

SUMMER  
2025

The Official Publication of the Water Environment Association of Utah

# DIGESTED news

*Celebrating 50 Years of Clean Water*

## 2025 WEAU Annual Conference SUMMARY

**INSIDE:**

Student Chapter Spotlight: University of Utah | What's in a Passphrase?

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## Discover the Cost-Effective Difference ACO Stormbrixx Makes For You.



### Schoonover Case Study

The Schoonover Plumbing ACO Stormbrixx project was brought to Mountain Supply out of a need to find a cost-effective way to eliminate an on-site drainage pond, while staying in compliance with the current State of Utah Stormwater Requirements. In order to eliminate the pond, it was determined that an underground stormwater detention system would be necessary. Working with Mustang Design and ACO an appropriately sized below ground retention system was designed for the site that included two access and maintenance points. Once approved, the system was installed with on-site assistance from Mountainland Supply.

By using Stormbrixx the owner was able to eliminate the pond by detaining the stormwater under their parking lot in a Stormbrixx system. This system not only saved the owner from wasting land but created a structurally sound “modular vault” that will be able to be maintained for years to come. By retaining and infiltrating the storm water 100% on site the owner was able to eliminate the extra cost incurred by connecting to the city’s storm sewer system.



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# A Better Way: ACO StormBrixx®

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Recently, the Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple needed to replace their old French drain system. The goal was to stop water from pooling in the parking lot and landscape, which was making the beautiful temple appear unkempt and unsafe. Three layers of the ACO StormBrixx® were installed, allowing for better drainage within the limited footprint requirements.

Quinn Brown, Sales Manager over the Geosynthetic Division of Mountainland Supply explained: "Not only is it a much more effective system because we can put it in while having a smaller footprint, it's also one of the fastest installing systems, and it doesn't require rock as part of the structure of the product. So, it also takes a significant number of trucks off the road and decreases the overall labour time."

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As Quinn Brown explains, it's easy to fall back on familiar methods, even if newer options are available. "I always ask, 'Do you still use your grandpa's TV?' Sure, it would turn on, but you'd probably prefer your LED flat screen. Why not apply the same thinking to stormwater management?"

New technologies like the ACO StormBrixx® system can increase profitability by reducing labor costs and speeding up project timelines. "There's a lot of great technology out there," says Quinn. "People just need to be willing to explore them. Not only will it save time and money, but it'll also deliver a better outcome."



# Making the most of a precious resource

Bridging the gap in water supply from today to Utah's future requires tenacity, practicality, creativity, and the ability to deliver. Together, our engineers, scientists, consultants, and constructors connect the tried-and-true with the best new ideas to deliver reliable and resilient water reuse solutions to enhance our communities and the environment where we live and work.

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# TRUSTED WASTEWATER ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS: A Sunrise Engineering Spotlight

TURNING COMPLEX CHALLENGES INTO SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS –  
DESIGNING, UPGRADING, AND MAINTAINING WASTEWATER  
INFRASTRUCTURE FOR COMMUNITIES OF ALL SIZES.

BY RYAN NELSON

Wastewater systems often work behind the scenes – but their impact on public health, environmental protection, and community growth is anything but hidden. As cities and towns navigate aging infrastructure, tighter regulations, and evolving community needs, one thing remains clear: effective wastewater management is essential. At Sunrise Engineering, we make it happen.

For nearly five decades, Sunrise Engineering has been a trusted partner for municipalities, utility districts, and private clients, delivering reliable, cost-effective wastewater solutions. From master planning and permitting to treatment plant design and lift station analysis, we offer comprehensive services tailored to each community's needs.

## Deep Expertise, Proven Results

Our team has completed hundreds of wastewater projects across the Intermountain West – covering everything from lagoon rehabilitations to cutting-edge mechanical treatment facilities. We understand the complexities of permitting, funding, regulatory compliance, and public outreach. Our engineers are skilled communicators who guide clients through every phase of planning, design, and construction.

Whether it's a small-town upgrade or a regional facility expansion, Sunrise is known for its commitment to long-term performance and community-centered design.

## Comprehensive Wastewater Services

We offer a full suite of wastewater engineering solutions, including:

- Wastewater Collection & Treatment Systems
- Lagoons and Mechanical Treatment Plants
- Lift Station Design and Evaluation
- Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) Systems
- Odor Control and Sludge Management
- Effluent Reuse and Land Application
- Regulatory Compliance and Permitting
- SCADA Integration and Remote Monitoring
- Funding Assistance and Grant Writing

Our team brings innovation and practicality to each project – balancing modern technology with operational simplicity and cost-efficiency.



## Spotlight Project:

### Mountain Green BNR Treatment Plant

A standout example of Sunrise's capabilities is the Mountain Green Wastewater Treatment Plant, currently under construction. This transformative project upgrades an aging 0.4 MGD lagoon facility to a 1.5 MGD mechanical BNR plant – with expansion capability up to 3.0 MGD.

To meet EPA phosphorus standards (less than 1 mg/L), the new system includes mechanical bar screens, grit removal, disc filters, UV disinfection, and a lined BNR basin. Secondary clarifiers, aerobic digesters, and new operations buildings round out the facility. Sunrise provided end-to-end support: from planning and funding acquisition through design, bidding, and construction management.

## LIFTSHIELD: Technology That Protects

Sunrise is also innovating in the evaluation of booster and lift stations through our proprietary **LIFTSHIELD** service. This low-cost tool collects and analyzes performance data to assess pump efficiency, detect wear, and prevent unexpected failures. Whether you're monitoring an existing lift station or establishing a baseline for a new one, LIFTSHIELD provides peace of mind and operational insight.

## Partners for the Long Haul

What sets Sunrise apart is our focus on relationships. We don't just deliver engineering services – we become trusted partners. Our teams are accessible, responsive, and invested in the communities we serve. We show up, we answer calls, and we follow through.

Many clients face lean staffing or tight budgets, and we tailor our support accordingly – offering clear communication, practical designs, and training for operators.

## Beyond Wastewater

While wastewater systems are a core strength, Sunrise offers a wide range of complementary services – surveying, GIS, natural gas engineering, community development, and more. This multidisciplinary approach helps our clients streamline project coordination and maximize value.

## In It for the People

At Sunrise Engineering, we believe infrastructure is about more than pipes and plants – it's about people. It's about safeguarding health, protecting natural resources, and preparing for the future.

We are proud to stand beside our clients as they tackle tough challenges and plan for sustainable growth. Wastewater is essential – and we're here to help manage it, now and for the long haul.

# From the Desk with the Golden Shovel



Steve Myers

**T**aking on the role of WEAU President is a little surreal, to be honest. Ever heard of *imposter syndrome*? Yeah, I've got a touch of that going on. And it's not because I haven't been around – I've been volunteering with WEAU for years – it's probably because I know the kind of people who've held this role before me. Smart, committed, humble folks who've carried a heavy load (similar to the weight of the conference grand prize! Who ended up with the 12,000-lb winch anyways?) and done it with grace and grit.



To all of you who've served, chaired, showed up, stayed late, carried boxes, wrangled speakers, mentored newbies, or just moved things forward without needing your name in lights: I won't name names (too risky – I'd leave someone out and live in shame for the rest of my presidency), but I will say this: you know who you are, and thank you. You've set the bar high. You've made this organization what it is and I'm honored (and a little nervous) to follow in your footsteps.

So, back to a prime example of what this community does best: the annual conference we just wrapped up. Huge thanks to the planning committee, speakers, exhibitors, and every single attendee who made it happen. As well, let's not forget the Operations Challenge teams, the true athletes of the water world. You trained hard, competed fiercely, and it showed. Congrats to all the winners and, again, thanks to the organizers!

This year, one of my big goals is to build even more engagement across our entire professional network. I'm talking operators, managers, engineers, equipment suppliers, regulators, students, and young professionals (YPs – not to be confused with *wipees*, although both are highly relevant in our line of work). Every one of you brings a perspective that makes this community stronger. I realize your engagement is a direct result of our value to you and your profession. To whit, I'd like to make a callout: If you've been watching from the sidelines, wondering how to get involved – now's a great time to jump in. Volunteering with WEAU isn't just good for the organization – it's good for *you*. You'll grow your network, learn things you won't find in a manual, and have some fun (yes, fun – just ask around!). Please visit [www.weau.org](http://www.weau.org) or [www.wef.org](http://www.wef.org) to check out volunteer opportunities – or simply reach





out directly to me or someone else on the board. There's something for everyone, whether you've got a free hour or want to lead a committee.

Another theme I've been chewing on: where does WEAU fit in the broader "One Water" or water circularity conversation? As the lines blur between drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and reuse, I think we have an opportunity to be more intentional about collaboration. Our AWWA colleagues (hello, Intermountain Section!)

“ I may not have all the answers, but I do have a deep appreciation for this work and the people who do it.

Let's keep showing up for each other, for clean water, and for the communities we serve.

I think it's worth exploring. Don't be surprised if I ask your opinion – I'd love to hear your thoughts, whether over lunch, during any WEAU event, or through an unsolicited meme you text me at 11:00 pm. Any and all methods are welcome!

Finally, yes – the golden shovel. What an honor. My 5-year-old told me that he could use it to finally dig a big hole... to his chagrin, it's mounted proudly behind me, watching over all of my Teams calls, serving as a shiny reminder not to take myself too seriously. I may not have all the answers, but I do have a deep appreciation for this work and the people who do it.

Let's keep showing up for each other, for clean water, and for the communities we serve. Here's to a year of digging deep (but not through a pressurized line – please call before you dig). [DM](#)

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# Tips and Insights for a Recent Engineering Graduate in the Wastewater/Water Industry

Wyatt Andersen

**H**ello Digested News Readers, With nearly seven years of experience as a consulting engineer in Utah's wastewater and water industry, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on some of the tips and insights I've gained – advice that I believe would be valuable to a recent engineering graduate just entering the industry.

The following is a list that I have compiled and felt the need to share:

- **Broaden Your Skillset** – As a new engineer that has little to no experience in the wastewater/water industry, you will likely be working on projects under one or two project managers. Often, these managers focus on similar types of projects year after year, which can limit the variety of your experience. I recommend reaching out to other project managers within your organization that work on different types of projects. Offering to help with a project of theirs can expose you to new projects and expand your skillset which will be useful for a junior or senior engineer.
- **Don't Delay Professional Licensure** –

Taking the Professional Engineering (PE) exam can be a daunting task, but it is a critical step toward becoming a successful engineer in this industry. I recommend taking the PE exam within a year or two after graduating from your university. This way the breadth of knowledge gained during your time at the university will help you pass the exam. The longer you wait, the more the knowledge that was acquired in university will diminish.

- **Ask Questions** – It is likely that you will need to ask a lot of questions to junior and senior engineers when you first start working on projects. There will be many times where you feel stuck on a project task and don't know what the next step is. While some recent graduates will be reluctant to ask questions and just spin their wheels, others immediately turn to coworkers to ask questions. I think a healthy balance between the two is the most successful approach.
- **Get Involved in Industry Organizations** – As a recent graduate engineer, I was not aware that WEAU or

WEF existing for the first few years of my career. I was also not aware that there are so many other organizations that you can be involved in like Rural Water Users, APWA, AWWA, ASCE, etc. I have been involved in the WEAU Young Professionals for a few years now and it has been a great experience to network with other young professionals in the industry. I recommend getting involved with a professional organization early in your career and join the young professionals if that opportunity is available.

- **Follow Through to Completion** – In the early stages of your career, it is possible that you will work on a half dozen to a dozen different projects at the same time, making it hard to be fully invested in each of the projects. It is beneficial for your development as an engineer to stay invested in each of your projects until the end of the project rather than just treating the project like you are completing tasks. Hopefully these tips and insights are useful to recent graduates that are finding their way through the wastewater/water industry. 

## FIND THE HIDDEN GOLDEN SLUDGE SHOVEL!\*


Each quarter, *Digested News* has this golden sludge shovel icon hidden somewhere in the content of its pages.

**Be the first to find it and email the editor** ([digestednews@weau.org](mailto:digestednews@weau.org)) the correct page number to **win an Amazon Gift Card – now \$50!**

Emails should include:

- Subject: I found the golden shovel
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Winners will be notified directly and named in the next issue of *Digested News*.

\*For those of you new to WEAU, volunteers who give notable time and service to WEAU are awarded a "5S" golden lapel pin shovel. With that award, they become members of the **Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers**. WEAU is always looking for volunteers and maybe one day, you too can become a 5S member. 



**CONGRATS TO:  
BRANDON RICHARDS OF THE  
MURRAY CITY WASTEWATER  
DIVISION FOR FINDING THE  
GOLDEN SHOVEL ON PAGE 49 OF  
DIGESTED NEWS SPRING 2025.**

**ENJOY YOUR GIFT CARD!**

**Have feedback or suggestions?** We'd love to hear from you about what parts of *Digested News* you find helpful, or about what you'd like to see. Email us at [digestednews@weau.org](mailto:digestednews@weau.org).



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# Josh Surratt – Talents Beyond the Job!

By Chad Hardinger

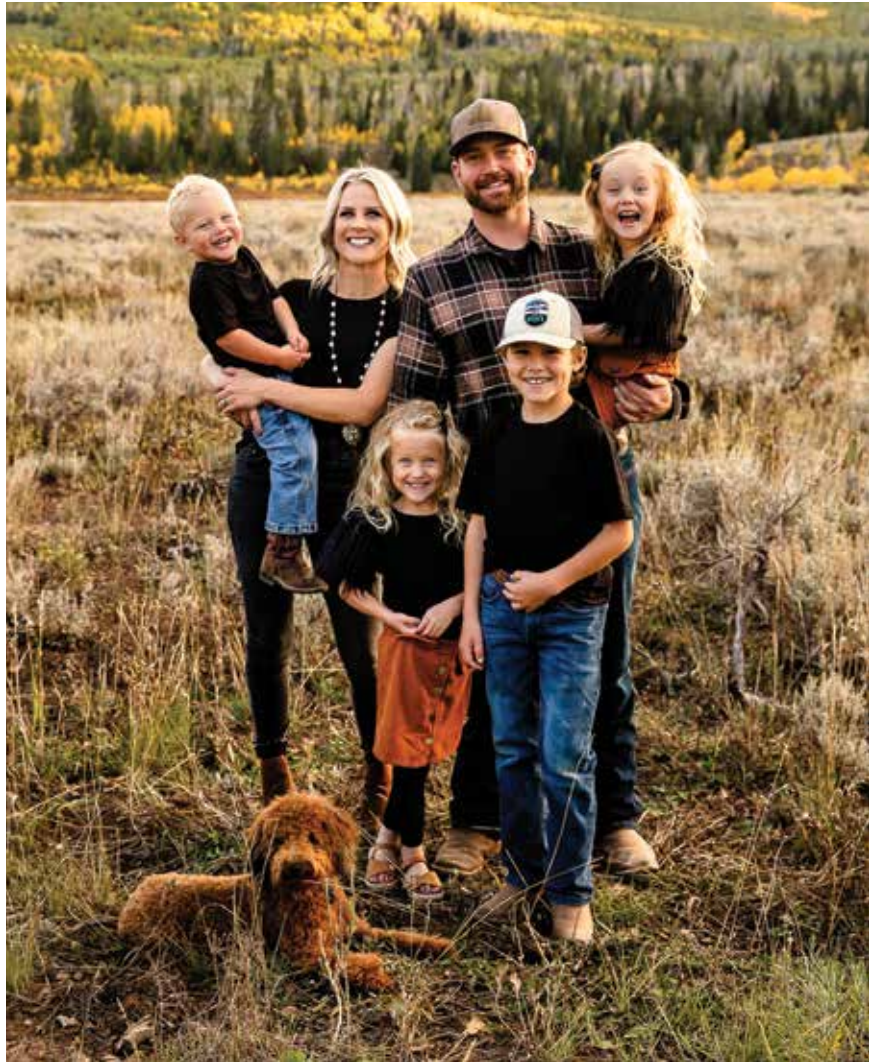
I would like to spotlight an employee at the Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation District whose talents extend far beyond maintaining a collections system.

Josh Surratt has been a collections system operator for the past 11 years. However, his most important job and priority is being a loving husband to his beautiful wife, Taylor Surratt, and father to his four amazing children: Braxton, Blake, Berkley, and Zeek. Josh and his family live in Heber City, where they spend much of their free time in the mountains camping, fishing, and hunting. Their kids are involved in many different sports and activities, which keep them busy.

Josh has other passions in his life that are accompanied by amazing talents. He has always been an avid hunter. His love of hunting – and capturing the special moments it creates for people – has led him to begin filming and documenting the hunting adventures of family and friends. He taught himself how to use cameras, editing software, and other special programs to create hunting videos that rival most other hunting content available today. Although this is currently more of a hobby, the videos he has created will stay with his family and friends forever, allowing them to relive those special moments.

Josh also spent a lot of time watching the TV show *Forged in Fire*, which inspired him to learn and master a new craft. Starting out with a small forge and hand tools, he set up a small forging shop in his shed. While most people might start with a simpler, more fail-proof blade, that is not Josh's style. After spending hours researching tips and techniques, he decided he would make a Damascus blade with copper layers for his first knife – and it turned out amazing. Since then, he has made several other Damascus-style knives, each one custom and unique to the people he made them for.

Oh yeah, Josh is also quite good at his day job! He is a Grade 4 collections operator with numerous certifications and has been awarded the WEAU Operator of the Year. He is a strong public speaker and has presented at the WEAU Midyear Conference as well as the WEAU Annual Conference. His self-motivated personality and ambition to be the best he can be in whatever he does makes him a valued friend and co-worker here at Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation District. [DRI](#)



Josh is a Grade 4 collections operator with numerous certifications and has been awarded the WEAU Operator of the Year.



# Collections Quiz

By Dan Olson

1. According to "Ten State Standards," when a sewer is installed parallel to a water line, it must be a minimum of \_\_\_\_\_ away (measured from the outside diameters).  
A. 6 feet      B. 48 inches  
C. 36 inches      D. 10 feet
2. What is the minimum distance from the edge of the spoils to the edge of the trench?  
A. 10 feet      B. 18 inches  
C. 2 feet      D. 6 feet
3. What capacity blower is required to ventilate a manhole 54 inches in diameter and 49-feet deep, if eight air change(s) are required every 60 minutes?  
A. 13 cfm      B. 104 cfm  
C. 6231 cfm      D. 249 cfm
4. A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ is required for any CSO outfall pipe.  
A. Netting facility  
B. NPDES Permit  
C. Outfall flow meter  
D. Monthly inspection
5. Shoring must extend \_\_\_\_\_ above the top of the excavation.  
A. 3 feet      B. 24 inches  
C. 18 inches      D. 1 foot
6. A wastewater treatment plant receives the following:  
*Pump Station = 6,500 GPM*  
*Sewer "A" = 70,000 people @ 100 GPCD*  
*I&I = 50,000 gal/day*  
*Ind. Waste = 92,000 gal/day*  
*Sewer "B" = ?*  
If the plant receives 21.5 MGD, what percentage of the total flow is contributed by sewer "B"?  
A. 69.7%  
B. 30.3%  
C. 76.8%  
D. 23.2%
7. Before any excavation can be done, you must notify (the) \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. EPA  
B. Department of Transportation  
C. County Sewer department  
D. One call center
8. The bottom of a water line crossing above a sewer line must be \_\_\_\_\_ from the crown of the sewer.  
A. 18 inches  
B. 10 feet  
C. 24 inches  
D. 3 feet
9. In keeping records, \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. Every test result should be included in an annual report  
B. Poor records are better than no records  
C. Records should be destroyed every two years  
D. Records should be kept up-to-date and maintained as long as they are useful
10. The interior of 1,750 ft of 27-in pipe is uniformly coated with 1.75 in of grease. How many gallons will this pipe hold when filled with water?  
A. 39,408 gal  
B. 9,337,556 gal  
C. 43,939 gal  
D. 7,329,982 gal
11. Colored dye is dumped into a manhole. The dye first appears 3 minutes, 32 seconds later in a manhole 975 feet downstream and disappears 7 minutes, and 55 seconds after the dye was first dumped into the manhole. What is the velocity of the flow in the sewer?  
A. 2.05 fps      B. 2.84 fps  
C. 4.60 fps      D. 0.70 fps
12. A mechanical ventilation system for the wet well portion of a lift station which operates continuously should be able to exchange the air in the wet well minutes, times an hour.  
A. 6      B. 20  
C. 30      D. 60 D



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## Answers

1-D, 2-C, 3-B, 4-B, 5-C, 6-D, 7-D, 8-A, 9-D, 10-A, 11-B, 12-A.

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# Maintenance Quiz

By James Magill

1. **When conducting a confined space entry, you must test atmosphere prior to opening, at entry, after opening, and every \_\_\_\_\_ minutes until the confined space entry is ended.**
  - A. 30
  - B. 25
  - C. 20
  - D. 15
2. **A circle has a circumference of 393 feet. What is the diameter?**
  - A. 63 feet
  - B. 98 feet
  - C. 125 feet
  - D. 197 feet
3. **A steel bar is 6.5 inches long. It is heated from 75°F to 250°F. What is the new length of the steel bar? The coefficient of thermal expansion is 0.00000633/F for steel.**
  - A. 6.4928 inches
  - B. 6.5006 inches
  - C. 6.5072 inches
  - D. 6.5720 inches
4. **The span of a belt-driven piece of equipment is described as \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. The distance from the center line of one shaft to the center line of the other shaft
  - B. The distance from the pitch line of one sheave to the pitch line of the other sheave
  - C. The distance from where the belt loses contact with one sheave to the point where it contacts the other sheave
  - D. The distance the belt travels in one revolution
5. **Which of the following “trouble causes” would be associated with a pump that fails to discharge on start-up?**
  - A. Leaks in the stuffing box
  - B. Excessive pump clearances
  - C. Lift to high
  - D. Air or vapor in the liquid
6. **The two main classifications of air compressors are \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. Positive-displacement and dynamic
  - B. Air-cooled and water-cooled
  - C. Reciprocating and rotary
  - D. Vane and piston
7. **A holding tank requires chlorination to 2.5 ppm. The tank holds 3.5 million gallons. How many pounds of chlorine will be needed?**
  - A. 8.75 lbs
  - B. 50 lbs
  - C. 73 lbs
  - D. 182 lbs
8. **A power-Installation drawing shows \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. Power outlets
  - B. Lighting receptacles
  - C. Plug receptacles
  - D. Computer terminal locations
9. **The real objective of measuring performance is to \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. Identify areas that need improvement
  - B. Determine maintenance cost
  - C. Determine work distribution
  - D. Update historical data
10. **If an 85% efficient pump delivers 2,250 GPM at a TDH of 100 feet, what is the water horse power?**
  - A. 42 whp
  - B. 48.3 whp
  - C. 56.8 whp
  - D. 66.8 whp
11. **Each device connected to a network works through a \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. Controller
  - B. Data packet
  - C. Node
  - D. Token
12. **What does the term “braided” refer to when applied to a pressure hose and/or fuel line?**
  - A. Type of inner hose reinforcement
  - B. Type of material used for fluid contact
  - C. Method of connecting hose sections
  - D. Hose covering material
13. **A running pump has a suction pressure of 15 psi and a discharge pressure of 135 psi. If the viscosity and bowl losses are 1.2 feet, what is the total dynamic head?**
  - A. 270 feet
  - B. 278.4 feet
  - C. 311.8 feet
  - D. 346.5 feet
14. **The national electrical code defines a qualified person as some who \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. Has been on the job a minimum of one year
  - B. Is a supervisor or manager
  - C. Is certified by testing laboratory
  - D. Is familiar with equipment operation and hazards
15. **The simplest kind of electrical meter to read is the \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. D’Arsonal meter
  - B. Digital meter
  - C. Pointer meter
  - D. Dial meter 

## Answers

1-C, 2-C, 3-C, 4-C, 5-D, 6-A, 7-C, 8-A, 9-A, 10-C, 11-A, 12-A, 13-C, 14-D, 15-B.

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xylem

+



# Operations Quiz

By Taylor Byrum

- What is the primary purpose of a bar screen in a wastewater treatment plant?**
  - Remove dissolved solids
  - Measure flow rate
  - Remove large debris
  - Add chlorine to the water
- Which process is most used for secondary treatment of wastewater?**
  - Filtration
  - Activated sludge
  - Coagulation
  - UV disinfection
- What is the typical range of pH in raw domestic wastewater?**
  - 2.0-4.0
  - 5.0-6.0
  - 6.5-8.5
  - 9.0-11.0
- A dissolved oxygen (DO) reading of 0.5 mg/L in the aeration tank likely indicates \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - Healthy microbial activity
  - Too much oxygen is being added
  - Low oxygen levels, possibly harming bacteria
  - An error with the DO meter
- What does BOD stand for in wastewater treatment?**
  - Biodegradable Organic Density
  - Biochemical Oxygen Demand
  - Basic Oxygen Distribution
  - Bacterial Oxidation Device
- A drop in pH in the aeration tank may indicate \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - Excessive chlorination
  - Nitrification is occurring
  - Anaerobic digestion
  - A faulty pH meter
- What safety gear is most important when working around open tanks of wastewater?**
  - Hard hat and safety glasses
  - Steel-toed boots
  - Respirator and fall protection
  - Hearing protection and gloves
- In a trickling filter, the media is used to \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - Remove nitrogen gas
  - Provide surface area for microbial growth
  - Chemically neutralize acids
  - Filter out pathogens
- What is the best method for calibrating a pH meter?**
  - Rinse with tap water and store in a dry container
  - Use two standard buffer solutions of known pH
  - Adjust manually to match sample readings
  - Replace the electrodes after each use
- Why is it important to control the sludge age in an activated sludge system?**
  - To reduce pumping costs
  - To increase the temperature of the effluent
  - To maintain a stable microbial population
  - To prevent corrosion of the aeration tank **dn**

## Answers

1-C, 2-B, 3-C, 4-C, 5-B, 6-B, 7-C, 8-B, 9-B, 10-C



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# Ops Challenge Results

**A**nother year has come and gone with our annual Ops Challenge competition – and what a packed and exciting event it was! This year, we had 12 teams compete, including seven from the north: Central Weber, North Davis, Snyderville, Central Valley, South Valley, Salt Lake City, and Jordan Basin. Representing the south were St. George and Ash Creek, joined by two composite teams made up of members from five different entities. We were also thrilled to see the Young Professionals return with a motivated and enthusiastic group.

It was exciting to watch each team grow from the first practice to the last, and even more rewarding to see it all come together at the conference. Since the events didn't change this year, teams were able to build on what they already knew without having to learn entirely new material. Please stay tuned for next year's competition, which will feature several changes to the events, providing participants with new opportunities to showcase their skills and embrace fresh challenges.

We brought back the pipe cutting competition for anyone who wanted to give it a try. For anyone who has not done it, we highly recommend giving it a shot. Jumping into a pipe cutting competition might sound wild, but hey – worst case, you make some loud noises and look cool doing it!

We extend our sincere thanks to all the teams and judges for their help with setting up and tearing down equipment –

a contribution that makes for a long day, and one we truly appreciate. Congratulations to all the teams for their outstanding performance and dedication; your hard work genuinely enhances the experience for everyone involved. We'd also like to thank the participating entities, managers, and board members for their continued support of our competitors throughout this year. [D11](#)

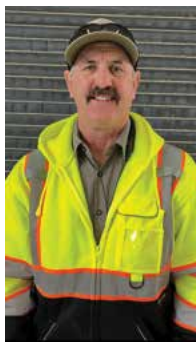


# Operator Spotlight: Chet Cloward

**T**his quarter, I'm pleased to introduce you to Chet Cloward, who works for Central Weber Improvement District.

Chet serves as a supervisor for the rotating crews and is responsible for overseeing all HVAC systems at the facility. He has been with the district for eight years. Prior to joining Central Weber, Chet spent 31 years in the HVAC industry, 23 of those with Holbrook Co., where he worked as a field supervisor.

When the opportunity eventually came along to join Central Weber, Chet made the



transition into the wastewater industry, a move he's thoroughly enjoyed ever since. He holds an associate degree in HVAC and completed a journeyman program in college. In addition, he holds a Wastewater Treatment Operator IV certification and is currently working on obtaining his Class A CDL.

Chet and his wife have been married for 40 years and currently reside in Layton. He originally grew up Fruitland Heights. They have one son, two daughters, and six grandchildren. His son, Nate, also works in the wastewater field and currently serves as an operations manager at Central Davis Sewer District.

In his free time, Chet enjoys a variety of hobbies including taxidermy, freeze-drying, hunting, fishing, and trap shooting. To stay

fit for hunting season, he remains active by going to the gym regularly. More than anything, he loves spending time with his grandchildren and enjoys sharing different activities with his wife, whether it's a hobby or simply being together.

Chet has competed in the Operations Challenge twice and was honored to be on the Wasatch All-Star Team, which competed in New Orleans, LA. He described the experience as an incredible opportunity for learning, professional growth and networking.

Chet is always willing to lend a hand and is known for his easygoing and friendly personality. It was truly a pleasure getting to know him better, he is a great example of the dedication and character found throughout our industry. [D11](#)



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# The Lab Committee's Quiz

Taken from the 2025 Operations Challenge Lab Event Test

- Laboratory results are valuable as a record of plant operations because they \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - Tell operators what changes have been made to the process
  - Help predict and prevent developing trouble within the process
  - Look good on a spreadsheet
  - Make necessary calculations impossible
- Given the following data, calculate the TSS result.**  
*Weight of Filter = 0.4388 g*  
*Weight of Filter + Dried Residue = 0.6903 g*  
*Sample Volume = 25 ml*
  - 10,060 mg/L
  - 10.06 mg/L
  - 2,515 mg/L
  - 25.15 mg/L
- Total dissolved solids (TDS) are solids that pass through a filter with a pore size of at least \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - 20  $\mu\text{m}$
  - 2.0  $\mu\text{m}$
  - 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$
  - 0.02  $\mu\text{m}$
- TSS results are used in all of the following calculations except \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - MCRT
  - SVI
  - Organic loading
  - Sludge wasting rate
- When running TSS samples, how often do you need to run a duplicate?**
  - At least one in 20 samples
  - At least one in 10 samples
  - At least one in 5 samples
  - Every sample needs to be duplicated
- After calibrating the conductivity meter with a 1413  $\mu\text{mhos/cm}$  standard, the calibration is verified using an 825  $\mu\text{mhos/cm}$  second source standard. The acceptance criteria for this standard is  $\pm 20\%$  of its true value. If the meter read 729  $\mu\text{mhos/cm}$  when inserted in a solution of the second source standard, what was the percent recovery and was the recovery acceptable?**
  - 88% and yes
  - 52% and yes
  - 88% and no
  - 52% and no
- Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) are dried at what temperature?**
  - 103°C
  - 103°F
  - 180°C
  - 180°F
- When weighing dried samples, constant weight is achieved if two successive weighing yield a weight change less than \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - 0.1 mg
  - 0.5 mg
  - 1.0 mg
  - 5.0 mg

- The correct preservation for TSS samples is \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - Refrigeration only,  $\leq 6^\circ\text{C}$
  - Refrigeration and  $\text{pH} \leq 2$  with  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$
  - Refrigeration and  $\text{pH} \geq 10$  with  $\text{NaOH}$
  - Freezing only,  $\leq -20^\circ\text{C}$
- In the  $C1V1 = C2V2$  equation, C2 represents \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - The known standard concentration
  - The volume of known standard concentration needed
  - The desired standard concentration
  - The volume of the desired standard concentration

## Answers

1-B, 2-A, 3-B, 4-C, 5-A, 6-A, 7-C, 8-B, 9-A, 10-C

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# Young Professionals Thrive at Annual 2025 Conference

The Young Professionals had another eventful Annual Conference this year with plenty of chances to connect throughout the week. One of our main focuses for the YPs each year is to increase our participation and widen our reach across the state. The group continues to grow and that is thanks to the effort that all of you put in.

On Wednesday, the Young Professionals and the Operations Challenge held a combined social event at BigShots Golf. This was a great opportunity to link up with our fellow YPs and also meet WEAU members involved with the Operations Challenge. On Thursday, the YPs reserved a few tables for a networking lunch in the banquet hall. To break the ice this year, each table raced to complete a WEAU themed crossword puzzle, which will hopefully include more hints

in the future. Wrapping up the week, on Friday the group was invited to tour the Confluence Park Facility hosted by Haskell, Bowen Collins, and Ash Creek SSD. There is a lot of behind the scenes work that goes into holding a tour on an active construction site so thank you again to our hosts.

Special shoutout to the YP Ops Challenge team competing for the second year in a row. Team members Lauren Schmidt, Cassie Spencer, Riley Fisher, Nate Rogers, and Coach Josh Matson took home some hardware placing **first** in the Process Control event and third in the Lab event. The team put in a lot of hours from their personal time and it paid off. Rumor has it the team is planning on competing again next year!

## Meet the New YP Co-Chairs

Katie Reams and Lauren Schmidt are officially stepping away from their roles as Young Professional Co-Chairs and are transitioning into their new positions within WEAU. Katie is a new Director and Lauren is the new Deputy Treasurer, so be sure to congratulate them on their new roles. They both have put a lot of time and energy into making the WEAU YP group what it is today and we are looking forward to seeing what they will accomplish in their new roles. Thank you from all of us YPs for everything that you have done with your time as Co-Chairs.

To fill the open positions, Michael Callison and Josh Matson will be stepping in to serve as the new YP Co-Chairs. Michael is a Project Manager for PCL construction with a BS in Mechanical Engineering from Fairmont State University. Originally from West Virginia, Michael has six years of water and wastewater experience with a strong background in process piping. Josh also works for PCL Construction, joining the team in December of 2022 from Cincinnati, OH. He is currently a Project Engineer with a BS in Civil Engineering from the Ohio State University. During his five years of wastewater construction experience, Josh has been involved with a wide variety of scopes and has a passion for learning more about the water industry as a whole. Michael and Josh are both currently working onsite at the Salt Lake City WRF project. If you see them around while attending your next WEAU event, be sure to introduce yourself. We are thrilled to see what fresh ideas they will bring as they take on their new roles. [DRI](#)



Josh Matson



Michael Callison

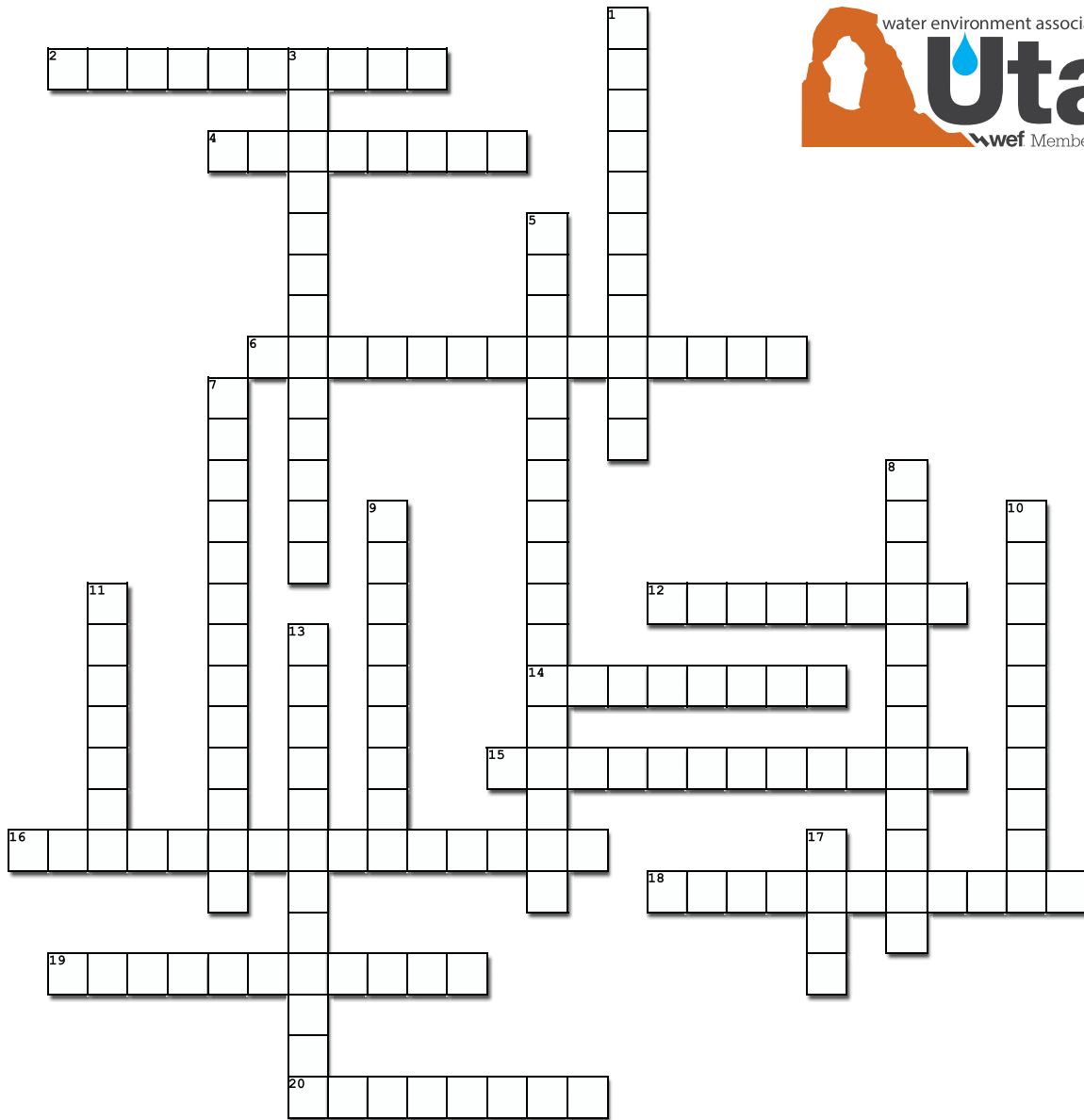
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# YP Icebreaker Crossword



## Across

2. Pre-conference workshop topic.
4. Special Service District formed in 1979 by Washington County to provide wastewater collection treatment and disposal service.
6. Friday's WRF Tour location.
12. Ops Challenge and YP Social venue.
14. Name of golf course where the WEAU Golf Tournament is held.
15. Host of Thursday Happy Hour.
16. Wednesday afternoon technical track in Sunbrook A.
18. Ops Challenge event with a pressurized pipe.
19. Water \_\_\_\_\_ Association of Utah.
20. Select Society of \_\_\_\_\_ Sludge.

## Down

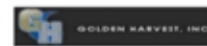
1. 2024-2025 WEAU President.
3. Place to meet manufacturers, contractors, engineers, and vendors.
5. WEAU member category, who has less than 10 years of experience in the wastewater industry, or is less than 35 years old.
7. Water Reclamation Facility that treats 50 to 60 million gallons of wastewater daily, making it the largest wastewater treatment facility in Utah.
8. WRF currently under construction and will feature a 20 MG BNR structure.
9. They answer the phone when you dial 811 in Utah.
13. WEAU's Quarterly Publication.
17. Organization originally founded as The Utah Water Pollution Control Association in 1957.

See page 54 for answers.

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# 2025 WEAU Annual Conference SUMMARY

APRIL 22-25, 2025 | Dixie Center, St. George, UT

## LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

### Thank you, 2024-2025 WEAU Board of Directors

Thank you to everyone that has served on the WEAU board this year. Those leaving the board are: Past President Sherry Sheffield, Director Matt Wiest, and PWO Rep James Magill. Steve Myers is looking forward to overseeing the new board as WEAU President for 2025-2026.



Pictured (L-R): Taylor Byrum, Nate Cloward, Marlo Davis, James Magill, Chad Burrell, Gary Vance, Sarah Ward, Tiffini Adams, Sherry Sheffield, Lauren Schmidt, Matt Wiest, Randy Zollinger, Brandon Wyatt, and Steve Myers

### Welcome, 2025-2026 WEAU Board of Directors

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| President                | Steve Myers     |
| President-Elect          | Gary Vance      |
| Vice President           | Ben Skousen     |
| Secretary                | Brandon Wyatt   |
| Treasurer                | Randy Zollinger |
| Deputy Treasurer         | Lauren Schmidt  |
| Past President           | Chad Burrell    |
| WEF Delegate             | Clint Rogers    |
| WEF Delegate             | Sarah Ward      |
| PWO Representative       | Taylor Byrum    |
| PWO Representative Elect | Cole Tubbs      |
| Director                 | Tiffini Adams   |
| Director                 | Katie Reams     |
| Director                 | Nate Cloward    |
| Director                 | Navneet Prasaad |



### Passing the Shovel

Outgoing President Chad Burrell and Incoming President Steve Myers perform the ritual passing of the shovel.





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# 2025 WEAU Annual Conference **SUMMARY**

## CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

### Young Professionals Confluence Park Tour







### Young Professionals Bigshots Golf



### Clay Sports



|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
|  <p>Water<br/>Wastewater<br/>Water Resources<br/>Natural Resources<br/>Civil Engineering<br/>Electrical Engineering<br/>Structural Engineering<br/>SCADA<br/>Studies/Master Planning<br/>GIS Mapping<br/>Construction Management<br/>Environmental</p> |  |  |  |
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# 2025 WEAU Annual Conference SUMMARY

## OPERATIONS CHALLENGE

### Operations Challenge Teams



Ash Creek Special Service District



Salt Lake City Public Utilities



Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation District



Central Weber Sewer Improvement District



South Valley Water Reclamation Facility



North Davis Sewer District



St. George City



Composite Team 1 with representatives from Cottonwood, Central Davis, and Murray



Composite Team 2 with representatives from Mt. Olympus, and Orem



Jordan Basin Improvement District



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# 2025 WEAU Annual Conference SUMMARY

## OPERATORS IN ACTION





# 2025 WEAU Annual Conference SUMMARY

## OPERATIONS COMPETITION WINNERS

### Overall Winners



1st Place:  
Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



2nd Place:  
South Valley Water Reclamation Facility



3rd Place:  
Central Weber  
Sewer Improvement District

### Safety



1st Place:  
Central Weber  
Sewer Improvement District



2nd Place:  
Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



3rd Place:  
South Valley Water Reclamation Facility

### Maintenance



1st Place:  
South Valley Water Reclamation Facility



2nd Place:  
Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



3rd Place:  
Central Weber  
Sewer Improvement District



## Collection



1st Place:  
Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



2nd Place:  
South Valley Water Reclamation Facility



3rd Place:  
Ash Creek Special Service District

## Lab



1st Place:  
Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



2nd Place:  
Central Weber  
Sewer Improvement District



3rd Place: Young Professionals

## Process Control



1st Place: Young Professionals



2nd Place:  
Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



3rd Place:  
South Valley Water Reclamation Facility

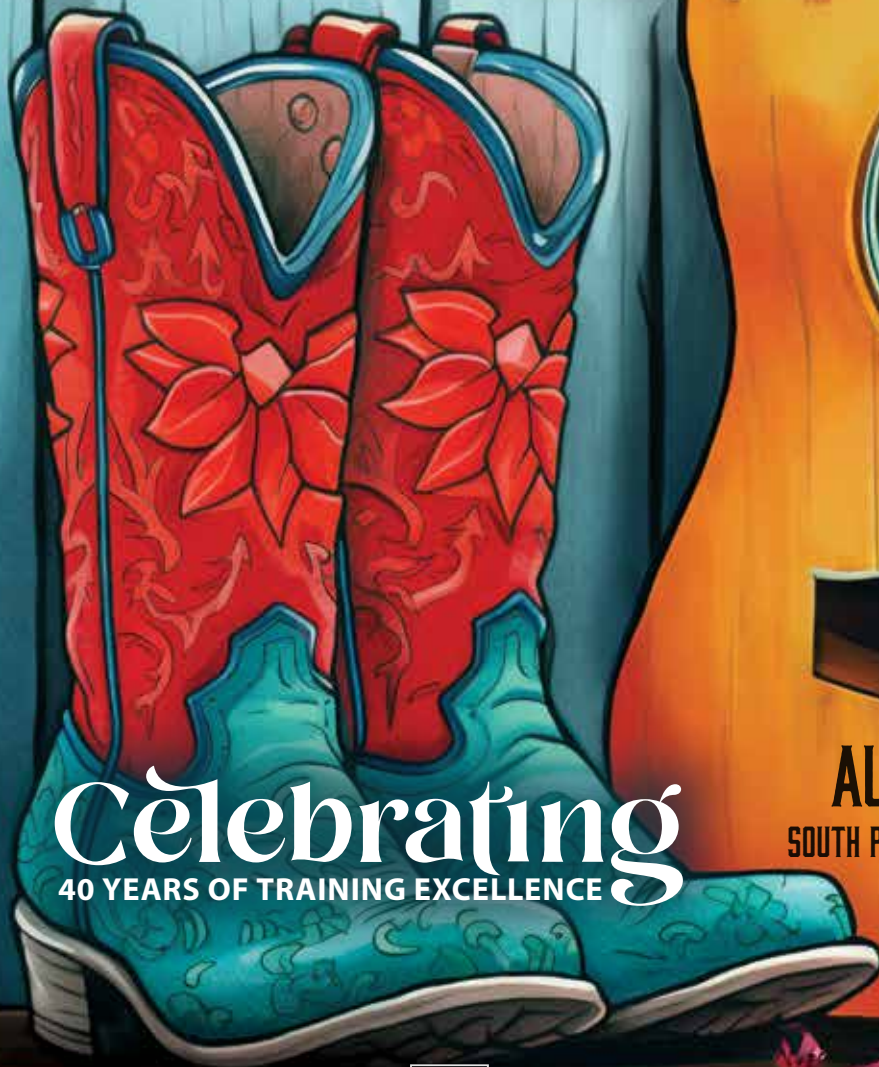
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# 2025 WEAU Annual Conference **SUMMARY**

## INDIVIDUAL AWARDS



**Outstanding Collections Operator (Over 5 MGD)**  
Chad Hardinger



**Outstanding Collections Operator (Under 5 MGD)**  
Zeth Docter



**Outstanding Laboratory Technician**  
Courtney Mobilian



**Outstanding Maintenance Specialist**  
Tyler Dawe



**Outstanding Pretreatment Specialist**  
Heidi Mathis



**Outstanding Supervisor (Over 5 MGD)**  
Brian Lamar



**Outstanding Supervisor (Under 5 MGD)**  
Collin Child



**Outstanding Water Reclamation Operator (Over 5 MGD)**  
Glen Bein



**Outstanding Water Reclamation Operator (Under 5 MGD)**  
Matthew Banks

# 2025 WEAU Annual Conference **SUMMARY**

## INDIVIDUAL AWARDS *continued*



**Outstanding Young Professional**  
Tess Laffer



**Outstanding IT Specialist**  
Curt Lalli



**Grant K Borg**  
**Extraordinary Service Award**  
Lee Rawlings

## PLANT AND PROGRAM AWARDS



**Outstanding Collections System**  
**(Over 5 MGD)**  
Mt. Olympus Improvement District



**Outstanding Laboratory**  
Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



**Outstanding Water Reclamation Facility (Over 5 MGD)**  
Central Weber Sewer Improvement District



**Outstanding Water Reclamation Facility (Under 5 MGD)**  
Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation District (Silver Creek)



**Outstanding Biosolids Program**  
Jordan Basin Improvement District



**Outstanding Pretreatment Program**  
Orem City



Outstanding Safety Program  
North Davis Sewer District



Best Operator Presentation  
Adam Butterfield



Winners of the  
Pipe Cutting Contest  
Erin Andersen  
Mark Leonard

## WEF AWARDS



Hatfield Award  
Phil Heck

Arthur Sidney Bedell Award  
Clint Rogers

Laboratory Analyst  
Excellence Award  
Tyler Weaver

Outgoing WEF Delegate  
Jeff Beckman



WEF Quarter Century  
Operator Club  
Lee Rawlings (Pictured)  
Dan Olson, Chad Burrell

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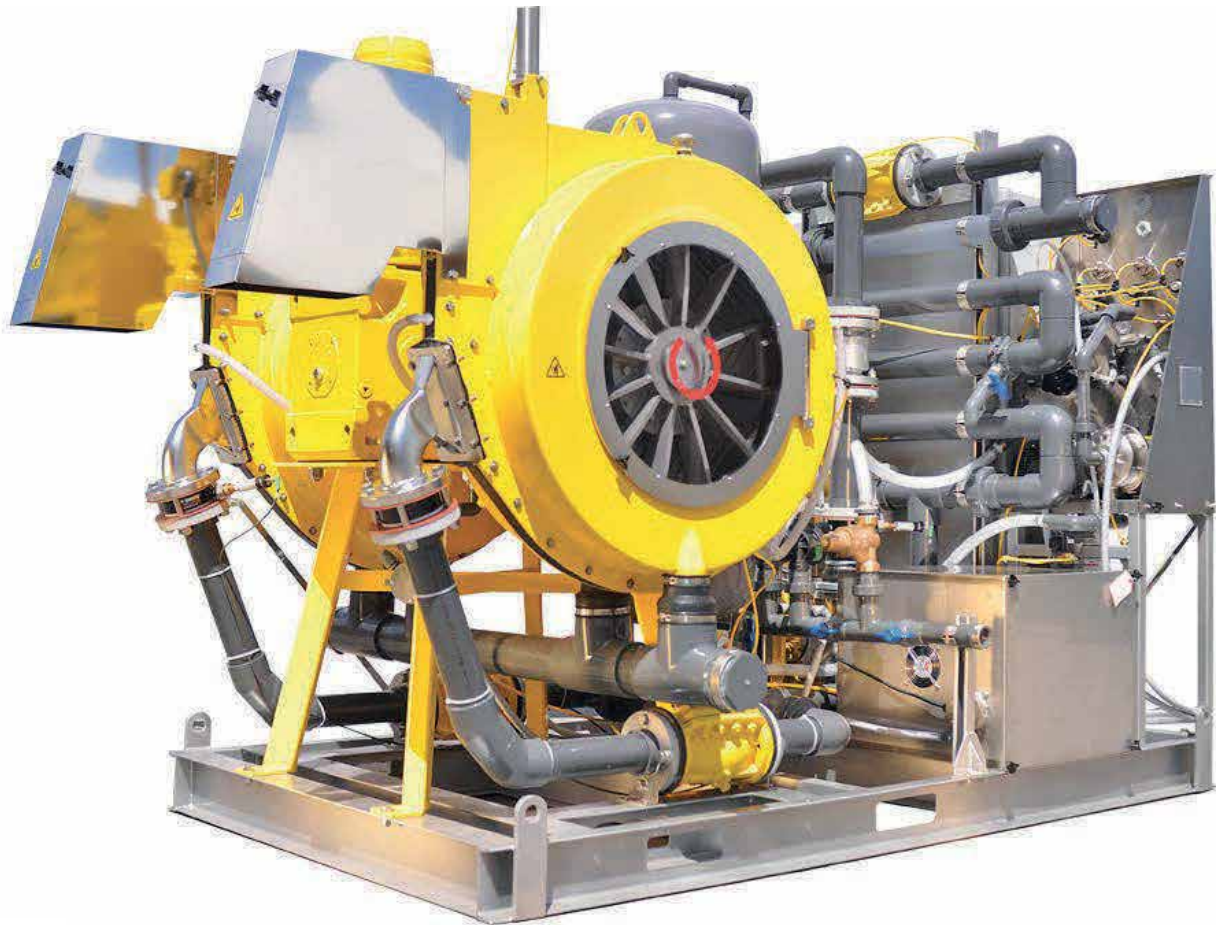
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# STUDENT CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT:



# THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

By Nikita Singhi, President, WEF – WEAU Student Chapter at the University of Utah

The WEF – WEAU Student Chapter at the University of Utah had a vibrant and memorable year filled with professional development, social events, and a whole lot of learning. We kicked things off with an insightful presentation by Archana Dahal, our Student Liaison, who introduced the history of WEF and WEAU and highlighted opportunities for student involvement – all over delicious pizza shared by everyone!



Our first official event was a movie night focused on education and awareness. We screened *Dark Waters*, a gripping film based on the true story of PFAS contamination and corporate environmental negligence. The event was well attended, with most students from the Environmental Engineering program participating. Everyone enjoyed an evening of pizza, ice cream, and a thought-provoking discussion on environmental health and water policy.

Next, we launched a CV Competition open to all students in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering – an initiative

championed by Dr. Ramesh Goel. To enrich the experience, we invited guest speaker Bruce Hancey to present *Essentials of Interviewing*, covering resume-building and interview strategies. Nine students submitted their CVs, which were reviewed by four faculty members. The department chair selected the top three, and each winner received a \$20 gift card.



In March, we visited the Park City Water Treatment Plant, a trip organized by the AWWA Young Professionals Committee. This state-of-the-art facility uses titanium dioxide ( $\text{TiO}_2$ ) to remove heavy metals,

which is a rare and advanced treatment process in the US. The journey through snowcapped mountains made the trip both educational and scenic.



“THE WEF – WEAU STUDENT CHAPTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH HAD A VIBRANT AND MEMORABLE YEAR FILLED WITH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL EVENTS, AND A WHOLE LOT OF LEARNING.”



Later that month, we participated in *Water Trivia Night*, hosted by Seven Canyons Trust. Although we didn't win, we learned a lot about Utah's rivers, reservoirs, and water history and had a blast doing it.

Energized by our growing sense of community, chapter members suggested attending Science Friday Live and Alton Brown Live, two standout events that perfectly blended education and entertainment.

Science Friday Live, held at the Eccles Theater in Salt Lake City, featured engaging talks on plant conservation – including efforts to revive the “Southwest Peaches” variety – the discovery of a new horned dinosaur (*Lokiceratops rangiformis*), and the use of animation to visualize molecular biology. It was an exciting evening that highlighted the power of science communication. The episode will air nationally on Science Friday in two weeks.





*Alton Brown Live* was another highlight. Known for combining culinary science with comedy and storytelling, Alton Brown's stage show was part food science, part entertainment, and completely unforgettable. With live cooking demonstrations, multimedia visuals, music, and audience participation, the show delivered the perfect blend of humor and scientific curiosity. We walked away with a new appreciation for the chemistry behind cooking – and sore cheeks from laughing so hard.

To wind down the semester, we hosted an Earth Day Social filled with snacks, fruits, and pizza. We included a short Earth Day quiz and gifted each attendee a small succulent to take home – a simple but joyful way to celebrate our shared passion for environmental protection.

Beyond campus, our members attended the WEAU Annual Conference in St. George. It was an incredible professional development opportunity, featuring industry talks, student presentations, and networking with the broader water community. We also had a lot of fun – playing golf at Big Shots (hosted by the Young Professionals/Ops Challenge Committee) and enjoying the scenic drive through southern Utah.





We wrapped up the year with a Pickleball Social in May, organized by the WEAU and AWWA YP committees. It was a fun way to try a new sport, enjoy great food, and connect with peers one last time before summer break.

All in all, this year was packed with meaningful, educational, and fun activities – from movie nights and live science shows to plant tours, trivia, live shows, conferences, and pickleball. I'm incredibly grateful for WEAU's support – especially Archana Dahal and Jayesh Charthal, Student Advising Committee Chair, for their guidance, and to Kyle Murray, our Student Chapter Vice President, for always being in sync with my enthusiasm and helping make great things happen for the chapter.

Reengaging students in the WEAU chapter at the university has been challenging since COVID, but rebuilding the student community this year has been a rewarding journey. We're excited to expand on this momentum in the year ahead. Here's to more learning, laughter, and leadership in water! [DU](#)



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# WHAT'S IN A PASSPHRASE?

By Aimee Matthies

With all the online security threats that we come face-to-face with every day, what in the name of all of Biosolids is one supposed to do to protect themselves and their plant? The first line of defense for your personal data is a secure password or passphrase. Here are the latest suggestions for how to handle the mess of numbers and letters in your life.

“But Aimee,” you may say, “what’s the difference between a password and a passphrase?” Excellent question, my young cyber-secure-minded Padawan!

A **password** is a collection of numbers and letters, and sometimes even special characters (&\*#!+, etc.), that *should* be difficult for someone to figure out. These are things like: “9tKhe55&m864Pq4)u-v\*” basically a jumbled mess. These can be VERY hard to crack, even for a computer running a hacking program. However, they can also be a pain in the coliform to remember.

That’s where a **passphrase** can come in handy. A passphrase is a collection (usually four to seven) of random words that don’t mean anything specific to you but are still secure and difficult to guess or crack. However, they are also much easier to remember for you, since you already know it. Take the passphrase “Pik@chuSnowcOneButt3flyShow.” You’ll notice I added in substitutions for some letters as numbers or special characters. This is much more accessible to the average person (like me!) to remember, whereas it would take a savant to quickly memorize the earlier password. Especially considering these should be changed frequently.

Now, let’s get into the recommendations by cybersecurity experts.

### 1. Make your Passwords Strong and Secure

This means avoiding easy-to-guess passwords like “admin” or “1234” or “Aimee” (plus, using my name as a password is weird, silly goose!). Here are three steps to ensure your password is secure:

- **Length** – Create a password with a length of 16 characters or longer. Wow! That’s a lot!
- **Randomness** – Use a mixed string of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols or a mix of random, but memorable, words.
- **Uniqueness** – Don’t reuse passwords EVER! If your X (formerly Twitter) password gets cracked and you are using it for your bank, guess what?, That information is now on the dark web and could be one that is tried by hackers to get into your accounts.

### 2. Use a Password Manager

If your plant doesn’t want to pay for a password manager, that’s fine, many are available for free. I use KeePass at home. Some of the top recommended password managers in the US, according to Cybernews (<https://us.cybernews.com>), include:

- NordPass
- RoboForm
- 1Password
- Keeper
- LastPass
- Aura
- Proton Pass
- Bitdefender Password Manager
- Norton Password Manager

“  
The **first line of defense** for your personal data is a secure password or passphrase.

With password manager, you create *one* strong master password to access your account. The password manager stores all your passwords securely, often as encrypted hashes. This means that even if someone breaches the security of the password manager, like NordPass, they wouldn't be able to read your passwords that are saved. Instead, to get your information, they would have to hack into YOUR specific account with YOUR specific passphrase to see any of that information. Keep in mind that for the sake of security, you should still change the password for your password manager frequently.

### 3. Change Your Passwords Frequently

I like to say that passwords are like diapers, they should be changed often and for the same reason. Passwords have an inevitable lifespan. They (most likely) won't stay secure forever. Many sites

and businesses require password changes every three to six months, which is a great rule of thumb. I personally like the six-month rule, provided you have followed the requirement for making secure passwords. It's long enough to remember your password but not so short that you have to wrack your brain trying to come up with or memorize a new password. There's already a lot going on in that brain of yours! No need to give you a headache on top of all the other things. And don't forget to change the passwords stored inside your password manager on the same schedule: every three to six months.

I think that's enough information to overwhelm even me, and I'm the one writing this! So, I'll close with this: If you have any question or concerns about passwords or password managers, check out [www.cisa.gov](http://www.cisa.gov). They are America's cyber defense agency and have a lot of great resources.

Until the next part in the Cyber Series: Stay safe online, friends! 

“ If you have any question or concerns about passwords or password managers, check out [www.cisa.gov](http://www.cisa.gov). They are America's cyber defense agency and have a lot of great resources.



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# Leadership Training

**T**hank you to Mike Chandler for presenting valuable Leadership Training to groups in Southern Utah and the Wasatch Front. We all learned from each other's' experiences, shared stories, made new connections, built upon existing relationships, and came away with many tools to take back to share with our colleagues as well as enrich our personal lives. There is a new Leadership training starting again this summer. Be sure to sign up soon!



The 2024-2025 Wasatch Front Leadership Class.

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