

| Jan/Feb 2021 |

TEXAS Sh2o

The Official Newsletter of the Texas Section AWWA | Every Drop, Every Day, Everywhere®

**Texas Water™ 2021 – Virtual
Registration Has Launched!**

Page 3

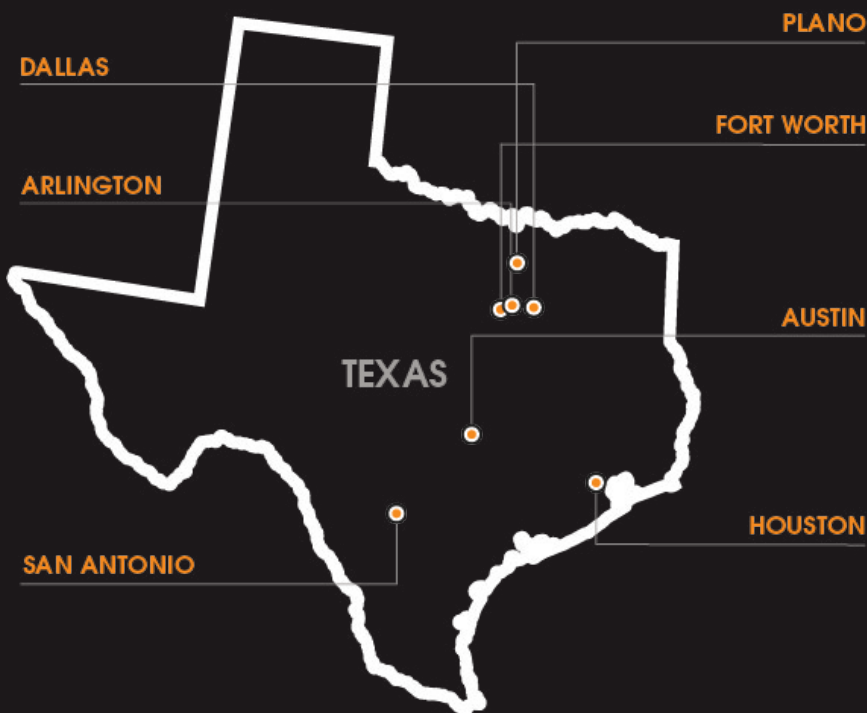
**Desalination Breakthrough
Could Lead to Cheaper
Water Filtration**

Page 10

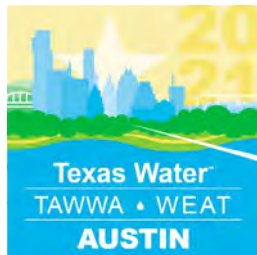
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CONTINUED PAGE 22 | tw 2021 - virtual

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New Year, New Initiatives

BY MELISSA BRYANT
texas section chair

I hope everyone has gotten off to a great start in this new decade. Hopefully you are being more intentional with your time, focus and energy and have started developing successful habits. Of course, it's never too late to start! Not sure if you were able to watch the Presidential Inauguration, but President Biden is not wasting any time transitioning into office. I'm sure several of you are keeping up with the President's new initiatives as he has already signed off on quite a few new executive orders and bills.

AWWA is already planning for a virtual fly-in to DC for late April, so we are all also preparing to advocate initiatives important to our communities. Some of those initiatives include COVID-19 legislation, Lead and Copper Rule, PFAS, and the Farm Bill. I know utilities and municipalities are feeling the budget constraints from the revenues lost due to customers not being able to pay their bills for the last year, which will start to have implications soon, if they haven't already. I encourage any entities that have issues they would like us to advocate to please contact us, so we can have discussions on what is important to our members.

At the state level, a few items to monitor include the Texas Water Development Board Regional Water Planning Process and the Regional Flood Planning Process. Currently, several of the Regional Water Plans are being reviewed and most have been approved by the Texas Water Development Board, so congratulations to all that have worked on their regional water plans. Solicitations for consultants should begin soon for the next Planning Cycle in each of the regions. The solicitation process for consultants is also starting for the State Regional Flood Planning process. Those interested in participating should visit the Texas Water Development Board website for more information. I appreciate all those involved on the regional planning processes and making sure we are all evaluating projects from a multi-benefit and comprehensive perspective.

As the new year begins, so do our continuing education hours for all our certifications and licenses. If you are looking ahead for training



MELISSA BRYANT
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Here's to a Better New Year!

BY MIKE HOWE
tawwa executive director

Liz sent me a note today reminding me this column was past due for this issue of **TEXAS***h2o*. If you have been involved in the Section for any length of time, you probably know it is really Liz who keeps the wheels on the track. So, when I am "reminded," I know I must get creative.

I have been writing these columns for a long time. A really long time. It is sometimes hard to find a topic or information that might be interesting or worth your time to read. As it is the new year, I thought about focusing on all the good things a new year can bring. But, and I'm sure you feel the same, it is difficult to be celebratory at this moment. I am not saying the future isn't bright. It is. It's just impossible to ignore the present state of the pandemic.

I went back a year ago at this time and looked at my column. It was prepandemic. Pre-virtual conference. Pre-life on Zoom calls. Pre- just about everything since February 2020 and a full shutdown. In that article, I talked about ways to start the New Year, with a series of steps to help you get organized. At the end of the article, I said I was going to try to implement these tips and "I'll let you know how it goes." Below is the list.

1. Collect a list of all your tasks.
2. Identify urgent vs. important.
3. Assess value.
4. Order tasks by estimated effort.
5. Be flexible and adaptable.
6. Know when to cut.

In February, I actually thought about how I could actually use this list. They all made sense. You know, decide what was urgent or just important. Order the tasks by estimated effort. Or be flexible and adaptable and know when to cut. What great ideas. Until EVERYTHING WAS URGENT. EVERYTHING HAD VALUE. WE

HAD TO ADAPT LIKE NEVER BEFORE. AND EVERYTHING THAT WASN'T URGENT (See above) WAS CUT, EXCEPT EVERYTHING WAS URGENT!

A year ago, everything made sense. A year later, well, what can I say. Nothing makes sense—at least not like last year. So instead of this list, I offer you the below list to make a BETTER New Year. These are a whole lot more fun than trying to make sense of, well, anything! ENJOY!

The below is from the Washington Post and with full acknowledgement that I am using it with as many references as I can including a link and not claiming it as my own, here are steps to Stop Doom Scrolling.

Here is the link: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2021/lifestyle/wellness/stop-doom-scrolling-ideas/>. OR if you read online at our website (www.txawwa.org) the links will be "hot."

I am including this under the Fair Use Doctrine, including comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. I also encourage you to subscribe to the Washington Post, and if you are an Amazon Prime Member, then I think you get access for free. (This is my unbelievably bad attempt at CYA)

STOP DOOM SCROLLING

... watch the new Pixar movie **1 "SOUL."**

Or binge Shonda Rhimes's show **2 "BRIDGERTON."** Er, on second thought, you should probably read a **3 BOOK**. Check one out **4 DIGITALLY**. Assemble a (virtual) **5 BOOK CLUB**.

Can't focus? Take a **6 WALK**. Listen to **7 THIS PODCAST**

CONTINUED PAGE 28 | executive director report



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If you would like to purchase the calendar, please visit: <https://www.weat.org/events/imagine-a-day-without-water-idww-2021-calendar>. Calendars are only \$13 each or two for \$20 and purchases help support combined educational programs and Water For People. 



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Desalination Breakthrough Could Lead to Cheaper Water Filtration

university of texas at austin | ut news

Producing clean water at a lower cost could be on the horizon after researchers from The University of Texas at Austin and Penn State solved a complex problem that had baffled scientists for decades, until now.

Desalination membranes remove salt and other chemicals from water, a process critical to the health of society, cleaning billions of gallons of water for agriculture, energy production and drinking. The idea seems simple — push salty water through and clean water comes out the other side — but it contains complex intricacies that scientists are still trying to

understand.

The research team, in partnership with DuPont Water Solutions, solved an important aspect of this mystery, opening the door to reduce costs of clean water production. The researchers determined desalination membranes are inconsistent in density and mass distribution, which can hold back their performance. Uniform density at the nanoscale is the key to increasing how much clean water these membranes can create.

CONTINUED PAGE 18 | desalination



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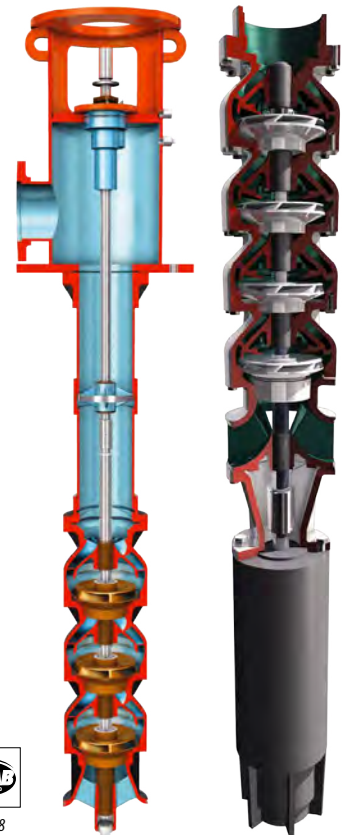


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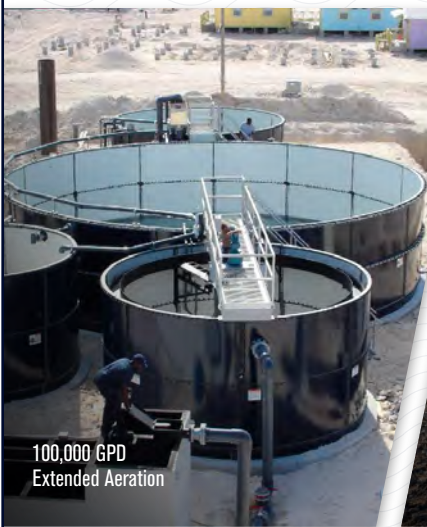


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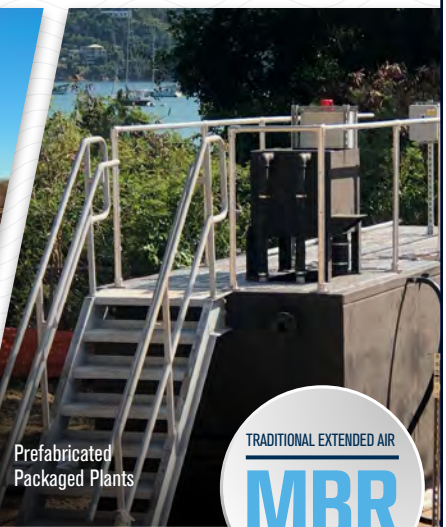
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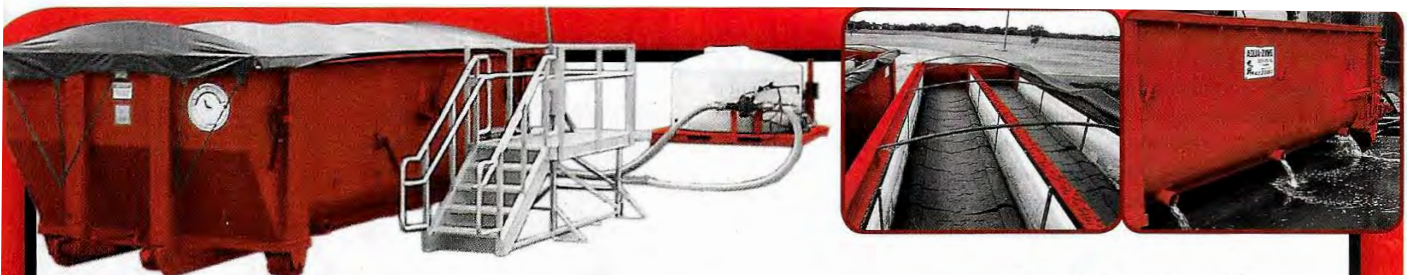
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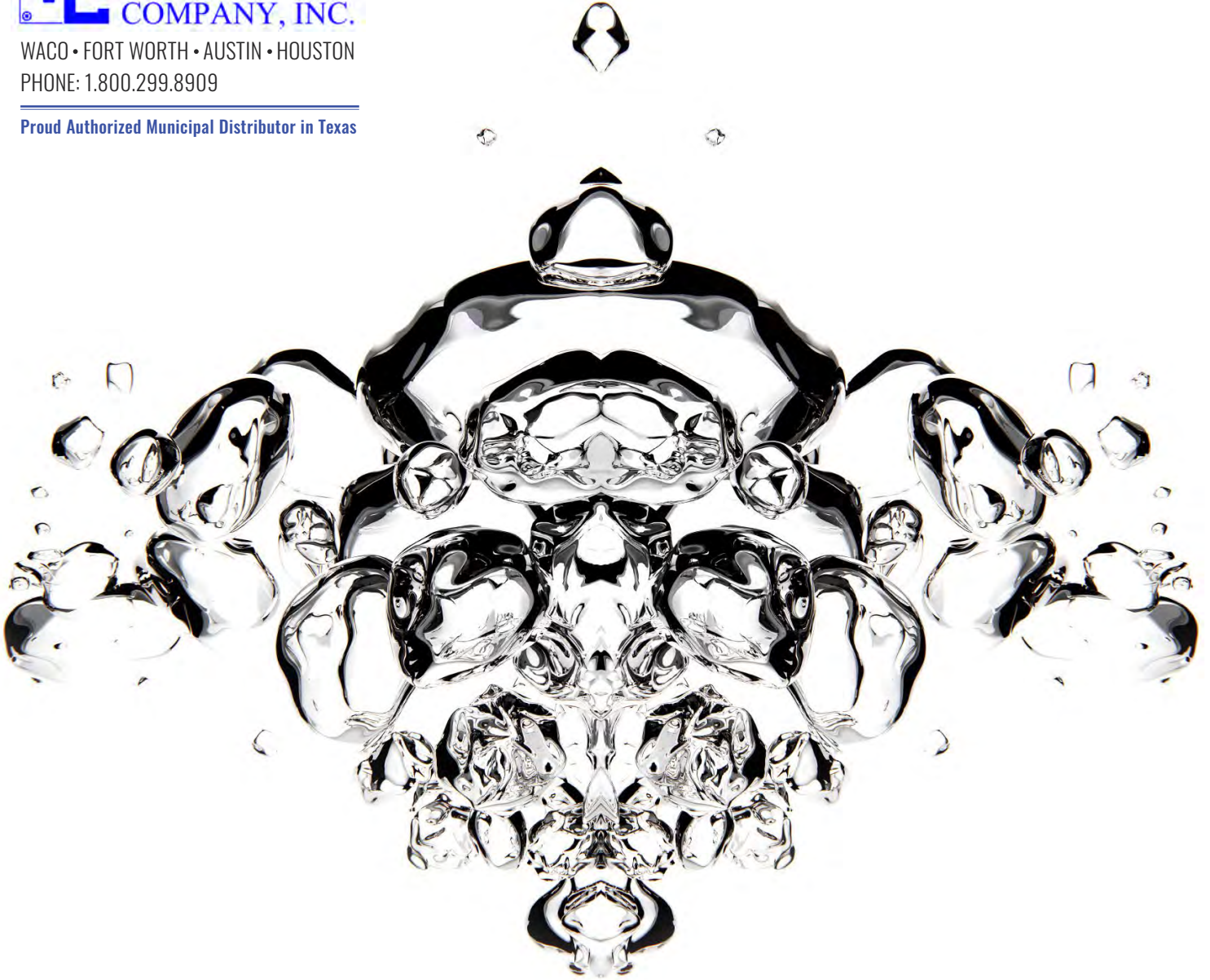


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Join TAWWA Executive Director Mike Howe and Heather Cooke, TAWWA Legislative Committee Chair, for a FREE Members-Only Legislative Lunch Break webcast from Noon to 1 p.m. CST Thursday, Feb. 11.

These very popular webcasts are a fast and informative way to keep up with what is going on at the State Capital. This is your best opportunity to keep up with the activity in the 87th Session of the Texas Legislature in just one very quick hour.

During the webcast, attendees will be able to text in questions.

Though this webcast is free to TAWWA members, you must register in advance: www.tawwa.org/event/legfeb11

On the day of the webcast, all registrants will be emailed a link to connect to the webcast.

And mark your calendar for our second Legislative Lunch Break update from noon to 1 p.m. Central Thursday, March 11. More information and registration will be sent out later.

Sorry, this webcast is not eligible for TCEQ credit hours. 

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Check the TAWWA Calendar,
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"Reverse osmosis membranes are widely used for cleaning water, but there's still a lot we don't know about them," said Manish Kumar, an associate professor in the Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering at UT Austin, who co-led the research. "We couldn't really say how water moves through them, so all the improvements over the past 40 years have essentially been done in the dark."

The findings were published in *Science*.

The paper documents an increase in efficiency in the membranes tested by 30%-40%, meaning they can clean more water while using significantly less energy. That could lead to increased access to clean water and lower water bills for individual homes and large users alike.

Reverse osmosis membranes work by applying pressure to the salty feed solution on one side. The minerals stay there while the water passes through. Although more efficient than non-membrane desalination processes, it still takes a large amount of

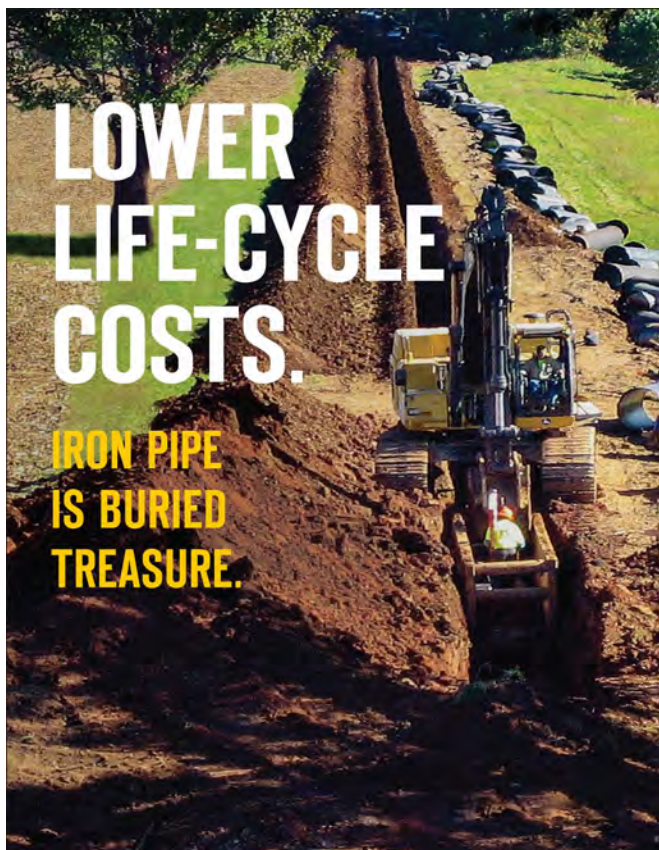
energy, the researchers said, and improving the efficiency of the membranes could reduce that burden.

"Fresh water management is becoming a crucial challenge throughout the world," said Enrique Gomez, a professor of chemical engineering at Penn State who co-led the research. "Shortages, droughts — with increasing severe weather patterns, it is expected this problem will become even more significant. It's critically important to have clean water availability, especially in low-resource areas."

The National Science Foundation and DuPont, which makes numerous desalination products, funded the research. The seeds were planted when DuPont researchers found that thicker membranes were actually proving to be more permeable. This came as a surprise because the conventional knowledge was that thickness reduces how much water could flow through the membranes.

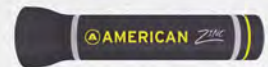
The team connected with Dow Water Solutions, which is now a part of DuPont, in 2015 at a "water summit" Kumar organized, and they were eager to

CONTINUED PAGE 21 | desalination



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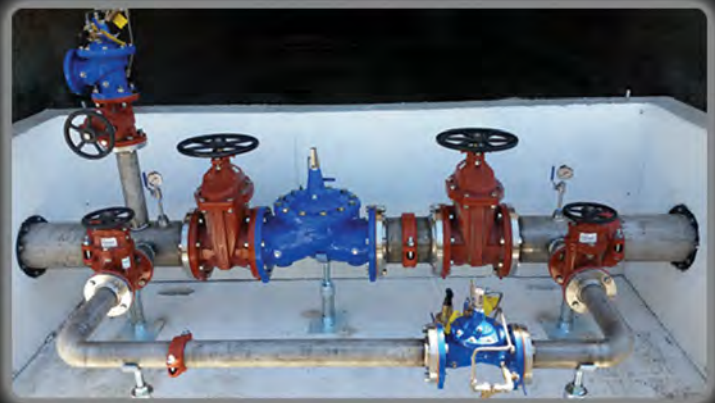


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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18 | desalination

solve this mystery. The research team, which also includes researchers from Iowa State University, developed 3D reconstructions of the nanoscale membrane structure using state-of-the-art electron microscopes at the Materials Characterization Lab of Penn State. They modeled the path water takes through these membranes to predict how efficiently water could be cleaned based on structure. Greg Foss of the Texas Advanced Computing Center helped visualize these simulations, and most of the calculations were performed on Stampede2, TACC's supercomputer. 🇺🇸

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3 | tw 2021 - virtual

not have to choose between attending different sessions as you would at an in-person conference. Better yet, all the sessions will remain posted for multiple months after the conference, to provide for maximum viewing flexibility.

- We're requesting operator hours from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for most of our online sessions. This is an excellent way to comply with any license training requirements in a safe, convenient setting, all without the cost and hassle of travel. Professional Engineers can also obtain their self-reported professional development hours, including the requisite one hour of ethics training.
- We'll also have our exceptional Poster Presentations to complement the technical sessions.

Many of our Texas Water special events will be held virtually, such as:

- the Opening Session/Keynote Address
- the Women in Texas Water session
- the Young Professionals recognition event
- the Engineering Ethics Course
- the Water for People Silent Auction
- Dodson's Drive Virtual Fun Run
- Curtis Smalley Environmental Event
- A **Virtual Exhibit Hall**, which will give you the opportunity to (virtually) visit the wonderful vendors that have continued their support of the conference and also play on online version of our "Match-the-Name Game" scavenger hunt for some amazing door prizes.

CONTINUED PAGE 25 | tw 2021 - virtual

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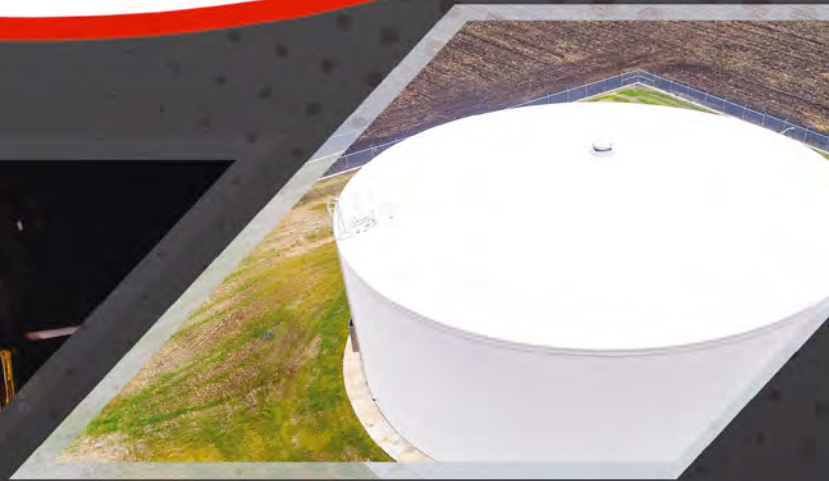
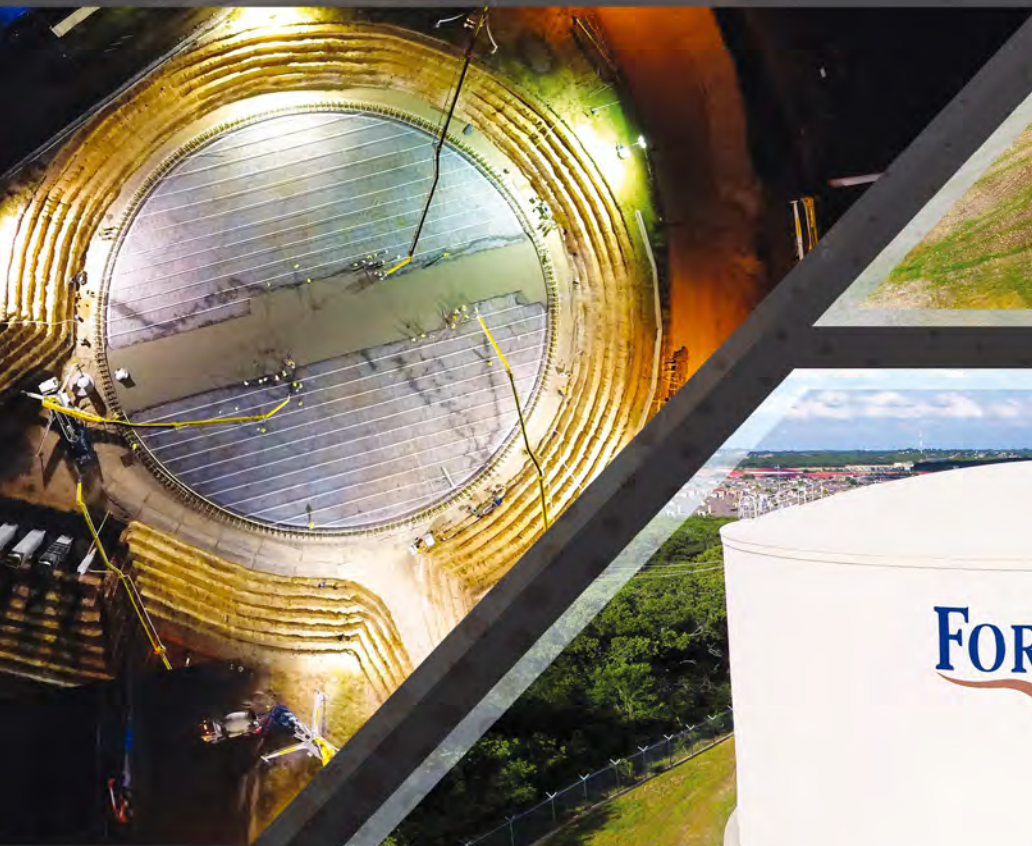


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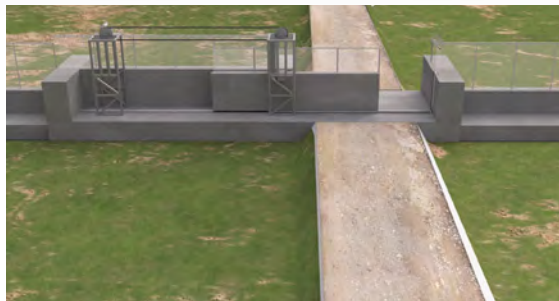
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22 | tw 2021 - virtual


What does registration include?

Registration for Texas Water™ 2021 - Virtual includes access to all technical sessions as well as any other virtual conference events such as the Opening Session, Women in Water event, Dodson's Drive Virtual Fun Run, Curtis Smalley Virtual Environmental Event, Young Professional Panel and Reception, virtual Exhibit Hall and Awards Ceremonies:

- **Member: (in AWWA or WEF): \$200** | on/after March 29: \$250
- **Non-Member: \$425** | on/after March 29: \$475

Non-member registration includes a free* one-year membership in either AWWA or WEF.

**New members only, not for membership renewals*

The conference preview with additional details and attendee registration can be found online at www.txwater.org! 



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Texas Water 2021 - Virtual Scholarship Golf Tournament

February 1, 2021 – March 15, 2021

Help raise funds for scholarships to assist students with families in the water and water quality industry. All profits from the Virtual Texas Water Golf Tournament go toward the scholarship programs.

This year our mission is to keep all players safe by following safety precautions but still enjoy a round of golf and continue our mission to assist students with scholarships. We are changing our format this year to accommodate every golfer playing as a single, a group of two, three or foursome. Your golf event will be held at a golf course in your community. Your group will complete the registration form and independently pick a course and submit your scorecard and picture of yourself or group to Texas Water before the March 15th deadline to be displayed vertically on the Texas Water virtual site during the conference.

Since we cannot be together to enjoy the game of golf, we are still offering opportunities to assist with fundraising by offering four levels of Scholarship Sponsorships as listed below. In addition, there are mulligans for purchase and the forward tee to be used at the team's discretion on any Par 5. Your generosity is sincerely appreciated by all and let's enjoy our golfing event.

Register online at www.txwater.org!



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6 | executive director report

about other people walking. Go on a **8 HIKE**. Better yet, get into running and **9 TRAIN FOR A 5K**. All right, just look out a **10 WINDOW**. Tour **11 THE SISTINE CHAPEL**. Or **12 YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK**. Get dropped somewhere in the world and then **13 FIND YOUR WAY BACK**. Then strategize your first **14 POST-PANDEMIC TRIP**. Donate your **15 TIME** to a cause. Check in with your **16 DOG** or your **17 BABY DEER?**

See what that whole **18 REGROWING SCALLIONS** thing was all about. Practice your **19 SMILE**, and your **20 POSTURE**. **21 MEDITATE**. Study **22 PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID**. Get a great **23 MASSAGE**. Or...**24 GET HOTTER?** Practice your downward dog with **25 ADRIENE**. **26 Take a bath**. **27 Light a CANDLE**. **28 Light A FIRE**. **29 Light it ALL ON FIRE**. **30 Talk to your plant**. **31 Or a friend ON THE PHONE**. **32 Play CHESS OR QUIPLASH** with them online.

33 Or avoid screens and WRITE THEM A LETTER INSTEAD. **34 Start a SKETCHBOOK**. **35 Turn on BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY NO. 6 OP. 68**. **36 Sew a FACE MASK**. Learn **37 EMBROIDERY**...Learn **38 CALLIGRAPHY**...Learn **39 GERMAN!** Do some laundry the **40 RIGHT WAY**. Flip your **41 MATTRESS**. Sell your old **42 DVDS**. Clean your **43 MAKEUP BRUSHES**. Check in on those **44 scallions**.

Get the blood flowing and do **45 30 jumping jacks**. Lift some **46 BARBELLS**. Try a **47 HIIT WORKOUT**. Make a **48 BANANA STRAWBERRY SMOOTHIE**. Stock your **49 PANTRY**.

Season that **50 CAST-IRON** that has, uh, seen better days. Organize your **51 NIGHTSTAND DRAWER**. Organize your **52 CLOSET**. Organize **53 LITERALLY ANYTHING**. Debate dipping into a new field, like becoming a **54 FAKE BUSINESSMAN**. Consider one of these **55 HIGHLY SPECIFIC HOBBIES**.

Treat yourself with a **56 COCKTAIL** made with things you already have. Or, if it's legal, bake some **57 GOOEY POT BROWNIES**.

I hope this has helped. When you are done with the fun, remember the old joke line, "break's over, back



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on your heads!" If you need the reference, send me an email.

For now, go register for Texas Water™ 2021 – Virtual at www.txwater.org. We have worked hard to make a great virtual experience with the always highly-vetted technical sessions. Don't stop thinking about tomorrow, and if you want to get back to some sense of normal, wear your mask, protect yourself and stay safe. I want to see all of you at Texas Water™ 2022 in San Antonio! 🇺🇸



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4 |
letter from the texas section chair

opportunities, I do want to remind everyone that registration is now open for the Texas Water™ 2021 - Virtual Conference. While I miss seeing everyone in person, I do anticipate another successful virtual conference. We were able to take a lot of our lessons learned from last year's virtual conference to improve upon and plan for an even better virtual conference.

This year I will be hosting the Women in Water event, which will include a mix of fabulous women around the state from utility and service providers. We will be discussing their accomplishments, successes, and adjustments during the pandemic that we are currently dealing with. We hope to release this session in March in time for Women's History Month, so stay tuned.

I was able to start my year off with an Equity and Inclusion Training Course that truly provided some diverse perspectives on how we plan our communities and infrastructure. I'd recommend this training to any community leader who has a desire to make positive changes for future generations. I also attended my first "in person" luncheon a couple of weeks ago at the Tobin Center. We all had the choice to select from red, yellow or green wristbands to identify our comfort levels of interacting with one another. Registration was limited, facemasks were required and tables were spread out on the main floor with individual seating on the upper levels. While there was minimal interaction among all attendees, it was nice to see other people in person. As we continue to deal with COVID-19 and more people begin to meet in person, I pray you and your families stay healthy and stay safe. 🇺🇸

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Classic Margarita Recipe

FOR A SINGLE MARGARITA:

- 1 1/2 ounces silver tequila
- 1 ounce orange liqueur
- 3/4 ounce freshly-squeezed lime juice
- ice
- optional: lime wedge and salt for rimming the glass

INSTRUCTIONS

- If you would like salt-rimmed glasses, begin by running a lime slice (the juicy part) around the top rim of a glass. Fill a shallow bowl with salt, and dip the rim in the salt.
- Add tequila, orange liqueur and lime juice to a cocktail shaker, and shake or stir until combined.
- Fill glass with ice. Pour in the margarita mixture over the rocks.
- Serve immediately, garnished with an extra lime wedge if desired.

February 22nd
Margarita Day

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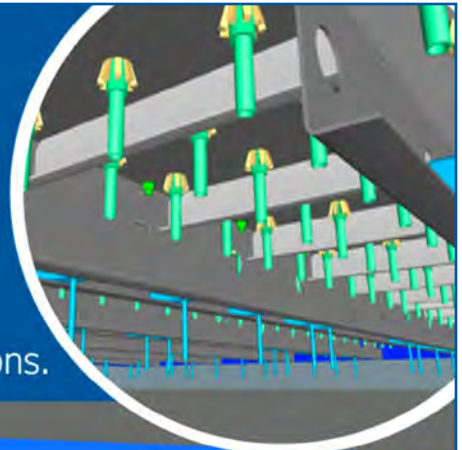
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What's Happening Across Texas

DATE	ACTIVITY	TIME	LOCATION	INFORMATION
FEB 11	Free Legislative Lunch Break Webcast	12 pm-1 pm	Online	www.tawwa.org
FEB 18	NCT February Chapter Meeting	12 pm-1 pm	Online	www.tawwa.org
MAR 4	Virtual Bingo for Bags	11:30 am-1 pm	Online	www.tawwa.org
MAR 11	Free Legislative Lunch Break Webcast	12 pm-1 pm	Online	www.tawwa.org
MAR 29	Texas Water 2021 - Virtual		Online	www.txwater.org

Want to share your event with the Texas water community?
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Check the Section's website, www.tawwa.org, for the latest information on Section activities.



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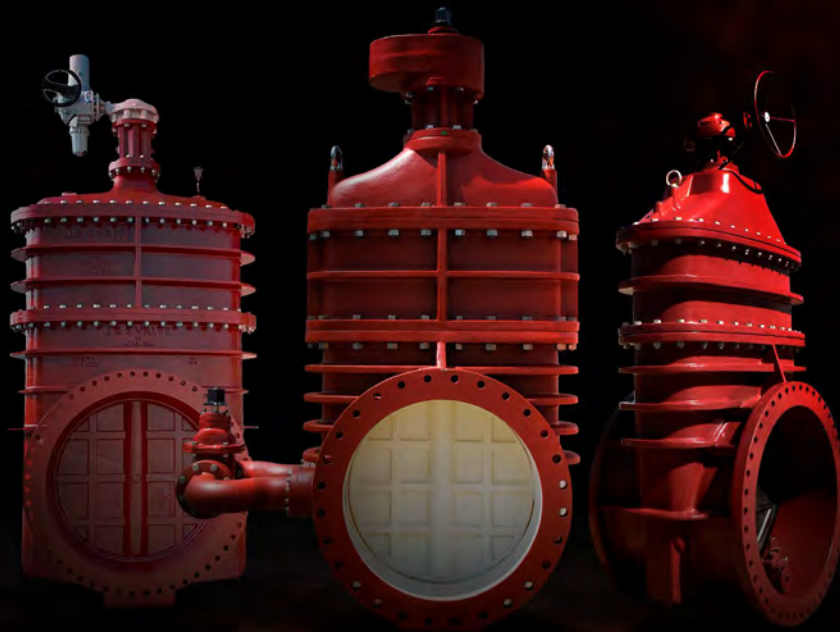
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