



Welcome to the December Spotlight Member, Sandra Krietzman. Sandra is the Bureau Chief, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water, with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. She has been an active member of AWWA NJ for over 30 years and has served on various committees including the Education Committee, Research and Technology Transfer Committee and currently is a member of the Technical Program Committee. She was awarded the AWWA Membership Pin for 25 years of membership in 2011.

Why did you decide to go into the field of water?

I have spent nearly all my career working at the DEP on drinking water quality issues. Like many of my colleagues, I took an indirect path to my career in drinking water.

After graduating from Rutgers College with an Environmental Biology (Ecology) degree, I started my career in the biological sciences as a technical research writer. However, I really wanted to work on improving the state's environment, so I took a Civil Service test and was offered an entry-level position with the DEP's Bureau of Potable Water (now Bureau of Safe Drinking Water) as a field sampler. This was similar to the independent study work I had done as an undergraduate, and I intended to eventually work my way into a position in which I would be directly engaged in environmental protection.

While at the Bureau of Potable Water, I became very interested in drinking water quality, the importance and health effects of the drinking water standards, and emerging treatment technologies. To further my education in these areas, I attended New Jersey Institute of Technology part-time, eventually earning a Master of Science degree in Environmental Science.

When New Jersey passed landmark legislation in 1984 that established the Drinking Water Quality Institute and directed the DEP to set drinking water standards for contaminants that were unregulated at the time, I was part of the team that provided technical support for this 15-member DEP advisory body. For the past 10 years I have been a member of the Drinking Water Quality Institute.

Throughout my career of more than 35 years with the DEP, I have mainly worked with drinking water quality issues, although I worked in the DEP's wastewater planning and air quality planning divisions, too. I enjoy working in the Bureau of Safe Drinking Water the most because of the important public health work done in this Bureau, such as providing compliance assistance to water systems and licensed operators and explaining drinking water quality information to water system customers. I currently have staff working on these issues as well as data systems, contaminants of emerging concern, building water system capacity, and drinking water loans.

How did you become a volunteer for AWWA? What motivates you to be active in the Section?

My supervisors encouraged me to join NJAWWA shortly after I started with the Bureau of Potable Water to broaden my understanding of the professionals that contribute to the delivery of drinking water. I was active on the NJAWWA Education Committee and have also participated on

the Research and Technology Transfer Committee and, most recently, on the Technical Program Committee. I would encourage anyone in the drinking water field to join – there are excellent opportunities to discuss issues, exchange information, and obtain different perspectives in a professional setting.

Hobbies and outside interests?

I spend a lot of my free time with friends and family – my husband and I love to cook, entertain in our home, spend time at the Jersey shore, and travel. We travel nearly every year to California (now Oregon) to visit family and have visited many of the western national parks along the way. We have also made several trips to Europe together.

I continue to train and bicycle ride with my husband and local chapter for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, as I have for the past seven years. JDRF sponsors several long-distance rides each year throughout the country to raise money for JDRF-sponsored research

What legacy would you like to leave behind?

As a female professional in a male-dominated field (engineering), I am pleased to see dramatic changes in the number of women working in the drinking water-related fields over the last 35 years. When I began at the DEP, I was the only female non-secretarial staff and at times it was intimidating. There are many more women entering the math, science, and engineering fields than ever before – and this trend is reflected in the drinking water field. I believe in leading by example, and I hope I helped pave the way for hiring more professional women at the DEP.