



North Central Texas Chapter

**TEXAS**

Section • American Water Works Association

Volume 14, Issue 2

August/September 2025



## NCT TAWWA August Meeting

Thursday, August 21st

Networking: 11:15 am

Lunch and Program: 12:00 pm

Register [here](#)

Texas Star Conference Center  
1400 Texas Star Pkwy  
Euless, Texas 76040

### “Water Conservation in North Texas”

#### Speakers:

Qiwon Zhang – Plummer

Jacie Lewis – City of Irving

Cynthia Baughman – City of Garland



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello NCT TAWWA Members!

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer so far. As the days start to warm up and we hit those triple-digit days, the heat is a powerful reminder of how vital water is. Behind every drop of water there are dedicated professionals working hard to ensure we all have access to this vital resource. This summer season let's all take a moment to recognize them, to share the value of water with others, and to look for simple ways to use it more wisely.

To stay aligned with the spirit of water conservation we are changing things up for our next chapter meeting on August 21 at the Texas Star Conference Center. We are excited to host a panel of experts to talk about Water Conservation in North Texas. We will have the opportunity to hear from Qiwon Zhang (Plummer), Jacie Lewis (City of Irving), and Cynthia Baughman (City of Garland). This panel will be moderated by Dustan Compton from the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD). This is sure to be an insightful and relevant conversation, and we hope you'll join us either in person or virtually.

We're also bringing some fun to the calendar! On Thursday, September 25, join us for our Double Down for Ops Casino Night at Turning Point Beer. This event is now our official fundraiser to help send Texas teams — Top Ops, Meter Challenge, Hydrant Hysteria, and

Pipe Tapping — to national competitions. It’s a great cause, and a great time. We hope you’ll be there!

Our Young Professionals Committee is planning a great summer event as well. They will be hosting a Texas Rangers Game hangout on August 27. Whether you are a young professional or “young at heart,” these events are open to everyone and are a great way to connect and build your water community.

Finally, here are a few more dates to save:

- October 24 – Annual Robert F. Pence NCT TAWWA Drinking Water Seminar
- November 11 – Women in Water Event
- December 4 – Holiday Dinner

More details including registration and sponsorship information will be shared soon, so keep an eye on future announcements and on our website.

Thank you for being part of this incredible community. Stay cool, stay safe, and we look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events!



Mariana Anguiano  
President, North Central Texas Chapter  
Texas American Water Works Association (TAWWA)

## PREVIOUS MEETING RECAP

***Jim Estala, EIT (LAN)***

***“Ongoing Lessons Learned in Conventional Pretreatment Design from Tom Taylor RWTP”  
Presentation***

Megan Freytag of Plummer and Kaylee Waldo of UTRWD gave a presentation on their work related to the retrofitting of the Thomas E. Taylor Water Treatment Plant. Their presentation covered the exponential population growth being experiencing in Denton, Texas and the increased demand for the treatment plant. They also discussed their path towards improving capacity and correcting operational issues within the plant.



*Megan Freytag and Kaylee Waldo introducing the project.*

The presentation also covered lessons learned that were encountered during this design process. The lessons learned included the importance of understanding the existing geometry conditions to consider when designing and construction. It also included the many considerations involved in creating and selecting alternatives to improve on multiple steps in pretreatment, specifically rapid mixing, flocculation, and sedimentation.



*Megan Freytag discussing pretreatment steps.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

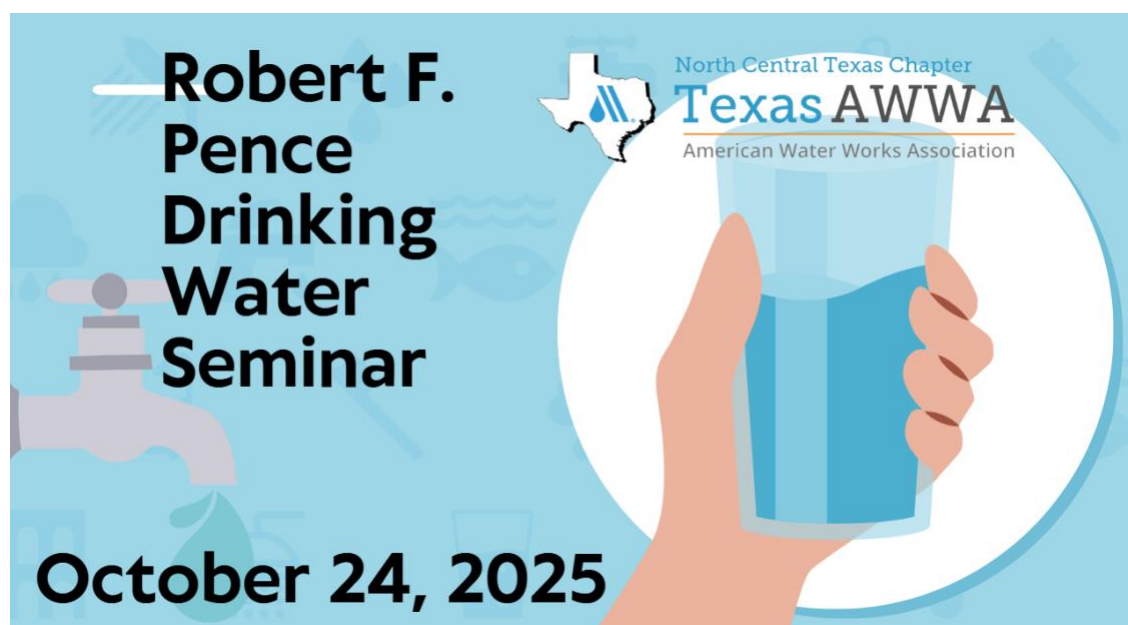
***Tyler Johnston, EIT (LAN)***

**Casino Night (September 25, 2025)**



**Robert F. Pence Drinking Water Seminar (October 24, 2025)**

The Robert F. Pence Drinking Water Seminar will be taking place in October 2025. The proceeds from this seminar directly benefit the TAWWA Scholarship Program.



**SAVE THE DATE – Education Committee Lunch & Learn (August 13, 2025)**



Join us for a Virtual Trivia Lunch 'n Learn August 13 at 12:00 pm Provided by the NCT TAWWA Education and Outreach Committee. The link to join will be provided closer to the event date. See you then!

## CALL FOR SPONSORS



### Sponsorship Opportunities June 2025 - April 2026

#### Annual Program Sponsor

**Annual Program Sponsor: \$2000** - Recognized at all THREE bi-monthly Chapter Lunch Meetings (June, August and February) and the April Plant Tour, and have their name included on the website and in the bi-monthly newsletter *The Lake*, and thanked at each meeting.  
**Individual Chapter Meeting and April Plant Tour Sponsorships: \$500** - Includes 1 registration and logo on event advertisements and thanked at the meeting.

#### Special Chapter Events

Proceeds benefit our  
Scholarship Program

#### Robert F. Pence Drinking Water Seminar (October 2025)

**Platinum: \$800** - Includes 1 registration, logo on event advertisements and slide show, and literature table near entryway.  
**Gold: \$500** - Includes 1 registration and logo on event advertisements and slide show.  
**Breakfast Sponsor: \$1500** - Includes 1 registration, logo on event advertisements and slide show, and emcee mention during the breakfast. One available - first come basis.  
**Morning Break Sponsor: \$1000** - Includes 1 registration, logo on event advertisements and slide show, and emcee mention during the morning break. One available - first come basis.  
**Afternoon Break Sponsor: \$1000** - Includes 1 registration, logo on event advertisements and slide show, and emcee mention during the afternoon break. One available - first come basis.

#### Women in Water (November 2025)

**Individual Meeting Sponsorship: \$300** - Includes logo on event advertisements and slide show and thanked at the meeting.

#### Holiday Dinner (December 2025)

**Platinum: \$1500** - Includes a reserved table with 10 registrations, logo on event advertisements and slide show, and emcee mention.  
**Gold: \$1000** - Includes half a reserved table with 5 registrations, logo on event advertisements and slide show, and emcee mention.  
**Silver: \$500** - Includes logo on event advertisements and slide show, and emcee mention.  
**Bar Sponsorship: \$2000** - Includes 1 registration, opportunity to hang logo banner, etc. by bar, logo on advertisements and slide show, and emcee mention. Two available - first come basis.

Has your organization ever wanted the chance to sponsor a TAWWA event? Now is your chance! Have your organization's name displayed at any of the events above and not only benefit your organization but benefit your community. Register for the **North Central Texas Chapter Annual Program Sponsor 2025-2026** program from 5/19/25 to 4/30/26.

Link to register: [North Central Texas Chapter Annual Program Sponsor 2025-2026](#)

## YP CORNER

*May Aye, EIT (Wade Trim)*

### Past Events Recap



On July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Young Professionals boot-scoted their way through a lively evening at Cowboys Red River Dancehall & Saloon! With free entrance, drinks, and plenty of Domino's pizza, the event offered a fun and casual space for networking and unwinding. Two-step dance lessons got everyone moving, from seasoned pros to first timers testing out their boots. Thanks to everyone who came out and made it a night to remember!

### **Stay in the Loop with NCT AWWA YPs**

We've had a busy year so far, from pickleball and plant tours to dancing and lake cleanups, and we're not slowing down. A Texas Rangers game, kickball, and our annual Ugly Sweater Party are all in the works for later this year!

Want to stay updated on what's next? Join the YP email list by reaching out to May at [maye@wadetrim.com](mailto:maye@wadetrim.com). And if you're thinking about getting more involved, now's a great time; new committee members are always welcome!

### **NCT AWWA YP Committee Updates**

We are excited to announce the newly elected officers for the North Central Texas AWWA Young Professionals Committee:

Chapter Position	Name	Organization
YP Chair	Conor Mullis	Pump Solutions
Secretary	Cheyenne Footracer	Plummer
Treasurer	Tasie Kade	Carollo
Communications	May Aye	Wade Trim
National AWWA Liaison	Jake Phillips	American Cast Iron Pipe
Programming Co-Chair	Paul Swope	Trinity River Authority
Programming Co-Chair	Ryan Sklar	Kimley Horn
Programming Co-Chair	Riley Teague	Garver
Intramurals Chair	Odran Fitzgerald	AECOM
Past YP Chair	Zac Bolen	Plummer
Committee Members at Large	Andrea Hibbard, Daniella Ineza, Collin McGovern, Arin Jett, Drew Quigley, Erin Morris	-

### **Stay Connected with NCT AWWA YPs**

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## **TECHNICALLY SPEAKING**

### ***Ali Kazemi (CDM Smith)***

Over the Fourth of July weekend, Central Texas endured a catastrophic flash flood that claimed at least 135 lives, displaced countless residents, and left widespread devastation along the Upper Guadalupe River in Kerr County and neighboring communities.



*Guadalupe River floodwaters and debris overwhelm a rural Texas bridge.*

### **What Happened**

In the early hours of July 4, 2025, intense rainfall—ranging from 5 to over 20 inches in just a few hours—triggered explosive flooding along the Guadalupe River basin. Within 45 minutes, the river rose more than 26 feet, cresting at nearly 37.5 feet, far surpassing life-threatening flash flood thresholds.

Schools, summer camps, mobile homes, and vacation cabins along the river were quickly overtaken. At Camp Mystic, a Christian girls' camp located in a low-lying floodplain, 27 campers and counselors tragically lost their lives when sudden floodwaters swept through the property.



*Floodwaters from the Guadalupe River devastate Camp Mystic*

### **Environmental and Climatic Factors**

#### **Geology & Topography:**

The Texas Hill Country's location along the Balcones Escarpment makes it highly susceptible to flash flooding. Warm, moist Gulf air rises along the steep hills, producing intense rainfall. The region's limestone bedrock and thin clay-heavy soils absorb water poorly, creating rapid surface runoff into narrow creeks and rivers.

#### **Drought Conditions:**

Months of severe drought left soils hydrophobic, preventing absorption and accelerating runoff during the torrential rainfall.

#### **Weather Patterns & Climate Change:**

The disaster was driven by a mesoscale convective vortex, fueled by the remnants of Tropical Storm Barry combined with tropical Pacific moisture. Meteorologists reported record-breaking rainfall, and climate scientists estimate that global warming increased precipitation by approximately 7%, amplifying the storm's impact—"like adding steroids to the weather," experts said.

### **Emergency Response and Policy Gaps**

Despite forecasts warning of extreme rainfall, early warning systems failed. Kerr County lacked outdoor sirens and relied on outdated alert networks, resulting in nearly 90 minutes of delay between initial warnings and public notification.

State lawmakers are now pushing for reforms, including:

- Mandatory outdoor sirens and upgraded real-time alert systems
- Stronger flood infrastructure and drainage improvements
- Updated FEMA flood maps and stricter floodplain regulations
- Zoning authority for rural counties to prevent high-risk development

Critics emphasize that decades of permissive floodplain development and outdated federal maps magnified the disaster's human toll.

### **Human Impact and Community Resilience**

The disaster prompted an unprecedented multi-state search and rescue mission involving drones, rescue dogs, divers, and helicopters. More than 160 people were initially reported missing, though the number dropped as rescues and recoveries progressed.

Local communities rallied to recover:

- Ingram ISD, one of the hardest-hit districts, vowed to rebuild and reopen for its 1,300 students under the motto 'Best Year Yet.'



*Ingram, Texas, unites to rebuild after devastating Guadalupe River floods*

The Hill Country SPCA shifted from planning a fireworks event to leading animal rescues. One Chihuahua that survived by sheltering above the waterline became a symbol of hope amid tragedy.

#### Looking Forward

The Hill Country floods underscore urgent needs for:

- Modernized FEMA flood maps and stricter development restrictions
- Prohibition of sleeping quarters in flood-prone camps, with mandatory life vests and evacuation drills
- Expanded local authority to regulate drainage and enforce zoning in rural counties

Experts warn that without meaningful infrastructure, policy, and climate adaptation measures, Texas remains dangerously vulnerable to future flash flood disasters.

## UTILITY SPOTLIGHT

**Ali Kazemi (CDM Smith)**

**Russell Pior**, Water System Superintendent at City of Fort Worth



#### **Experience**

Plant Superintendent (Drinking Water Treatment Plants)  
27 years with City of Fort Worth  
Total of 38 years in the water utility industry.

#### **Career Path**

Russell started as a water meter reader in New Mexico during a recession, initially helping with his father's construction business. He soon transitioned into field operations, learning main break repairs, service line installations, and distribution system operations.

He continued by pursuing water certifications (up to the highest level available in New Mexico) and worked his way up before returning to Texas for a career advancement opportunity as the superintendent at the City of Fort Worth.

#### Education

Russell earned a Master's Degrees in Management from Troy University while working full-time and raising a family.

#### Hobbies

In his free time, Russell enjoys off-road motorcycle racing, motocross, playing bass guitar, and spending time with his family.

#### Leadership and Team Development

Russell strongly encourages all operators to obtain their certifications and views it as a key part of professional growth.

Russell acknowledges the challenge of motivating a large and diverse team (approx. 45 operators plus maintenance, electricians, and administrative staff) and shared that the secret to success lies in recognizing that every team member has different factors that motivate them.

Russell also places a lot of value in mentoring. He credits former boss, Charlie, for guiding him early in his career and now strives to provide that support to his own staff.

#### Outreach and Workforce Development

Russell is passionate about finding ways to introduce young people to the water utility field, and is an advocate for partnerships with the following schools and programs:

- Tarrant County College's water technology program (focused more on wastewater).
- High school internships (4 weeks during the summer) to immerse students in operations or maintenance.
- Russell also believes social media and professional organizations (AWWA, WEAT, TWA) are critical for promoting the industry.

#### Challenges and Priorities

Russell sees the below challenges as pivotal priorities in our industry:

- Keeping up with rapid population growth and storage capacity requirements (TCEQ mandates).
- Currently building multiple new tanks and pump stations; long lead times (1-2 years for large equipment) complicate planning.
- Maintaining consistent plant operations across multiple shifts and facilities.
- Meeting high summer demand (record peak of 400 MGD two years ago).

#### Water Quality Achievements

Russell was heavily involved in the resolution of a longstanding water quality/stability issue at the Eagle Mountain Plant. The problem caused rapid chlorine residual loss in the distribution system and brought in experts nationwide without success. Eventually, he and his team developed an internal operations strategy around two years ago. Since implementation, water quality has remained stable with minimal flushing. Russell considers this one of his proudest career accomplishments.

#### Passion and Motivation

Although Russell initially entered the field by chance, he developed a strong appreciation for water treatment's complexity and impact. He enjoys the responsibility of ensuring high-quality drinking water and mentoring the next generation. Russell views water as a critical and increasingly scarce resource. Because of this, he believes public education is vital to promote conservation and careers in water utilities.

*"Water is life. In the future, we're going to see more conflict over water rights because it's becoming a scarce resource."*

**Upcoming AWWA Webinars**

**Ashley Van Keer, P.E. (LAN)**

- **[FREE]** [Microgrids for Water Utilities – Sponsored and Presented by Enchanted Rock](#)  
August 7, 2025, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM
- [Unique Challenge of Tackling PFAS in Surface Water](#)  
August 13, 2025, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM
- **[FREE]** [D&I Summer Book Club](#)  
August 15, 2025, 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM
- [Water 2050: Securing Our Future in a Circular Water Economy](#)  
August 20, 2025, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM
- [Essential Policy Updates from AWWA's DC Office: Third Quarter - Cybersecurity Guide](#)  
August 27, 2025, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
- [Water 2050: Strengthening Public Trust in Water](#)  
September 10, 2025, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
- **[FREE]** [How to Boost Tank Lining Lives - Sponsored and Presented by Sherwin-Williams Protective & Marine](#)  
September 18, 2025, 11:00AM – 12:00 PM
- **[FREE]** [Built Tough, Field Ready - Sponsored and Presented by DIPRA](#)  
September 23, 2025, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**North Central Texas TAWWA Officers**

Chapter Position	Name	Organization
President	Mariana Anguiano	TRA
Vice President	Andrea Tom	CDM Smith
Secretary	Ikram Sayed	Garver
Treasurer	Elaine Hung	TRA
Arrangements Committee Chair	Bella Boddicker	Carollo
Arrangements Committee Associate Chair	Amir Tabesh	LJA
Communications Committee Chair	Caitlin Koranda	NTMWD
Education & Outreach Committee Chair	Dustan Compton	TRWD
Programs Chair	Chris Bitter	JQ Infrastructure
Virtual Programs & Arrangements	Brandy Martinez	Brown and Caldwell
Associate Virtual Programs & Arrangements	May Aye	Wade Trim
Membership Committee Chair	Pat Donovan	City of Dallas
Scholarship Committee Chair	Meredith McCall	LJA
Robert F. Pence Drinking Water Seminar Committee Chair	Guadalupe Bailey	City of Dallas
Robert F. Pence Drinking Water Seminar Committee Secretary	Cate Ball	Plummer
Chapter Competitions Committee Co-Chair	Kristen Cope	FNI
Chapter Competitions Committee Co-Chair	Riley Teague	Garver
Diversity & Inclusion Committee Chair	Tony Mbroh	Mbroh Engineering
Young Professionals Committee Chair	Conor Mullis	Pump Solutions
Young Professionals Committee Secretary	Tasie Kade	Carollo
Young Professionals Committee Treasurer	Cheyenne Footracer	Plummer
Young Professionals Committee Past Chair	Zac Bolen	Plummer
Student Design Co-Chair	Nicole Conner	Kennedy Jenks
Student Design Co-Chair	<i>Vacant</i>	
Past President	Brandy Martinez	Brown and Caldwell
Section Trustee	Katie Livas	HDR
Section Deputy Trustee	Stefi Massey	Aecom

**We Love Our Water Memes!**

*Traci Peterson (City of Arlington)*



**August**  
National Water Quality  
Month

#TXWATERAMBASSADOR



**TEXAS**  
Section - American Water Works Association

**This month, consider how important water resources are to humans and others in our ecosystem.**



**August**  
Back-to-School Time

#TXWATERAMBASSADOR



**TEXAS**  
Section - American Water Works Association

**Don't forget to add a reusable water bottle for your learner's backpack.**



August 24  
National Waffle Day

#TXWATERAMBASSADOR



 **TEXAS**  
Section • American Water Works Association

No matter how you mix  
them up, water is  
essential for this  
delicious treat!



August 16  
National Backflow  
Prevention Day

#TXWATERAMBASSADOR



 **TEXAS**  
Section • American Water Works Association

Safe tap water requires  
the efforts of many  
different water  
professionals. Backflow  
prevention is essential.



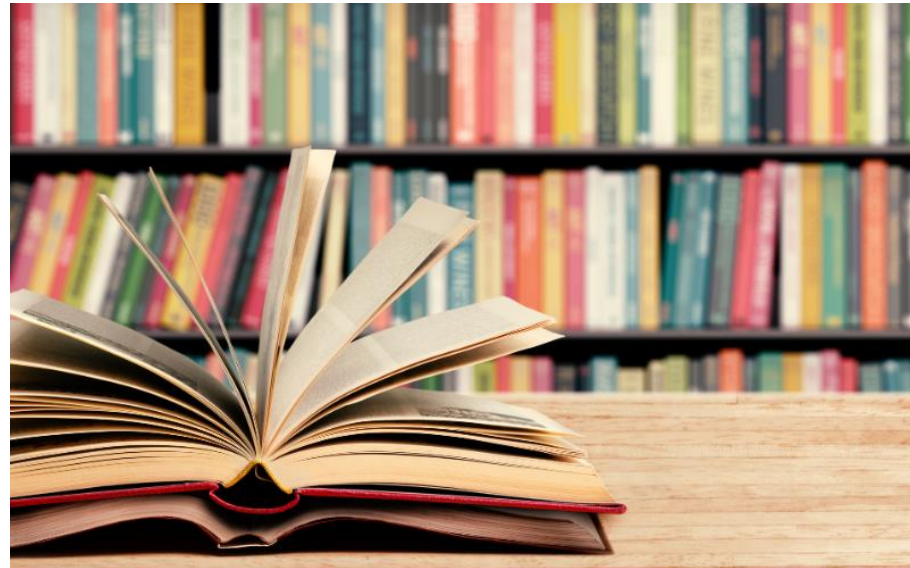
September 5  
National Cheese Pizza Day

#TXWATERAMBASSADOR



 **TEXAS**  
Section - American Water Works Association

Keep the  
celebration simple  
with a warm slice  
and a cool glass of  
water!



September 6  
Read-a-Book Day

#TXWATERAMBASSADOR



 **TEXAS**  
Section - American Water Works Association

Read a book about  
water or share one  
with a young  
person!



September 22  
First Day of Fall

#TXWATERAMBASSADOR



 **TEXAS**  
Section - American Water Works Association


Water is a key part of  
that fall feeling.  
Pumpkins need  
watering a few times a  
week to be ready for  
decorations and pies.



September 29  
National Coffee Day

#TXWATERAMBASSADOR

Isn't it amazing what water can do for coffee beans? Enjoy a cup!



Traci Peterson with the City of Arlington has been instrumental in creating these up-to-date memes. Thank you, Traci!

**Thank you to our Annual Sponsors!**



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This newsletter was brought to you by your NCT TAWWA Communications Committee members.

We would like to thank each member who contributed their time to bring you this issue of *The Lake*:

*Lake*:

Caitlin Koranda (NTMWD) • Brandy Martinez Manske (Brown and Caldwell) • Dustan Compton (TRWD) • Traci Peterson (City of Arlington) • Ashley Van Keer (LAN) • Tasia C. Kade (Carollo) • Jim Estala (LAN) • Tyler Johnston (LAN) • Paul Swope (LAN) • Ali Kazemi (Kimley-Horn) • Cate Ball (Plummer)

For questions or comments about the newsletter, please contact Caitlin Koranda. We're open to ideas for potential articles and newsletter contributions.

Thanks for reading.  
See you in June for our next issue!

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You received this email because of your affiliation to the Texas Section AWWA. If you would like to be removed from this email list, wish to edit your information, or be added to our e-mail list, please email [Veronica Enriquez](#).

