His voice will usually reach you before he does, but that’s one of his trademarks.

Luis Aguiar, Chief of the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department’s (WASD) Water Distribution Division, has a knack for making a person feel extraordinary and can electrify an otherwise mundane workday.

A WASD employee since 1977, Luis has not only proven himself to be exceptionally dedicated within the Department, but a bona fide leader within the national water utility industry.

“In all the years that I have known and worked with Luis, he has proven to be a dependable, hard working and creative leader not only within WASD, but throughout the national system of water utilities,” says Ralph Terrero, Assistant Director of Water at WASD. Luis is currently running for President Elect of the American Water Works Association, or AWWA.

“If I am elected president elect of AWWA,” says Luis, “it would be a tremendous honor for the Department and the County, as a whole. To have the chance to represent an organization dedicated to the improvement of water quality and supply would be amazing.”

An active member of AWWA since 1987, Luis was selected as the National Director of the Florida Section of AWWA in September 2005. The next year, he was elected to serve as a National Vice-President.

“I am running my campaign for president on the platform of the education of public officials, the mentoring of young professionals and the improvement of service to the various sections within AWWA,” says Luis.

Among his many accomplishments, Luis has been recognized with awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for the implementation of programs that have increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department. Luis was also the recipient in 1997 of the Water Environment Federation Collection System Award for the advancement of state of the art wastewater collection.

Although someone with all these accolades could let it go to their head, Luis takes it all in stride:

“I’m only as good as the people I have around me, and luckily, I’ve been able to assemble a good team throughout the years.” Despite all his accomplishments, Luis names the fact that he has been able to help his fellow employees as the highlight of his long career.

“I’ve been very fortunate to have been able to help a lot of people coming into this organization,” Luis says, “to be put in a position to meet so many interesting and amazing people; no one can take that away from me.”
Region VII held a fall seminar luncheon on September 20, 2007 in Miami Beach. The seminar, titled “Implementing Cost Effective Demand Management in your Utility” was attended by more than 100 representatives from various consulting firms and local utilities. David Bracciano, Tampa Bay Water Demand Manager and FSAWWA Water Use Efficiency Division Chair, provided a presentation which was followed by a Meter Madness Competition won by the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority. The event was sponsored by sixteen consulting firms and vendors, allowing the event to raise $5,600 for the Section’s Water for People Fund. Special recognition and thanks are given to the City of Miami Beach Public Works Department who provided a wonderful venue and lunch for the event.

Water for People News

Region VII has had a successful year of fund-raising for Water for People, raising over $7,000 for the charity. Looking towards 2008, remember the first week of April is designated as Robert A. Cuevas Water For People Week. Mark your calendars! There will be a Water for People event April 25, 2008 at the Deering Estate. Keep your eyes and ears open for more information to come!

3rd Year of Bowling Fun

Region VII held its 3rd Annual Statewide Young Professionals’ Bowling Tournament on Thursday, September 27, 2007 at Bird Bowl in Miami. Eight teams from five firms participated: Chen and Associates, MWH, Hazen and Sawyer, Nova Consulting and CDM. Chen and Associates won First Place with a highest average team score of 1135, with Hazen and Sawyer taking second place with a highest average team score of 1069. Errol Julien of Hazen and Sawyer also won highest individual score for a second year in a row. The event managed to raise $496 with proceeds benefiting the Roy Likins Scholarship Fund and the Section YP Fund.

FSAWWA Strategic Planning Retreat

A Strategic Planning Retreat was held on Thursday, October 11th at the Riverside Hotel in Ft. Lauderdale. The goal of the retreat was to obtain input and support in directing the future growth and continued success of the Florida Section of AWWA.

The event was attended by over 40 people from all levels of leadership in FSAWWA including a few members at large. The all day workshop focused on the following areas:

- Strategic Planning—Purpose and Process
- Current FSAWWA Strategic Plan Overview
- Review of Member Survey Results
- Driving factors affecting FSAWWA
- Updates to the Strategic Plan
- Future Vision and Mission

In all, the retreat was highly successful. Many new and exciting ideas were discussed. All the information collected at the retreat is currently under review and will be presented to the Section Board for inclusion in the new strategic plan.