours truly were elected as Vice Presidents (special thanks to the KsAWWA Board for their support!); and Michelle Stockness (Minnesota Section) and Corianne Burnett (Pacific Northwest Section) were elected as a Directors-at-Large. All will take office at the conclusion of ACE20.

Coronavirus

AWWA has been monitoring the spread and severity of the coronavirus. In a recent memo to the Board, AWWA CEO David LaFrance stated: "We are also taking precautionary steps to protect AWWA's employees, assess and plan for potential business impacts, and prepare for business continuity. Our operational objective is to be vigilant while also carefully continuing with our important work. This will require monitoring the risk of the virus, coordinating

and communicating throughout AWWA, and—if risks increase—making some difficult business decisions. For now, we have the luxury to plan and prepare, so we are doing just that." AWWA is also alerting its members to publications and online resources they may find helpful in dealing with a pandemic outbreak.

Source Water Protection Funding

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) allows for the formation of partnerships to address agricultural resource needs, including source water protection. The current round of funding is for $300 million nationally. In the application period that just ended, AWWA and its volunteers and consultants helped form five partnerships that completed applications. If funded, these five projects will deliver more than $11.8 million in source water protection, with nearly half of the funds coming from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). It's time for utilities to start gearing up for the next round expected to begin in June. This includes forming partnerships and discussing source water needs with NRCS, local conservation districts and the local agricultural community to lay the foundation for successful larger partnerships that can take advantage of future farm bill funding. AWWA's Source Water Protection Resource page links to several relevant resources. Interested utilities can contact Adam Carpenter, AWWA's energy and environmental policy manager in the Washington, D.C. office.

In response to EPA's proposed Long-Term Lead and Copper Rule (LT-LCR), AWWA submitted detailed comments to EPA in February, as did the KsAWWA Research Committee, under the leadership of John Gilroy and in cooperation with KDHE. AWWA continues to closely track this issue and has a wealth of information and resources available on its website to help utilities understand lead issues, comply with the current rule, prepare for future changes, communicate with their customers, assess their distribution systems, and work toward a future where drinking water no longer comes into contact with lead.

As always, please do not hesitate to share with me your opinions, suggestions, questions, and concerns, or to contact me for additional information regarding any matter relevant to AWWA or KsAWWA.

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break in the next week to 10 days, I will pursue that endeavour, and you will receive an invite to attend.

In the meantime, stay safe, follow your local regulations regarding social distancing, and together we will get through this and be the stronger for it.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in September!

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that show they understand the community's needs are off on the right foot when it comes to fostering a positive attitude toward their water services.

Customer service in the public sector is a difficult task. Water utilities are basically monopolies because where else is the public going to go for drinking water? This has the potential to create a mindset that does not always put customer needs first. But, understanding the customers' needs is beneficial for gaining support for new projects, discussing rate increases, and recruiting new employees.

Developing good customer service practices is a three-step process.

Utility staff who appreciate the variety of contributing factors to customer frustration can better manage the events that potentially lead to negative situations. When utility staff offer customers understanding, empathy, and sympathy a hot situation can cool-off and potential solutions or a request for patience are more likely to be accepted with gratitude. Preventing unpleasant interactions can lead to fewer intense situations and a more positive customer opinion of the water utility, and the community's government as a whole.

Louisburg, Kansas, is using specific language to diffuse heated conversations in order to be more cognizant of how emotion drives a customer's message. Utility staff's use of calm language can transition a difficult situation into a manageable encounter. A primary goal of customer engagement is to create pathways that angry, demanding, or impatient customers can use to become content, flexible, and understanding customers.

Small communities have unique challenges regarding customer service. Personal and professional boundaries can be blurred in small towns. Those complications can have direct impacts on how the community views their government and its utilities. For example, if a customer is trying to give their water payment to the utility clerk while at the grocery store, the clerk is encouraged to explain that payments can be made during business hours at city hall.

How does your water utility engage in customer service? How can your staff learn to prevent,

mitigate, and manage negative situations? It's a process that takes time to learn. Utilities must practice, fail, and try again to learn which customer service tactics works best for their community. There are a variety of tools and resources to help your utility begin the better customer service journey.

For information about bringing in-person or webinar-style Customer Service Training for your utility contact Michelle DeHaven, michelle.dehaven@wichita.edu, at Wichita State University Environmental Finance Center.

MOVE FROM

- Angry → Content
- Impatient → Understanding
- Intimidating → Calm
- Talkative → Listening
- Demanding → Flexible
- Indecisive → Decisive
- Complainer → Acceptance

Auditing Ourselves

by Bob Brower, KsAWWA Safety Committee Chair

When the word audit is mentioned, people generally think of a negative experience, an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax audit or of a confrontation. However, it is possible for audits to be positive.

First, let's consider the definition of audit: *a systematic or methodical review; to examine with intent to verify.*

Audits can apply to your job. From a safety standpoint, there is only one way to do a job—the safe way. Safety needs to be the first consideration in everything we do. It is possible that we may not always be doing this, so our continuing efforts to review or think about our jobs are auditing.

Contrary to an IRS audit which evaluates what we did not record, our job audit should evaluate what we did record. If we take the time to at least mentally think out the steps that we go through to perform a task, we can audit it to ensure we are safe.

Things to Consider When Auditing Ourselves

Look at these things before completing a task:

- PPE, do we have the correct eye protection? The correct gloves? Protective footwear?
- Do we need any special PPE such as a chemical apron or a harness?
- Is our PPE in good condition?
- Do we have the correct tools and are they in good shape?
- Do we know how to operate the tools or equipment?
- Do we know how to accomplish the task safely?
- Do we know the harmful energy sources around the area and have we isolated them?

These are a just a few of the questions we should ask, but they include some of the most important ones.

Ensure you do a quick audit, before accomplishing a task. A more thorough one should be done if we're doing something for the first time or for the first time in a long time.

Dive, Dry, or ROV: Which is the Best Option for Your Tank?

by Erin Schmitt, Pittsburg Tank & Tower Group

You wouldn't go and buy a Ferrari then not change the oil for 15 years. If you do, it's not going to last for very long. It's the same thing with a tank. It doesn't make sense to let a multimillion-dollar investment—as some tanks can cost—be left to fall apart due to lack of maintenance.

Maintenance should be part of a tank's life cycle. A tank left alone without any maintenance or repairs will start to deteriorate and corrode over time. Inspections and cleanouts are a must if you want to keep your tank in service and get your money's worth out of your investment.

Tanks should be washed out and inspected at least once every three years, according to AWWA M42. In areas where water supplies have sediment problems, the AWWA recommends annual washouts for potable water tanks. NFPA 25, which sets standards for fire protection tanks, recommends inspecting the interiors of steel tanks without corrosion protection every three years, while tanks with corrosion protection should be checked every five years.

Inspections and cleanouts can be conducted either by remote underwater operating vehicles, divers or, if the tank is emptied, by trained inspectors and cleanout crew members.

No matter what method is chosen, the tank owner should provide inspectors and cleanout crews with the blueprints, schematics and any previous inspection reports. This will give the crews a sense of the tank's layout before any work begins and it also gives them a heads up about potential problem areas or unresolved maintenance issues.

If possible, it's also helpful if the tank operators fill the tank to capacity before the tank crews clean it out. If too much vapor space—the space between the top of the water and the roof of the tank—is left; it can prevent the pumps that are being used to pull the sediment out of the tank from working due to the amount of weight and space the material must pass through prior to reaching the end of the discharge line.

The style of the tank may help determine what type of inspection or cleanout technique would work best. For instance, ROVs can't clean a witch's hat, also known as a tinman, style of water tower because the bowl of the tank is too steep. Torospheres, which kind of look like a spaceship out of a 1950s B movie, can also sometimes be difficult for an ROV to maneuver. Likewise, for composite towers with a concrete shaft and a metal tank. However, the majority of tanks can be inspected and cleaned by remotely operated underwater vehicles.

The most appealing aspect of an ROV inspection or cleanout is that the tank remains in service. That means the tank owner doesn't have to dump the

water or refill the tank – which can be both costly and time-consuming. No one enters the tank, which means that no lives are potentially put at risk either. The robot is equipped with a high-definition camera, allowing the operator to see inside the tank as they operate the ROV from the ground.

It's important to know before crews show up to the site if the robotic device hired is small enough to fit through the tank's manway. It's also important to know what kind of floor the tanks have. Bolted tanks can sometimes pose a problem for ROVs. If the tank has a bolted floor and the bolts are spaced closely together, the robot might have difficulty getting over the top of the bolts to clean. There's a chance that the robot will bottom out over the bolts and be rendered immobile. With ROVs, there's always the chance of equipment breaking down and causing potential delays so it's best to know upfront what obstacles lie in the tank's interior.

There are also instances where ROVs just won't work. For example, an upstate New York municipality might contract an ROV inspection in early winter when temperatures can fluctuate greatly. Between the time it takes for a crew to travel to a site, the temperature could have plunged from 40° to the single digits. If the tank is frozen then an ROV cannot be placed in the tank.

While a robot can clean a tank well, it's also constantly stirring up sediment as it rolls along the tank's floor. The robot will suck up the sediment on the bottom of the tank but won't catch sediment that's floating in the water after being disturbed. This sediment will eventually settle and leave a very light dusting on the floor.

An ROV does a good job cleaning a tank, but nothing can truly beat having people inside the tank cleaning it. A dry inspection is, in most cases, the most thorough overall inspection. Drained of water, inspectors can enter the tank and examine each inch of it by hand.

There are fewer potential obstacles for an inspection or cleanout crew if the tank is emptied of water. If it's a dry inspection, it doesn't matter if there's baffles, cathodic protection, or any kind of internal obstacle for the most part. Cleanout crews enter the tank and can see the full picture in person, using their shovels, squeegees, and trash pumps to wash out the tank.

As with ROV inspections and cleanouts, a tank can remain full and in service for a dive inspection or cleanout. Unlike with the ROVs, a trained, qualified diver will enter the tank to inspect or clean the tank thoroughly. There's no reliance on cameras, the diver can see everything in the tank in person. Divers also tend to stir up less sediment than robots with their large propellers. Another selling point for divers is that they can inspect and clean out any style of tank.

Since they are physically in the tank, divers can clean up all traces of sediment. Robots are able to rid tanks of most of their sediment, but since the machine stirs up dust and dirt, it cannot get the sediment particles floating in the water. Therefore, the ROV tends to leave behind a faint tracing of sediment, even after it's cleaned out.

Before entering into a contract for a tank cleanout, it's important to iron out the details of how the sediment will be discharged. Does the company handle discharge itself? Is that an option but it requires an additional cost? Always be mindful of local and state

environmental regulations when disposing of sediment.

It might be the company's policy to discharge the sediment on-site unless otherwise specified. The waste is a nonhazardous mix of sand and sediment, but some tank owners might not want it to be disposed of on-site – particularly if the tank is adjacent to households or businesses. Disposing of the waste might require tank owners to hire a roll-off company to provide dumpsters, which will add to the total cost for the project. What is collected in the tank will then likely have to be tested for heavy metals before its disposed of in a landfill. Testing requires additional money. It will likely also take a week or two at a minimum to receive the results of the test back. That means the waste has to remain in the dumpster until the results are returned.

FROM American Water Works Association

Want to Know More About AWWAIndia?

By Anuja Chodankar, Manager, AWWAIndia

American Water Works Association (AWWA) is the oldest and the largest association for water professionals with over 280 standards. In the community of the American Water Works Association (AWWA), AWWAIndia is the first international office outside of North America that started operations in late 2015.

American Water Works Association (AWWA) launch in India

With the formation of the AWWAIndia community, we aim to identify critical issues in the water industry and develop action plans to find solutions. These include technology adoption, building a skilled workforce, and standards & best practices through AWWAIndia's content-driven resources like specialized and customized workshops & training, the annual conference, and exhibition and **AWWAIndia membership** with exclusive benefits to the individual, corporate, utilities and student members. In these Four basic categories of membership, each offers advantages for professional growth, the acquisition of new skills, exposure to the water industry and enhanced technical knowledge.

AWWAIndia workshops and training help develop measurable knowledge & skills, expand professional network, led by industry specialists from AWWA and AWWAIndia. AWWAIndia has organized more than 9 trainings for utilities and service providers with an aim to focus on providing knowledge required to solve the problems and to refine the understanding of various issues related to water and wastewater treatment plants/facilities.

Workshop and Trainings

AWWAIndia has successfully conducted the below training programs:

- Training Session on Effective Utility Management & Asset Management- **2016, Mumbai**
- Workshop on GIS Applications & Asset Management for Water Utilities-**2016, New Delhi**
- Symposium on Energy Efficiency in Water and Wastewater Infrastructure-**2017, Mumbai**

- Understanding and Solving Problems at Water Treatment Facilities for TSRWSSP WORLD BANK Engineers and Operators at Hyderabad-**2017, Hyderabad**
- Understanding and Solving problems at Water Treatment Facilities-**2017, Vijaywada**
- Understanding and Solving Problems at Water Treatment Facilities-**2018, Bhopal**
- AWWA & World Bank India-Utility Management Workshop-**2019, Mumbai**
- Understanding and solving problems at wastewater (STP) treatment facilities-**2019, Pune**

In Each workshop and training, **40-60** trainees were successfully trained and were provided certificates from AWWA, with a focus on how the water-related issues can be addressed and managed effectively in India.

AWWAIndia have successfully organised 3 International conferences in India titled AICE17, AICE18, AICE19 for valued education, content-rich technical sessions & networking opportunities, with 'Total Water Solutions' as a theme and with 'Uniting the Indian Water Industry' as the objective, intending to bring together the policymakers, utilities, practicing engineers and academicians to find innovative solutions for the challenges facing the Indian water industry.

The first edition of AWWAIndia annual conference **AICE17** was conducted at Mumbai in 2017 which was attended by over **200 delegates** & **10 sponsors** well represented by both Government and industry.

The second edition of the AWWAIndia annual conference **AICE18** was conducted at Hyderabad in 2018. The conference was attended by over **270 delegates**, which was **25% more** from the previous year with **5 sponsors** and **3 media partners.**

Highlights of AICE

And the third annual conference **AICE'19** was organized very successfully at Mumbai in 2019 which was attended by over **252 delegates, 16 sponsors, 35 eminent speakers & 5 media partners**.

One of the important member benefits is the AWWAIndia's flagship Publication, Opflow India. This is a monthly magazine that provides hands-on guidance to make utility operations smoother and more efficient in India, with a focus on both new and best-established technologies.

Over the years AWWAIndia have been associated with the numerous media-partners and various exhibitions & events from the water industry as knowledge / supporting partner. AWWAIndia access to the water community and initiate fruitful conversations through a range of promotional and

Events and Exhibitions

Since 2015 AWWAIndia has participated in more than 20 events and exhibitions related to water and environment, such as 50th IWWA Conference in Goa, Express Water Jal, Watertech Wastetech India,Water & Sanitation Systems in India (organized by ANSI), Water Expo, Hyderabad, Supporting Association at the Municipalika, Knowledge Partner at 2nd Industrial Water Management Conference and many more.

AWWAIndia launched its first student chapter at IIT Bombay in Mumbai on World Environment Day, June 5, 2018 Attended by 14 CESE students the chapter was formed under the guidance of Prof. Suparna Mukherjee, Center for Environmental Science & Engineering (CESE). AWWAIndia is all set to open its second student chapter at IIT Roorkee in April 2020.

AWWAIndia is a strong team of 6 people led by our Head-India Operations Mr. Aninda Sen along with AWWAIndia strategic board;

- Sanjay Kamat - Chair AWWAIndia – VP Tata Projects Limited
- Shirish Kardile - Director & Past Board Chair AWWAIndia– K Consultations
- Dr. D. Hanumantha Chary–Director & Vice Chair, Training Committee Chair AWWAIndia - Contract Management and Technical Specialist
- Dr. Malini Shankar, IAS, - Director AWWAIndia - Director IL&FS
- Owais Farooqi – Director AWWAIndia - Black & Veatch Private Limited
- Shilpashree.M.S - Director AWWAIndia - Suez Water Technologies & Solutions (India) Pvt Ltd.

AWWAIndia provides an avenue to influence and shape the discussion on India water issues with our conferences, workshops & training, publications, membership benefits & best practices to the water sector/professionals at large.

Photos used by permission of AWWA India

Veterans Workforce Spotlight: Sarah Hoffman, KCK Board of Public Utilities

by Steve Nirschl, KsAWWA 1st Year Trustee

AWWA believes military members are a good fit for the water sector because of their technical expertise and experience working non-traditional hours in a regulated environment.

In early August 2017, AWWA President Brenda Lennox, CEO David LaFrance, former AWWA President Katie McCain, and other AWWA volunteers and staff met in Washington D.C. with representatives from Soldier for Life, Marine for Life, Veterans Affairs, the Department of Labour, and the Department of Défense to build awareness and strategies to help Veterans work in the water sector. The Veterans Workforce Initiative was thus born.
(source: https://awwa.org)

KsAWWA has several veterans employed within their utilities, and we are hoping to interview each of them and get some of their insight into what led them to a career in the water industry.

This time we are interviewing a military veteran from Kansas City Kansas Board of Public Utilities, Sarah Hoffman

Hoffman is from Brady, Nebraska. She is currently employed at KCK BPU as a Utility Operator. When asked what led her to a career in water treatment she said "while serving in the Marine Corps, [she] trained to install and maintain electrical generators and small water purification systems to accommodate field personnel while deployed in different countries for humanitarian and field training exercises."

Hoffman went to work for KCK BPU in May 2018. Previously she worked for the City of Olathe for three years. She said, "The constantly learning something new about the water treatment processes and the various equipment is the most enjoyable part of her job at KCK BPU."

Hoffman says the greatest accomplishment she is most proud of is, "serving in the Marine Corps because she got to see the world, learned leadership skills, discipline, and great work ethic."

She lives in Kansas City, Kansas; her hobbies include playing volleyball, running, and target shooting (Joint Conference Trap Shoot winner on the horizon). Something most people don't know about her is she played for the Marine Corps Volleyball Team.

Hoffman's philosophy on life is, "Treat people how you want to be treated. If you do that, everything else will fall into place."

Look for more articles about KsAWWA's veterans in the utility field in upcoming issues of Solution H_2O.

Tool Belt Safety

by Bob Brower, KsAWWA Safety Committee Chair

The tool belt is the mark of a tradesman, a hard-working person who knows how to get the job done. Using a tool belt correctly will help ensure your safety while you work.

As an active worker you need to have your tools handy and in order. Carrying your tools on a belt allows you to keep your hands-free for your tasks. Tool belts are commonly used in a great variety of occupations including; electricians, carpenters, steelworkers, plumbers and construction workers among many others. Even if you don't use one at work, chances are you use a tool belt for your home maintenance and renovation work.

It is important to secure tools and to guard sharp edges. A falling tool is subject to damage, and can also cause injuries to your feet, or to workers on a level below you. A sharp tool such as a knife or chisel can stab you if it is carried unsafely.

You must choose the right tool belt assembly to keep your implements safe and secure. Pockets, pouches and slots should be of the correct size and shape to keep your tools from falling out. The belt should be made of a sturdy material, reinforced for the points of tools. Fasteners should be effective and resistant to wear.

Tool belts must never be used as safety belts for working at heights.

Do not hang your tool belt up on nails, hooks or other protruding objects where it may cause an entanglement hazard around machinery, or an overhead hazard for people working below you.

A tool belt should be balanced so the weight is approximately equal on each side. You should be able to stand straight, with an imaginary line running from the top of your head, down your spine and to your feet. When the belt is heavier on one side, your back is pulled out of alignment. Repeated wearing cause's chronic discomfort and back problems. If you need most of your tools on one side for easy access, balance the other side with supplies such as nails or bolts.

Use broad-strapped suspenders to allow the muscles in your upper back and shoulders to take some of the load.

Take the tool belt off when you take a break, to give your back a chance to rest and readjust. The average tool belt is 15 to 20 pounds.

Do not pack around excess pounds. Take a regular inventory of items in your tool belt and get rid of unnecessary weight.

Getting Involved with AWWA

by Stephen Randtke, KsAWWA Director

I am sometimes asked, especially by individuals active in KsAWWA, "How can I get involved (or more involved) with AWWA at the national level?" Here are some suggestions:

» Go online at https://www.awwa.org to familiarize yourself with the organizational structure of AWWA, especially its councils, divisions, and committees.

» Most individuals find it easiest to get involved by starting at the committee level. Pick out one or more committees and volunteer to join by contacting the chair or staff secretary (usually identified on AWWA's website). Individuals with higher or broader levels of knowledge or experience in a given area may want to consider getting involved at the division level.

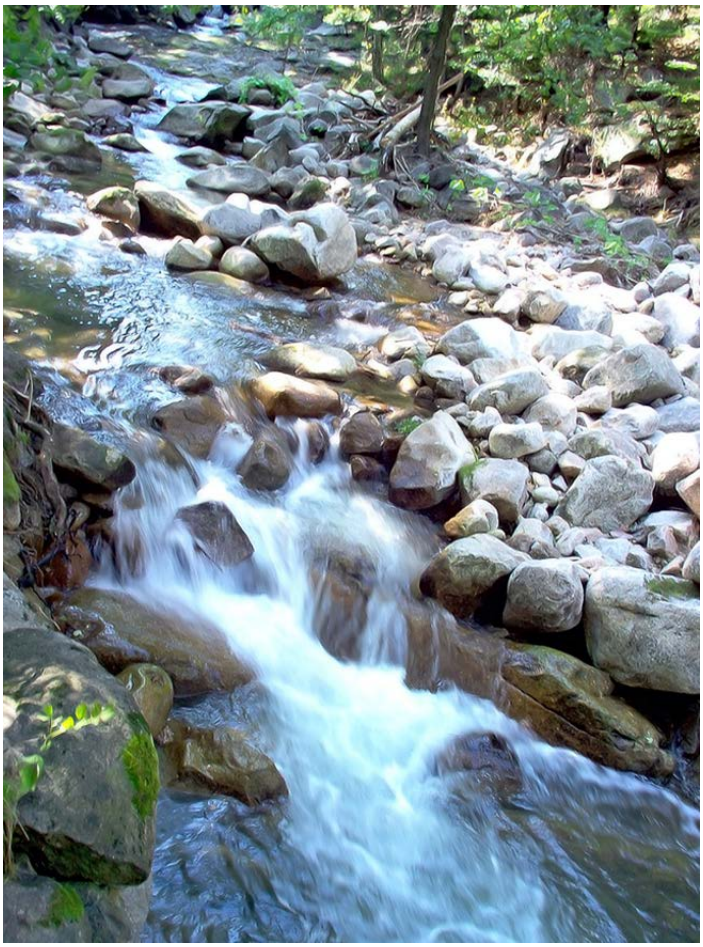
» Check "help wanted ads" at https://www.awwa.org/Membership-Volunteering/Volunteer/Volunteers-Needed to see if there's a committee of interest to you actively looking for new members.

» Tell me or someone else actively involved at the association level of your desire to get more involved, your specific interests, and any relevant experience or skills you have to offer. One of us may be able to make some suggestions, provide contacts, or recommend you to the chair of a division or committee.

» Attend ACE if you are able to do so. This is not a requirement, and not a lot of "work" gets done during ACE; but ACE offers an opportunity to get personally acquainted with others having similar interests, and a great deal of networking, planning, scheduling, and decision making is done during ACE. It's a lot easier to work together remotely with people you already know personally and who are on the same page with regard to priorities, schedule, and direction.

» For additional information check out https://www.awwa.org/Membership-Volunteering/Volunteer and https://www.awwa.org/Membership-Volunteering/Volunteer/Volunteer-FAQ.

As always, please feel free to contact me directly for assistance or advice.



70th Annual KU Environmental Engineering Conference to Be Held Online

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2020

Forced by circumstances to forego the usual face-to-face conference format, organizers plan to hold the 70th Annual KU Environmental Engineering Conference entirely online. Looking on the bright side, this format will help attendees celebrate Earth Day in a most appropriate fashion by conserving energy and other resources, reducing CO2 emissions, alleviating traffic congestion, and improving air quality. Besides helping combat the current coronavirus pandemic by maintaining a strong level of social distancing, an online format will also save attendees both time and money. Registration will be capped at 300, so registration now to reserve a spot.

The theme of this year's conference is "Resilient Engineered Environmental Systems." Plenary session presentations will address topics of broad interest; and afternoon breakout sessions will address timely topics in the areas of water supply and treatment; wastewater collection and treatment; and air, energy, and waste management. Participants will earn 6.5 PDHs. Program and registration information is available at https://ceae.ku.edu/kueec.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

Annual KWEA / KsAWWA Joint Annual Conference

2020
Wichita Hyatt Regency / Century II
September 1-3

2021
Topeka Capitol Plaza / Stormont Vail Events Center
August 31 - September 2

AWWA Annual Conference

June 14-17, 2020	Orlando, FL
June 13-16, 2021	San Diego, CA
June 12-15, 2022	San Antonio, TX
June 11-14, 2023	Toronto, Canada

KsAWWA Board of Trustees Meetings

TBA

American Water Works Association
KansasSection