The professional ties that nurture our success in providing essential water services to our customers can be sustained, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. We can demonstrate our strength as the premier water industry organization by participating in the virtual FSAWWA Fall Conference, which will be held Monday, November 30, to Wednesday, December 2.

While this event will not replace the in-person camaraderie that we used to take for granted, we can still talk with and learn from each other. All activities, including the technical sessions, will be interactive, with the same question-and-answer opportunities of our normal in-person conferences. And, as always, the conference will offer professional development hours (PDHs) and continuing education units (CEUs). All information and registration for this pioneering conference are provided at www.fsawwa.org.

**Seminars, Sessions, and Presentations**

Student poster presentations, and seminars on laws and ethics, addressing per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and asset management are the focus of Monday’s activities.

Tuesday morning’s sessions will focus on developing alternative water supplies, utility management under the COVID-19 pandemic, state-of-the-art water treatment, need-to-know pipe design, and management strategies. Tuesday’s afternoon sessions include Florida’s experiences with potable reuse, using technology to support pipe resiliency, Southeast Desalting Association (SEDA) membranes, and improvements and experiences in pipeline management.

Wednesday morning’s sessions will focus on building resiliency in water supply and utility management, new ideas for utility financing, and more pipeline management experiences.

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Kim Kowalski  
Chair, FSAWWA

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The opening general session always includes a thought-provoking speaker to help us navigate through our professional life. This picture shows our audience at the 2019 session.

The best opportunity to learn about our vendors, educators, and consultants is to visit the conference exhibit hall. This year the exhibit hall will be virtual and interactive.

I thank Mike Bailey, 2019 chair, and Peggy Guingona, FSAWWA executive director (at right), for making me feel like a queen at last year’s conference luncheon.
Exhibit Hall

The conference features a 3-D exhibit hall where attendees can view new technologies and have two-way conversations with vendors, educators, and consultants. Exhibitors can choose from ready-made booth templates or customize their own. Each booth supports the dissemination of brochures and the presentation of videos. Attendees will be able to chat “one-on-one” with each exhibitor. This is as close as you can get to these experts without physically standing in front of them.

Opening General Session and Awards

The opening general session (OGS) takes place on Monday afternoon. To thank the many FSAWWA volunteers who have donated their time and talents to the Florida Section, our awards for outstanding achievement and service will be presented at specific times throughout the program, including the OGS. Please check the website to obtain the awards schedule.

Contests and Prizes

While it’s not possible to support, online, our usual excellent Backhoe Rodeo, Iron Ductile Tap and Fun Tap competitions, Hydrant Hysteria, and Meter Madness, the virtual conference will be conducting fun contests, where everyone can participate.

Leaderboard

Prizes will be awarded to attendees who interact the most during this virtual conference. A leaderboard will post the hour-by-hour status of participants, and prizes will be awarded to the end-of-day leaders. The more points you earn, the more chances you have of winning cool prizes! Examples of participation include attending the OGS and chatting with an exhibitor.

Scavenger Hunt

Our virtual conference will award prizes to those who can find hidden objects online during the conference.

Reminiscing

I used to take our Fall Conference for granted, but not anymore. I have included several pictures to help us reminisce about the great times we’ve had together and to look forward to our future conferences post-pandemic. My prayer is that this pandemic will be behind us by next year when we can all be together again in person.

I look forward to speaking with all of you during our virtual Fall Conference. God bless you and stay safe!