

GAWP 2026 Spring Conference

April 7 - 8, 2026 | Dalton, GA



Tuesday, April 7 (6 Recertification Points Available)

8:00 – 9:00	Registration & Exhibit Hall Opens with Hot Breakfast Items. <i>Don't forget to pick up your GAME ON! Bingo card -- get your squares stamped in the exhibit hall today and you'll be entered into tomorrow's drawing for a YETI cooler!</i>				
	Session 1 Room A1 Utility Finance & Asset Management Moderator: Kimbrough Pace	Session 2 Room A2 Wastewater Treatment I Moderator: Jonathan Burgess	Session 3 Room B1 Public Education Moderator: Sally Anne Short	Session 4 Room B2 Water Loss Moderator: Devin Davis	Session 5 Room B3 PFAS Moderator: Leslie Dumas
9:00 – 9:30	Strategy Meets Funding: Unlocking Your Utility's Built-In Grant Capacity Alana Hardison MM Williamson	Novel Wastewater Treatment Process for PFAS Removal Patrick McKeown ECT2	Recognizing Excellence in Public Outreach: Education Awards Q&A Will England Cherokee County WSA	Seeing the Unseen: Using Geographical Testing to Identify Water Loss and Seepage Nick Ratcliff Terracon Consultants Cole Angelo Terracon Consultants	A Federal Perspective on PFAS Brian Smith US EPA Aaryn Jones US EPA
9:30 – 10:00	Water Affordability: Approaches & Considerations Elizabeth Jurado IB Environmental	Wastewater Treatment Processes: Realistic Cost Expectations in 2026 and Beyond Brad Brown Haskell Murray Taylor Haskell	LCR Testing in Schools and Child Care Centers Just Got Easier Erica Wood Clean Water for Georgia Kids/RTI International	Leveraging Real-Time Data Analytics and vDMAs for Water Loss Control Joaquin San Juan Xylem Vue USA, Inc.	Advanced PFAS Destruction Through Custom Reactivation of Spent Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) Benjamin Pepper Norit Activated Carbon
10:00 – 10:30	H ₂ S Corrosion in Sewer Systems: How Lining Solutions Prevent Costly Rehabilitation Matthias Predl PREDL Inc.	Wastewater Disinfection Technologies Jose Fragoso UltraAqua UV & Ozone Systems	Reel 'Em In: The Water Education Tool Sitting In Your Pocket Trevor Thrift Athens-Clarke County	The Shift from Meter to Monitors: Meters That Find Leaks before Leaks Find You Marcus Cameras Kamstrup Water Metering, LLC	Next Generation Drinking Water Treatment: Regenrable Resins for Cost-Effective Compliance Patrick McKeown ECT2
10:30 – 11:30	Product Review and Break in Exhibit Hall Featuring the WEF Operations Challenge – Pump Maintenance Challenge, the AWWA Hydrant Hysteria Demo, and GAWWA Best of the Best Tap Water Taste Test .				
11:30 – 12:45	Awards Luncheon, featuring a welcome address from Dalton Utilities CEO, John Thomas.				
	Session 6 Room A1 Customer Service Moderator: Arkedia Raines	Session 7 Room A2 Wastewater Treatment II Moderator: Vivian Lu	Session 8 Room B1 Young Professionals Moderator: Denita Burton	Session 9 Room B2 Leadership Moderator: Lori Ciriemi	Session 10 Room B3 Collaborative Project Delivery Moderator: Mark Dickson
1:00 – 1:30	From Analog to Digital: A Water Utility's Advanced Metering Infrastructure Nick Oberg Eastside Utility District Justin Bolender Jacobs	Driving Energy Efficiency in Wastewater Treatment Matthew Pattom Coriho	Balancing Personal and Professional Goals Natalie Boggess Wade Trim Kristen Graham City of Atlanta	Where There's a Will, There's a Way Kimbrough Pace Henry County Water Authority	Is Collaborative Delivery Right for Your Project? Flowery Branch Case Study Peter Woerner City of Flowery Branch Addison Shealy Archer Western
1:30 – 2:00	Five Mile Tunnel and 2.4 Billion Gallon Quarry for the City of Atlanta Water Supply Program Quinton Fletcher City of Atlanta Adam Bedell Stantec	Activating Steel Slag into a New Paradigm for Nutrient Removal and Energy Recovery from Wastewater and Biosolids Jonathan Teaford Green Steel Environmental	Tips for Delegating as a YP to a YP Aaron Capelouto GHD	The Workforce Cliff: Succession Planning in Water Utilities (Panel) Lori Ciriemi, Moderator Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority Melven Williams Clayton County Water Authority	A Long and Bumpy Road: Chattanooga's Progressive Design-Build Journey Mark Heinzer City of Chattanooga Justin Bolender Jacobs
2:00 – 2:30	De-Escalation Techniques for Water Utility Customer Service: Staying Calm, Professional, and Helpful in Tough Situations Donna Adkins Douglasville-Douglas County WSA Krysten Davis Douglasville-Douglas County WSA	From Constraints to Control: Addressing Immediate Needs at the Pumpkinvine WRF Lauren Handell Tetra Tech	Coagulative Removal of Microplastics from Secondary Treated Wastewater using Magnesium Chloride: A Comparative Perspective on Bench-Scale and Industrial Approaches Nandika Girish Jacobs	Involving Operators in CMAR Projects: Cartersville WPCP Project Scott Moody City of Cartersville Blake Barnhill Archer Western	

2:30 – 3:30	Product Review Break in Exhibit Hall <i>Featuring the WEF Operations Challenge – Pump Maintenance Challenge, the AWWA Hydrant Hysteria Demo, and GAWWA Best of the Best Tap Water Taste Test finals.</i>				
	Session 11 Room A1 Stormwater Moderator: Kartik Radhakrishnan	Session 12 Room A2 H2Oportunity & Model Water Tower Moderator: Nicholas Samples	Session 13 Room B1 Distribution Systems Moderator: Herve Yondo	Session 14 Room B2 GA EPD Moderator: Justin Brown	Session 15 Room B3 Water Industry & Technology Moderator: Darlissa Tillman-Sadler
3:30 – 4:00	Conservation and Natural Resource Management Support through Modeling and BMPs Stephen Bontekoe Limestone Valley RC&D	H2O Yeah! Former Teachers Making Waves in Water Panelists: Sally Anne Short Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority Will England Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority Katie Kenerly Athens-Clarke County Stormwater Management	Protecting the Invisible: Virtual Assessment of a Large Distribution System Allyson Mauck McKim & Creed	EPD Water Branch and District Operations Wastewater Compliance Katie Meade Georgia EPD Sean Early Georgia EPD	Flow Control Basics: Actuators in Municipal Applications Tripp Waymack REXA
4:00 – 4:30	Turning Policy into Progress: The City of Dalton's Stormwater Success Story Chad Townsend City of Dalton Jackson Sheppard City of Dalton	Blueprints for Success: Investing Time and Expertise to Build Future Water Leaders Russell Kelly Paulding County Water System Brianna Greiner Garver	Serving as a Regional Utility, the City of Atlanta increased Water Pressures in the Distribution System by installing Booster Pump Stations Hugh Puckett City of Atlanta	GEFA and EPD Water Funding Updates Hayley Cotton GEFA Russell Nix Georgia EPD Brian Woodham Georgia EPD	Hard Hats & High Tech: The Future of Water Infrastructure Kevin Ball Archer Western
4:30 – 5:00	Restoring Resilience: The McQueen's Island Trail Feasibility and Implementation Roadmap Joe Wagner Woolpert	Testing Their Designs: A Model Water Tower Hands-On Tutorial Melanie Brueggemann Archer Western Will England Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority	Fundamentals and Importance of Backflow Prevention and Cross Connection Control Debra Troutman City of Atlanta Roberto Machorro Swain Wade Trim	Georgia Water Planning and Forecasting Updates Russell Nix Georgia EPD	Bridging PFAS Compliance Gaps: Pilot-Proven Treatment and Interim Full-Scale Operation John Dyson Aqua-Aerobics Systems
5:00 – 6:00	Meet & Greet Reception and GAWP Model Car Races (in Exhibit Hall) <i>Grab your two drink tickets and join us in the Exhibit Hall for drinks, snacks, and games! This is the perfect way to wind down from a day of sessions. Maybe you'd like to challenge someone to a game of Giant Jenga or Cornhole?!</i>				
5:00 – 6:00	Women Making Waves Networking Social (Crescent City Tavern - 324 S. Depot Street)				

Wednesday, April 8 (4 Recertification Points Available for morning sessions)

8:00 – 8:30	Registration and Exhibit Hall Opens with Hot & Cold Breakfast Items				
	Session 16 Room A1 Pretreatment Moderator: Steven Stokes	Session 17 Room A2 Collection Systems I Moderator: Matt Joiner	Session 18 Room B1 Integrated Master Planning Moderator: Becky Hachenburg	Session 19 Room B2 Biosolids & Residuals Moderator: Ashley Brondeel	Session 20 Room B3 Competition Spotlight Moderator: Connie Nelms
8:30 – 9:00	Industrial Wastewater Permit Special Conditions Sonya Harrison Goldie & Associates	Modernizing Utility Operations Through AI-Assisted Inspection Workflows Omar Chaudry Sewer AI	Data Foundations for Water Modeling Kiara Macdonald Barge Design Solutions	When the Centrifuge Stops Dewatering: A Case Study on Rapid Diagnosis and Recovery Bo Zhang Stantec	Starting Up a WEF Challenge Team & the GAWP Fall Lab Event Christopher Hamilton City of Gainesville Jenna Cook GA EPD
9:00 – 9:30	Compliance Challenges During Industry Startup Alexander Graves Zoetis	Smart Technologies for Efficient Wastewater Sewer Cleaning and Discovering I&I Issues Walter Woodard InfoSense, Inc.	Solving the One Water Puzzle: Identifying Tailored Solutions for Regional Problems Leslie Dumas Woodard & Curran	Biosolids and Residuals in Georgia: Regulatory Framework William Cook GA EPD Benoit Causse GA EPD	GAWWA Competitions Panel
8:30 – 9:30	Exhibit Hall Demo Hour <i>This alternative one-hour session will be a 'traveling' session in the exhibit hall to visit three of our vendors for a presentation:</i>				
	Simplifying the Science of Sample Testing Kathleen Boyer & Lysa Walters HACH	Intent to Distribute Clean Water Jon Burnett AquaSmart Inc.	Dry-Pit Chopper Pump in Action Charles Smith & Steve Vantooenburg Crane Pumps		
9:30 – 10:30	Product Review & Break in Exhibit Hall (Exhibit Hall Closes at 11:30) <i>This is your final chance to visit with our exhibitors! Did you complete your GAME ON! Bingo card? Make sure to stick around for the YETI drawing!</i>				

	Session 21 <i>Room A1</i> Water Treatment Moderator: Wiley Helm	Session 22 <i>Room A2</i> Collection Systems II Moderator: Esmeralda Bonilla	Session 23 <i>Room B1</i> Pumps & Pump Systems Moderator: Andrew Tartaglia	Session 24 <i>Room B2</i> Lab Moderator: Michael Arnette	Session 25 <i>Room B3</i> Diversity Moderator: Kiara Macdonald
10:30 – 11:00	Regulated and Unregulated Disinfection By-Products and Opportunistic Pathogens in Water Distribution Systems Chris Impellitteri The Water Tower	Horizontal Direction Drill 101 Chad Andrews Underground Solutions	Selecting the Right Wastewater Pump Steve Vantoorenburg Crane Pumps and Systems	DMR-QA: Strategies for Effective Compliance Sam Wright GA EPD	"Age" is a Diversity Issue: Engaging Seniors as Educators, Advocates, and the Hidden Workforce in Water Kellie Edwards Fulton County Public Works Ebony Jones Fulton County Public Works
11:00 – 11:30	Designing Resilient Water Systems: A Technical Evaluation of PFAS and Salinity Mitigation Strategies Bethel Mamo Jacobs	Mindset for Growth: How Water Utilities Can Assess and Elevate their Asset Management Systems Ryan Chavez Schneider Geospatial	How to Control the Surge and Not Ride the Wave! Jordan Longoria Templeton & Associates	Steam Sterilizers in the Laboratory Environment, Care, and Feeding Steve Keith Medical Maintenance	Diversity in Workforce Development Melissa Meeker The Water Tower
11:30 – 12:00	From Legacy Infrastructure to New Builds: Evaluating Adsorptive Media for PFAS Treatment at Dalton Utilities Hamed Torkzadeh Black & Veatch Additional Q&A with Tim Blaydes Black & Veatch Jamie Cox Dalton Utilities Jonathan Melton Dalton Utilities	Managing FOG in the Collection System Edwin Breed DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management Manyon Anderson DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management	Are your VFDs Trouble or Triumph? Troubleshooting VFDs for Pump Control Zach Kieser Applied Industrial Controls	Effectively using Fecal DNA to Address Pollution Concerns Jennifer Arp Cherokee County WSA	How Diversity has Impacted Our Organization Bernard Franks Clayton County Water Authority
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch on Your Own				

Wednesday, April 8 (2 Recertification Points Available for afternoon sessions)

1:00 - 3:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Post-Conference Tours:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tour Option 1: City of Dalton Stormwater Tour</p> <p>This tour will encompass field visits to several of the city's stormwater capital improvement projects ranging in elements from a regenerative stormwater conveyance system, stream bank restoration, bypass conveyance infrastructure, flood plain reconnection, retention & detention pond projects. <i>(We will have a bus, with a 25-person limit, or you can drive yourself to tour locations)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tour Option 2: City of Chattanooga E2i2 Wastewater Project Tour</p> <p>This project is a major component of the broader Clear Chattanooga initiative aimed at reducing sanitary sewer overflows and improving water quality. The program includes constructing two large wet weather equalization stations along South Lee Highway and West Chickamauga Creek that will provide a combined 40 million gallons of temporary storage during heavy rain events, preventing untreated wastewater from entering local waterways and supporting future system capacity needs. These facilities represent one of the largest environmental infrastructure investments in the city's history and are scheduled for completion in 2027. <i>(You will need to drive yourself to the tour location. You must also wear closed-toe shoes or boots, long pants, and 4-inch shirt-sleeve minimum)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Tour sign-up sheets will be out at the registration desk at 8:00 AM Wednesday morning.</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">AWWA Top Ops Competition (Room A3)</p> <p><i>Watch teams comprised of your fellow water professionals compete in a fast-paced question-and-answer tournament as their knowledge about water treatment processes, safety, laboratory, maintenance, distribution, and basic science is put to the test. Make sure to cheer loudly!</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Movie Screening: Unless Something Goes Terribly Wrong (Room B1)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Documentary screening and post-viewing discussion.</i></p> <p>We are excited to host a screening of Unless Something Goes Terribly Wrong, a documentary filmed over a two-year period inside the Portland (Maine) Water District's East End Wastewater Treatment Facility. With a tag line of "A buddy comedy about poop and the pursuit of making a better world," you know it has to be good (and a realistic look at the day-to-day activities inside a plant!)</p>