Quickly—name the first thing that comes to mind when you see this image:

If you said Coke, or Coca-Cola, you are with the majority of people in the United States, and most other countries. In fact, Coca-Cola is the most recognizable brand image in the entire world. You might recall a commercial by Coca-Cola that used the catch phrase, “Just for the taste of it.” It was used when the soda company first introduced Diet Coke to the market. How easy was it for you to remember that?

Let’s try this exercise again. What does this symbol represent?

If you are in the industry, you should have answered this correctly, but unfortunately, most consumers do not associate the faucet with clean, reliable, and safe drinking water. That is usually reserved for the bottled water arena. So the question then becomes: How can FSAWWA help local utilities change this misperception? One way that the FSAWWA has attempted to help utilities is by having an annual drinking water contest in each of our twelve regions.

This competition has become a friendly rivalry among many local utilities to be awarded the region crown and represent their region in the statewide competition. Many of these events get media coverage and provide a great way to increase public awareness of what FSAWWA, our utility members, and our industry provide to their local communities.

The FSAWWA can also provide a press release through the Public Affairs Council. A press release can help a region garner more attention for the event and for the participating utility members. It can also help the event attract more public attention, resulting in increased awareness of the value that FSAWWA, our utility members, and our industry brings to them. Get in touch with the Public Affairs Council chair (contact information is at the FSAWWA website) to find out how to get your press release.

After the regional winners have been selected, FSAWWA then conducts a statewide competition at the yearly Florida Water Resources Conference for the coveted crown of “Best Tasting Drinking Water” in the state. This winner also gets the honor of representing Florida at the AWWA Best Tasting Drinking Water Contest held each June at ACE.

Even though these competitions offer a great opportunity to develop awareness among consumers, and typically receive media attention, sometimes the opportunities are not enough to get the message across. What is that message? Nowhere else in the world do you have the reliability in delivering safe drinking water that our utilities provide—nowhere.

There is another program available only to FSAWWA utility members that can help in delivering this message: the “Only Tap Water Delivers” campaign. This campaign is a comprehensive advertising mechanism that offers utility members the following:

- Print ads (available in Spanish)
- Radio public service announcements
- Bill stuffers
- Consumer handouts
- Children’s activities
- Fun fact sheets
- Campaign logos
- Electronic banners
- Campaign talking points
- Campaign speech
- Op-Ed pieces
- PowerPoint presentations
- Editorial board briefing guides
- Twenty ways to use the campaign
- Campaign metrics for analysis

This campaign has been developed by AWWA through several years of market research and development, and is made available to our utility members for FREE! To take advantage of this wonderful advertising campaign, please visit the FSAWWA website at www.fsawwa.org and click on the “Only Tap Water Delivers” banner ad located within the rotating banner at the top of the webpage, or contact the Public Affairs Council chair to see how your utility can get started. Also, navigate to the calendar-of-events tab to find out when your region taste test will be held.

Remember that public awareness and education of how our industry produces safe, reliable drinking water is not just for the sake of it, it's also for the taste of it!