

WINTER  
2023

The Official Publication of the Water Environment Association of Utah

# DIGESTED news

*Celebrating 50 Years of Clean Water*

2023  WEAU  
MID-YEAR  
CONFERENCE  
*Recap*

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**INSIDE:**

WEAU ATTENDS WEFTEC 2023 | 2023-2024 Buyers' Guide



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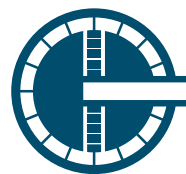
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**FEATURES**

2023 Mid-Year Conference Recap ..... 25

Mark Your Calendar: 2024 Annual Conference ..... 28

2023 WEAU Awards Nominations ..... 32

WEAU ATTENDS WEFTEC 2023 ..... 35

What Does AI Know? (About Wastewater Operators) ..... 39

2023-2024 Buyers' Guide ..... 43



**Departments**

President's Message ..... 7

Editor's Message ..... 9

Certification Training ..... 11

Pretreatment ..... 17

PWO ..... 19

Young Professionals ..... 20

Advertiser Product & Service Center .... 49

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Sherry Sheffield

# Moving Forward into 2024

There are times when serving as president of the WEAU is stressful and daunting, but there are other times when I can't believe I have this amazing opportunity. The Mid-Year Conference and YP Summit we had recently were examples of the latter. It was such a privilege to connect with so many members of our association, and I can't say enough good things about our committee chairs and members who made these events possible. There are times when I get so caught up in my own little work world that I forget there are so many of us dealing with similar challenges. It's invigorating to know I'm not alone.

Our committee chairs and members have been working so hard this year to provide opportunities, trainings, and networking/social events that bring us all together and help us learn and grow in our professions. We are very lucky to have so many people willing to volunteer their time and efforts to WEAU. If you haven't had the opportunity to take advantage of the many activities WEAU has to offer, I encourage you to do so. Thank you to all

who have reached out to me and other members of the Board asking to volunteer. You make our jobs so much easier!

We are now moving forward on planning for the 2024 Annual Conference. We have so many exciting opportunities for you to be involved – the Operations Challenge (as a competitor or a judge), the Operators Awards (you can nominate colleagues and programs or volunteer to be on the judging committee), Young Professional activities, or as a presenter. Remember, operations staff can compete for a presenter award (\$\$\$) for the first time ever! We even plan to hold a training in the Spring to teach PowerPoint and offer tips on giving presentations. So, keep watching your email for updates or check out [www.wEAU.org](http://www.wEAU.org) for more information.

As we celebrate the holidays, I hope you all have a wonderful Thanksgiving – one that's full of gratitude for your families, opportunities, work, and WEAU. I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy 2024! 🍷



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# Merry Christmas and Happy Festivus!

Bryan Mansell

If you are or were a fan of the 90's sitcom, *Seinfeld*, you'll probably recall the episode (a top 10 in my opinion) featuring the celebration of Festivus in the Costanza household. For everyone with better things to do with their time, I'll briefly summarize the main points:

"A Festivus for the rest of us" refers to the non-commercial secular holiday (December 23rd due to the *Seinfeld* episode) formed in response to the commercialization of Christmas. It includes several main features:

1. Festivus Dinner – self-explanatory.
2. Airing of Grievances – just what it sounds like (e.g., Frank Costanza yelling: "I got a lotta problems with you people, and now you're going to hear about it!")
3. Feats of Strength – comes after the dinner and airing of grievances and involves a designated challenger (e.g., only son George Costanza) having to pin the head of household (e.g., Frank Costanza) in a wrestling match.

This occasion may include "Festivus miracles" and will most likely leave long-lasting emotional scars. Still, it sounds kind of fun.



With Thanksgiving family drama and turkey bowl season so recently behind us, it almost sounds like a repeat of the typical American Thanksgiving celebration. Who's not up for round 2?! Even if you aren't into sitcoms, you should watch this episode if for no other reason than comic relief from the normal holiday stresses. Why stress when you can have serenity now!?

Perhaps the best part of this funny holiday idea is that it was actually celebrated by the family of one of the writers of the *Seinfeld* episode, Dan O'Keefe, whose father conceived the idea back in 1976, although it had a few other features not included in the *Seinfeld* episode. Still, I can't help but picture Dan, like George Costanza, dreading this annual holiday his dad invented where the family fights over dinner, and he's forced to wrestle his father until he wins. We might just have to try this at my home.

So, my WEAU friends, Merry Christmas, and Happy Festivus! May you feel that you're so good looking, master of your domain, and/or queen of the castle; and may your holidays be filled with happy pappies, no re-gifting, yada yada yada, and always plenty of soup for you. 🍲

## 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 a \$25 Amazon Gift Card.**

Emails should include:

- Subject: I found the golden shovel
- Correct page number
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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:  
NICK COOPER OF AECOM  
FOR FINDING THE GOLDEN  
SHOVEL ON PAGE 13 OF  
DIGESTED NEWS FALL 2023!  
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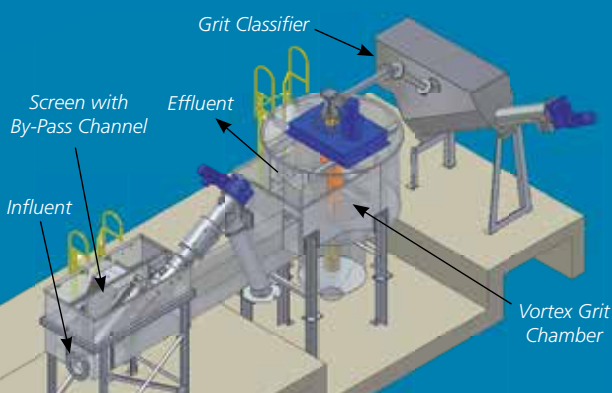
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**Where:** Online

**Tickets:** \$275 Member/  
\$275 Non-Member

**Description:** Starting January 1, 2024, WEAU will become a training hub for the American Water College. By signing up for the AWC through WEAU, it allows individuals access to a large variety of online courses, study material, and pretests on the topics of Wastewater Treatment and Collection Systems. These courses are designed to help operators pass their State Certification Tests.



All of these courses are available online for those that sign up for a one-year subscription. This means, as soon as you finish one course you can begin the next one for no additional cost during the calendar year.

**In-Person Date and Time:** For those that need in-person training, WEAU will continue to sponsor monthly study groups. These will be three-hour sessions one day a month, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at East Canyon WRF in Park City, dates TBD.

**Cost:** \$275/person/calendar year

**Deadline:** If interested, register before end of day December 31, 2023. [DH](#)

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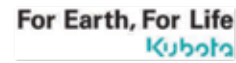
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# Certification Preparation Quiz

By James Magill

1. **Solids that settle to the bottom of clarifiers and are pumped to the head of biological reactors are referred to as \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. RAS
  - B. WAS
  - C. TSS
  - D. Total residual chlorine
2. **Because of industrial flows and the nitrification process, pH imbalance may become a concern for activated sludge processes if sufficient \_\_\_\_\_ is not present.**
  - A. TSS
  - B. Alkalinity
  - C. Ammonia
  - D. BOD
3. **When performing a most probable number (MPN) test, the sample dilution is considered positive when \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. Gas bubbles are found in the Durham tube
  - B. No bubbles are found in the Durham tube
  - C. The sample turns color from brown to amber
  - D. The Durham tube is found upside down
4. **Since reaction rates are slower in the winter time, an operator of an active sludge plant will \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. Increase dissolved oxygen levels
  - B. Decrease MCRT
  - C. Increase Wasting
  - D. Increase MCRT
5. **Alkalinity is the ability of wastewater to \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. Neutralize base
  - B. Neutralize acid
  - C. Dissolve organics
  - D. Maintain constant temperature
6. **Fecal coliform results are reported as MPN per \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. 10 mL
  - B. 50 mL
  - C. 100 mL
  - D. 1000 mL
7. **A BOD<sub>5</sub> sample can be removed from the incubator at five days plus or minus \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. One hour
  - B. Two hours
  - C. Three hours
  - D. Four hours
8. **What is the advantage of a COD test over a BOD<sub>5</sub> test?**
  - A. Shorter test time
  - B. More accurate
  - C. Safer
  - D. Less chemicals needed
9. **Which of the following is the primary goal of a well-planned, systematic, and comprehensive maintenance program?**
  - A. Minimization of training and fieldwork for max profit
  - B. Elimination of duplicate and redundant pumps
  - C. Prevention of sewer systems overflow
  - D. Replacement of sewer lines over 20 years old.
10. **Fine bubble diffusers are easily clogged because they are \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - A. Self-sealing from the inside if dirty air is pumped into them
  - B. Often installed incorrectly
  - C. Installed in wastewater with high solids
  - D. Designed to clog quickly and to be easily cleaned
11. **A jet crew cleans an average of 4,500 feet a day. How many days will it take for them to clean 240 miles of line?**
  - A. 188 cleaning days.
  - B. 210 cleaning days.
  - C. 282 cleaning days.
  - D. 352 cleaning days.
12. **Which of the following describes a composite sample?**
  - A. A sample collected at the influent and effluent of a process and combine to form a single sample.
  - B. An individual sample collected from the same location at the same time each day.
  - C. Compilation of single samples collected each day for seven days at the same location and then combined to a single sample.
  - D. A single sample prepared by combining a number of grab samples during a specific period, usually 24 hrs.
13. **What is the most common cause of accidents involving chlorine?**
  - A. Leaking pipe joints.
  - B. Operator error.
  - C. Improper offloading.
  - D. Vehicle delivery.
14. **The activated sludge process uses microorganisms to \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - A. Inactivate or destroy pathogenic organisms.
  - B. Activate BOD consuming organisms.
  - C. Detoxify toxic metal wastes.
  - D. Speed up the decomposition of wastes.
15. **A settling basin has a length of 60 feet, a width of 20 feet and a depth of 12 feet. With a plant flow of 60 MGD, what is the retention time in the basin?**
  - A. 15 minutes
  - B. 30 minutes
  - C. 1.1 hours
  - D. 2.6 minutes.
16. **Which of the following is used to start and stop pumps and also indicates the level of water in a wet well?**
  - A. On-off switch
  - B. Float controller
  - C. Hour run meter.
  - D. Magnetic starter

17. Which chemicals should be used when performing a jar test?
- A. Chemicals with as few impurities as possible
  - B. Laboratory grade chemicals
  - C. The same chemicals that will be used to treat the wastewater.
  - D. Chemicals provided by the chemical supplier
18. A special device that is used for sampling foaming covers the entire surface of the biological reactor is called a \_\_\_\_.
- A. Bomb sampler
  - B. Depth of foam sampler
  - C. Mixed liquor sample
  - D. Surface sampler
19. Which of these systems are typically used in rectangular clarifiers?
- A. Draw tubes and siphons
  - B. Rapid sludge removal mechanism and vacuum tubes
  - C. Spiral blade and segmented rake
  - D. Traveling bridge and continuous flight
20. The brake horsepower is 13.5 HP. If the motor is 90% efficient, what is the motor horsepower?
- A. 15 mhp
  - B. 12 mhp
  - C. 13.5 mhp
  - D. 18 mhp
21. Safety features such as limit switches and shear pins are used on clarifier drives to \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Guard against unauthorized personnel operating the equipment
  - B. Automatically shut down the equipment when high torque conditions occur
  - C. Control the incoming wastewater level to avoid flooding
  - D. Quickly take the clarifier off line for preventive or emergency service

22. The specific oxygen uptake rate test is used to indicate \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. DO concentration of the effluent
  - B. Biological activity of the mixed liquor
  - C. F:M
  - D. Setting characteristics of MLSS
23. In centrifugal blowers, surge conditions are triggered when \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Electrical power supply suddenly fluctuates
  - B. Discharge pressure is less the system back pressure
  - C. A rupture in the inlet seal allows extra air to be drawn in
  - D. Inlet vanes are completely opened
24. Stainless steel is typically preferred for air piping because it is \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Inexpensive
  - B. Easily corroded by liquids
  - C. Virtually maintenance free
  - D. Easier to assemble than PVC piping.
25. The water level in a well drops 18 inches during a three-minute pumping test. If the well is 8-feet by 6-feet, what is the pumping rate?
- A. 180 gpm
  - B. 72 gpm
  - C. 540 gpm
  - D. 270 gpm 

**Answers**

17-C, 18-A, 19-D, 20-A, 21-B, 22-B, 23-B, 24-C, 25-A  
 1-A, 2-B, 3-A, 4-D, 5-B, 6-C, 7-D, 8-A, 9-C, 10-A, 11-C, 12-D, 13-A, 14-D, 15-D, 16-B



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# Sharing Pretreatment Experience

By Juliette Curtis, SGRWRF Pretreatment Coordinator

The WEAU Pretreatment Committee held a two-day Local Limits Training on October 25 and 26, 2023. The presentation was given by Jeff MacFarlane, who spoke about the history of local limits and why we incorporate them, the four levels of wastewater discharge regulations, Pollutants of Concern (POCs), how to calculate Maximum Allowable Headworks Loading (MAHL), how to calculate Uniform and Mass Allocation limits, and how to bring all of the data together to complete a Technically Based Local Limit. The two-day training included 20 attendees from the State of Utah as well as attendees from Henderson, NV, who all contributed valuable information from past experiences.

A portion of the training was spent addressing questions from the group and identifying new and existing issues with Local Limits as they apply to each individual program. As a whole, the training was not only informative and productive, but it brought a diverse group of Wastewater Individuals together to create new relationships, and networking opportunities and provided direction for continuing Pretreatment training. [D&A](#)





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# WEAU is Truly Something Special

By Nate Cloward

**D**uring my short time being involved in WEAU, it amazes me how many wonderful people I have met and how many relationships I've built. There is something truly special about this whole thing. It provides opportunities to be recognized for those who genuinely deserve it. I have gained a new appreciation for all the hard work that goes into making this organization the incredible thing it is. Being involved has taught me so much about myself; my strengths, my weaknesses, my authenticity, and for all this, I am grateful.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge our Ops Challenge teams. Both the Wasted Gas, and the Wasatch Allstars performed well this year at Nationals and looked good doing it. I'd like to express my gratitude for the efforts and contributions that were made by all. What a great group of guys that I am proud to say that I now know. It was refreshing to see the way they

represented the state of Utah and really kept the spirit of participation alive. We appreciate you.

Thanks to our supportive and inspiring President, Sherry Sheffield, for making the Ops Challenge bigger, broader, and more inclusive than ever. Come watch the teams, try for yourself, or even better, bring a team and compete with us. Do YOU think you have what it takes? We think so. It's not just about the glory and trophies; it's about the journey, and the memories that last a lifetime.

While we begin to wind down from all our summer activities and transition our efforts to things like winterizing equipment, raking leaves, and preparing for the snow and cold, let's just take a moment to appreciate our own work and dedication to this industry knowing each one of us is a valuable part. Our work often feels underappreciated, but rest assured, it is not unnoticed. [DH](#)



# WEAU Young Professionals Summit Recap



Thank you, WEAU YP Summit Planning Committee:

Dan Taylor, Maggie Shalvoy, Katie Reams,  
Lauren Schmidt, and Tess Laffer



The WEAU Young Professionals (YP) Committee hosted the first ever Mid-Year YP Summit this year in conjunction with the 2023 Mid-Year Conference. The YP Summit provided opportunities for YPs to network with peers from across the state of Utah, learn about up-and-coming technologies, discuss the future of the water and wastewater industry, and dive deeper into the career paths available in the water realm. Held on the night prior to the Mid-Year Conference, YPs and students gathered for a fun evening of fellowship, interactive workshops, and insightful panel discussion.

The evening kicked off with a catered networking dinner, where YPs played Icebreaker Bingo to learn fun facts and professional background knowledge about their colleagues. Then, YPs heard from Keynote Speaker Kim Shelley, Executive Director of the Utah

“The YP Summit provided opportunities for YPs to network with peers from across the state of Utah, learn about up-and-coming technologies, discuss the future of the water and wastewater industry, and dive deeper into the career paths available in the water realm.”

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Kim shared her guidance on early career success, why now is a critical time to be a wastewater or water quality professional, and the value of building a career that makes a difference. She also shared her personal journey within the industry and offered insights to DEQ’s historical investment in Utah’s environmental priorities and the urgency and need to continue these efforts.

*Session 1: Navigating Your Future* included a lively roundtable discussion led by industry professionals representing a variety of wastewater and water quality career paths. The YPs met construction professionals, engineers, manufacturing experts, operators, and regulatory agents, many of whom are WEAU Board Members. From the discussions, YPs gained valuable career advice, new industry connections, and lessons learned from past projects.

*Session 2: A Personality Test Perspective* got everyone on their feet with a collaborative personality type and communication style exercise, based on their Myers-Briggs 16 personalities results. The activity focused on the importance of working with different personality types, which is critical to finding success in any industry. Through several industry-related scenarios, the YPs worked in teams to determine how to best connect with others whose communication style differed from their own. Throughout the session, YPs gained a new appreciation for how their fellow coworkers communicate and approach tasks.

The YP Summit offered valuable insights into the industry and prioritized the importance of infusing fun into professional development. The attendees left with strengthened networks, fresh perspectives, and a renewed sense of purpose for working in the wastewater and water quality industry. The YP Committee is already looking forward to next year’s summit. [en](#)



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## **2024 WEAU Winter Jazz Game**



**Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup> vs. the Denver Nuggets**  
**Doors open at 6:30pm, Tipoff at 8:00pm**

**Tickets are \$25 per member, limit of 6 tickets per member**  
**Includes buffet dinner and suite seating**  
**Registration will open in December**



# Young Professional Spotlight

Dan Taylor, Project Manager, MGC Contractors

**D**an works for MGC Contractors as a project manager and estimator in the water/wastewater and heavy civil construction field. He is accomplished in Design-Build, Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC), and traditional project delivery methods of estimating, project management, and design collaboration, and has managed projects across the Northeast and Western US. He graduated from Youngstown State University in Youngstown, OH, with a degree in Civil Engineering and Construction Management.

After moving to Utah, Dan immediately joined WEAU, attending the Young Professional events and volunteering on the WEAU YP Summit Planning Committee.

### How did you get started in the water industry?

I moved to Arizona in 2015 and the fast growth and expansion in utility infrastructure in the Phoenix area persuaded me to change from heavy civil construction to water/wastewater construction. I also found it interesting and wanted to learn more.

### What is your favorite part of working as a Water Professional?

How dynamic, fast paced, and ever-changing this industry is.

### What do you like most about the work that you do?

Showing others outside of the water industry what we do. We are such an integral part of the infrastructure of our communities, and few people get to see the projects we work on and how important they are.

### What are you most proud of in your career so far?

The great relationships I have built over the years with clients, engineers, and others in the industry. It is always great to have a successful project and to be able to call on those you worked with in the past for future advice.



### What is one thing people do not know about you that they would be surprised to find out?

I love the outdoors. On the weekends you will find me out with my family climbing mountains, rock climbing, or just generally hiking in the wilderness. [DM](#)

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# 2023 MID-YEAR CONFERENCE

UTAH CULTURAL  
CONFERENCE CENTER  
NOVEMBER 8, 2023

# Recap

The 2023 Mid-Year Conference was a huge success. We want to thank all those who presented and especially those attended. We hope to see you all again 2024.

## THANKS, AS WELL, TO OUR 2023 SPONSORS



# MID-YEAR Young Professionals *Recap*

The Young Professionals hosted a silent auction to support the local Engineers Without Borders chapter. In preparation, YPs gathered donations and assembled themed auction baskets for the WEAU Mid-Year Conference attendees to bid on. 100% of the proceeds from the silent auction went to support the EWBs drinking water distribution project in Rwanda.

Thanks to all those who attended and contributed to the fundraising!



WEAU YPs gather donations and assemble baskets over lunch.



EWB Chapter Members Archana Dahal and Ellie Siddoway.



Silent Auction Basket Winners.

# Recap

# CONFERENCE Highlights



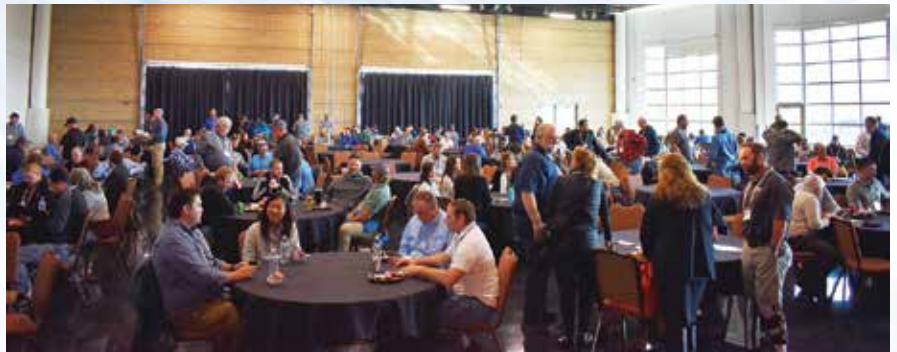
*WEAU President Sherry Sheffield addresses conference attendees.*



*Mid-Year Conference attendees line up for the luncheon.*



*The YP Co-Chairs Katie Reams and Lauren Schmidt presenting about the Young Professionals Fundraiser.*



*Attendees enjoying lunch.*



*PWO Reps Nate Cloward and James Magill recognizing Ops Challenge team members.*



*Utah Ops Challenge Teams receiving praise for a job well-done at WEFTEC 2023.*

## CONGRATS OPS CHALLENGE TEAMS!

If you are interested in participating in the 2024 Ops Challenge, reach out to Austin Petersen, [petersena@cwrwfut.gov](mailto:petersena@cwrwfut.gov) or 801-386-0499.



*Jade Echard recognizing the Utah State University WEAU Student Chapter for their success in the Student Design Competition.*



*Abby Johnson and Donald Olsen, two members of the Utah State University WEAU Student Chapter, who recently placed 2nd in the Student Design Competition at WEFTEC 2023 with their design: "Removal of Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) at the East Canyon Water Reclamation Facility."*



Rob Jaterka recognizing the winners of the Okey Scholarship.



Okey Scholarship Recipient, Anjan Goswami.



Okey Scholarship Recipient, Junjie Tang.



Nathan Zaugg recognizing the winner of the Stockholm Jr. Water Prize.



Stockholm Jr. Water Prize Winner, Krishnam Goel.



Chad Burrell (equipped with a Bionic Leg) talks about a New Operator Training program available in the new year.



Attendees eagerly awaiting the final raffle.



Mentor Award Recipients.



President Sheffield posing with a Mentor Award.

### Mentor Recognition

WEAU recognizes the following individuals for their dedication to the wastewater field by significantly impacting the professional and personal development of one or more water quality professionals, including providing personal, social, and intellectual support:

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Ben Ford        | Giles Demke      |
| Brent Justensen | Jill Jones       |
| Clint Dilley    | Lee Rawlings     |
| Jeff Wiest      | Sherry Sheffield |

**Mark Your Calendars!**  
**WEAU Annual Conference**  
**Dixie Center, St. George, UT**  
**April 23-26, 2024**

Watch for more details at [www.weau.org](http://www.weau.org).  
 Photo: Courtesy of Craig White, SVSD

**OPERATIONS CHALLENGE  
 KICK-OFF:**  
**December 12, 2023**

**AWARD  
 NOMINATIONS DUE:**  
**December 15, 2023**

**ABSTRACT  
 SUBMITTALS DUE:**  
**December 22, 2023**

**AWARD JUDGING  
 KICK-OFF:**  
**January 25, 2024**



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Cybersecurity is a mission-critical function for the water industry. Implementing it, and doing it correctly, is the challenge. Cyber attacks are a growing threat to critical infrastructure and yet most organizations lack the resources or the depth of staff to assess, monitor, and track security concerns that can lead to the disruption of a business process or critical operation.

We all strive to find the talent needed to fulfill requirements, but even when we do most organizations do not know what steps need to be done or what processes need to be followed. But most importantly, organizations typically do not have the tools to assess, monitor, and respond to actions.

For those in the water industry, there is an underlying responsibility we have not just to the organization but also to the public at large. We must keep our infrastructure safe and secure. Threat actors who can pierce security barriers can provide damage beyond the borders of the organization which can have far reaching effects. We need to be resilient in our efforts and vigilant in our monitoring.

At Maise, we have the staff, technology, and knowledge bases to address your security concerns and threats to your businesses. We would encourage you to contact us so we can assist you or even to provide a free assessment. Whatever you do, please make sure you are taking the steps you need to protect your organization, and in turn, the public. If you have any questions, please contact us.

—Matthew Hutchings

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# 2023



## AWARDS NOMINATIONS




We are now asking for and accepting nominations for the Annual WEAU Awards.

Please nominate in any of the following categories:

- Plants
- Collections Systems
- Operators
- Discharging or Non-Discharging Lagoons
- Programs Specialists
- Supervisors

WEAU is a member organization where members can nominate those individuals or organizations within our industry and organization that deserve recognition by the association for their efforts. Individual awards must be nominated by someone other than the nominee, and the individual must be a member of WEAU. If nominating an individual, please notify their supervisor and have them sign the form. Good luck!

Nominations are requested back by December 15, 2023. (There is **not** an online submission form available this year.)

Fill out the form at [https://weau.starchapter.com/images/2023\\_Awards\\_Nomination\\_Form.pdf](https://weau.starchapter.com/images/2023_Awards_Nomination_Form.pdf) and get it back to the Awards Committee by emailing or mailing the form as follows: Email to: [awardsweau@gmail.com](mailto:awardsweau@gmail.com). 

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# 2023

## GENERAL ASSOCIATION AWARDS NOMINATION FORM

**Instructions:** Place a "X" mark in the box next to the award for the nomination. Next, fill out the information for the nominee and yourself (nominator) as fully as you can. This information will be used by the Awards Committee to process the nomination.

Please send a separate application for each nomination. It is OK to copy the form for this purpose. Next, email the application to: [awardsweau@gmail.com](mailto:awardsweau@gmail.com), or mail to: WEAU Awards Committee, Attn: Tiffini Adams, 2800 Homestead Rd, Park City, UT 84098. Applications are due by December 15, 2023. WEAU is a member organization where members can nominate those individuals or organizations within our industry that deserve recognition by the association for their efforts. When you send in your nomination, you will be contacted to arrange a time for a visit by the Awards Committee. Individual awards must be nominated by someone other than nominee. If nominating an individual, please notify their supervisor. Members with significant managerial responsibilities, (i.e., general managers, etc.) are ineligible.

Those with significant supervisory responsibilities, (i.e., coordinators, directors, etc.) should be considered for the supervisor award, or program award. Please feel free to contact Tiffini Adams at 435-214-5254 or Spencer Parkinson at 801-495-5452 with any questions. Thank you!

### OUTSTANDING PLANT / SYSTEM AWARDS

- Treatment Plant – Under 5 MGD
- Treatment Plant – Over 5 MGD
- Lagoon – Discharging
- Lagoon – Non-Discharging
- Laboratory
- Collections System – Under 5 MGD
- Collections System – Over 5 MGD

### OUTSTANDING PROGRAM AWARDS

- Pretreatment Program
- Biosolids Program
- Safety Program

### OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS AWARDS

- Treatment Plant Operator – Under 5 MGD
- Treatment Plant Operator – Over 5 MGD
- Collections System Operator – Over 5 MGD
- Collections System Operator – Under 5 MGD
- Supervisor
- Pretreatment Specialist
- Maintenance Specialist
- Laboratory Technician
- Young Professional
- IT Specialist

**By December 15, 2023 please email form to [awardsweau@gmail.com](mailto:awardsweau@gmail.com). Confirmation email will be sent with a receipt.**

### NOMINEE INFORMATION

Individual, System or Program Name *(As it will appear on the Award Plaque)*

Employed At *(For Individuals Only)*

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Email

Supervisor's Name *(For Individuals Only)*

Plant / System Manager

### NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Email

Briefly describe why you think the nominee should be considered for an award (please use a second page if necessary)



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This year's WEFTEC, the Water Environment Federation's Technical Exhibition and Conference, lived up to its reputation as the water sector's leading marketplace for transformative ideas and innovations, with slightly more than 21,000 registrants, 870 exhibiting companies and the largest ever Operations Challenge competition with 55 teams from seven countries.

**WEAU had a great time at the 96th anniversary of the event – here's a recap of everything you need to know.**

## THE STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION

The WEFTEC Student Design Competition (SDC), provides university student teams from WEF Member Associations (MAs) an opportunity to gain real world design experience by producing a written and verbal design project. WEF offers wastewater design and environmental design categories to encourage students of all technical backgrounds to participate.

This year's competition included 27 teams from 20 MAs and three different countries. The judges reported a VERY strong showing from all teams. Judges recognized the top four teams in each category:

### WATER ENVIRONMENT CATEGORY WINNERS:

1. Georgia Institute of Technology (GAWP)
2. Utah State University (UWEA)
3. SUNY ESF
4. University of South Florida (FWEA)

### WASTEWATER CATEGORY WINNERS:

1. Texas Tech University (WEAT)
2. University of Guelph (WEAO)
3. Universidad de Costa Rica (CSWEA)
4. North Carolina State University (NC One Water)

The Utah State University WEAU Student Chapter made Utah proud with their design, Removal of Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) at the East Canyon Water Reclamation Facility. Congratulations, team, and thank you for all your hard work!



## OPERATIONS CHALLENGE

WEFTEC's Operations Challenge showcases the skills and expertise of wastewater professionals from around the world. The Operations Challenge is a competition event where teams that consist of four members compete in five timed and graded wastewater events.

This year, WEAU was well-represented at WEFTEC 2023 by CVWRF Wasted Gas and Wasatch All-Stars. Great job, teams!



Photo by Kieffer Photography.



CVWRF's Wasted Gas (Photo by Kieffer Photography.)



Photo by Kieffer Photography.



Photo by Kieffer Photography.



Photo by Kieffer Photography.



Photo by Kieffer Photography.





Wasatch All-Stars (Photo by Kieffer Photography.)



Photo by Kieffer Photography.



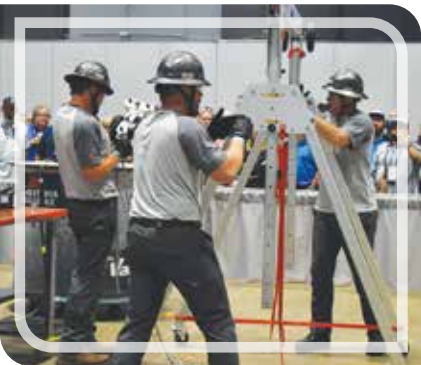
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# WHAT DOES AI KNOW?

## (ABOUT BEING A WASTEWATER OPERATOR)

Introduction and prompts by Ben Skousen, original certification prep questions and answers by Dan Olsen, and responses by ChatGPT

**H**ello again *Digested News* readers. Welcome to the third installment of our series about artificial intelligence (AI) written mostly by AI. If you recall, this series uses one form of AI, a conversational AI called ChatGPT, to learn more about AI. Let me remind you that ChatGPT works on a prompt/response basis. Basically, the user (me) provides a prompt and the AI (ChatGPT) responds in a natural way using information found on the internet.

In the first two installments, we have learned more about the basics of AI followed by what it knows about various wastewater topics. We are going to mix things up this installment. You may have heard statements like AI is going to replace <fill in the blank> jobs in the near future. I know family, friends, and coworkers that are using AI to edit documents, write, and debug computer programming code, prepare PowerPoint presentations, and even make art. You have probably seen a movie with a slightly cringy AI-generated actor or actress. That may make you wonder if AI could replace you in your job. Let's find out!

Can AI replace wastewater operators? Given the physical nature of the job, a conversational AI like ChatGPT isn't going to replace a wastewater operator, but could it pass the exam? I'll ask (prompt) ChatGPT the first page of certification prep questions from the Fall 2023 issue of *Digested News* and we'll see how it does. This will highlight AI's ability to answer various types of questions like true/false, multiple choice, and fill in the blank.

**PROMPT (Ben):** True or false: Rollback occurs when screened material falls back down the face of the screen, possibly being returned to the wastewater flow.

- A. True
- B. False

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** A. True.

**ANSWER:** *Correct.*

**PROMPT (Ben):** Multiple choice: A pond WRRF is most likely to have this type of screen in its headworks?

- A. Manual bar screen
- B. Perforated plate screen
- C. Stair screen
- D. Micro screen

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** B. Perforated plate screen.

**ANSWER:** *Incorrect (A. Manual bar screen is correct.)*

**PROMPT (Ben):** Fill in the blank: On a single rake screen, a limit switch \_\_\_\_\_?

- A. Sets the upper and lower limits of travel for the rake
- B. Adjusts input line voltage
- C. Modifies the minimum particle size captured
- D. Turns off the drive motor if the rake is jammed

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** A. Sets the upper and lower limits of travel for the rake.

**ANSWER:** *Incorrect (D. Turns off the drive motor if the rake is jammed is the correct answer)*

**PROMPT (Ben):** Fill in the blank: One disadvantage of using comminutors and grinders is \_\_\_\_\_?

- A. Reduced potential for clogged pipes and damaged equipment
- B. Increased screenings disposal costs
- C. Shredded material reduces treatment capacity downstream
- D. More frequent overflows of the influent channel

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** C. Shredded material reduces treatment capacity downstream.

**ANSWER:** *Correct*

**PROMPT (Ben):** True or false: A WRRF with a combined sewer system is expecting a large storm. The manual bar screens are normally cleaned every hour. The operator should plan to decrease the cleaning frequency during and immediately after the storm.

- A. True
- B. False

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** B. False.

**ANSWER:** *Correct*

**PROMPT (Ben):** True or false: A shear pin is designed to break under a certain amount of force or pressure to prevent additional damage to equipment.

- A. True
- B. False

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** A. True.

**ANSWER:** Correct

**PROMPT (Ben):** Fill in the blank: Screens should be cleaned before the head loss across the screen reaches \_\_\_\_\_ or according to the screen manufacturer's recommendations.

- A. 2.5 cm (1 in.)
- B. 7.6 cm (3 in.)
- C. 12.7 cm (5 in.)
- D. 17.8 cm (7 in.)

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** C. 12.7 cm (5 in.)

**ANSWER:** Incorrect (B. 7.6 cm (3 in.) is the correct answer)

**PROMPT (Ben):** Multiple choice: This type of control mechanism is best suited for storm events or other conditions that produce highly variable amounts of screenable material?

- A. Clock timer
- B. Level sensor
- C. Particle counter
- D. HOA switch

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** B. Level sensor

**ANSWER:** Correct

**PROMPT (Ben):** A mechanical bar screen must be taken out of service for maintenance. Put the following steps in the correct order.

- A. Shut down the screen according to the manufacturer's directions.
- B. Close the upstream (inlet) gate.
- C. Close the downstream (outlet) gate.
- D. Wash the screen to remove debris.
- E. Drain the channel and remove debris.
- F. Lockout and tagout equipment.
- G. Wash sides of channel and perform final draining of channel.

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):**

- F. Lockout and tagout equipment.
- A. Shut down the screen according to the manufacturer's directions.
- B. Close the upstream (inlet) gate.
- C. Close the downstream (outlet) gate.
- E. Drain the channel and remove debris.
- D. Wash the screen to remove debris.
- G. Wash sides of channel and perform final draining of channel.

**ANSWER:** Incorrect (the correct order is B, C, A, F, E, D, G.)

**PROMPT (Ben):** Multiple choice: At a minimum, how often should screens be inspected for visible and audible indications of possible malfunctions?

- A. Daily
- B. Weekly
- C. Monthly
- D. Quarterly

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** A. Daily

**ANSWER:** Correct

**PROMPT (Ben):** True or false: The volume of grit removed for every m3 (mgd) of flow received is very consistent from one facility to the next.

- A. True
- B. False

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** B. False.

**ANSWER:** Correct

**PROMPT (Ben):** True or false: As flow velocity through the basin increases, larger, denser particles will pass through to the next process.

- A. True
- B. False

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** B. False.

**ANSWER:** Incorrect (the statement is true.)

**PROMPT (Ben):** Multiple choice: All the following characteristics will influence the settling velocity of a particle EXCEPT \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Density
- B. Size
- C. Color
- D. Shape

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** C. Color

**ANSWER:** Correct

I'll be honest, I saved the next question for second to last, because I wasn't sure how to format the matching question for ChatGPT's prompt. In the end I copied and pasted the question with the two columns, and ChatGPT handled it without error.



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**PROMPT (Ben):** Match the screen type to its identifying characteristic.

- A. Trash rack
  - 1. Single operating cycle
- B. Manual bar screen
  - 2. Interlocking links, no lower sprocket.
- C. Single rake screen
  - 3. Efficiently removes hair and stringy material
- D. Catenary screen
  - 4. Integrated wash press
- E. Continuous self-cleaning screen
  - 5. Remove only largest debris
- F. Perforated plate screen
  - 6. Rectangular openings limited in height and width
- G. Stair screen
  - 7. May be located in a bypass channel
- H. Inclined cylindrical screen
  - 8. Two sets of lamella lift solids up stairs

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):**

- a. Trash rack -
  - 5. Remove only largest debris
- b. Manual bar screen -
  - 1. Single operating cycle
- c. Single rake screen -
  - 8. Two sets of lamella lift solids up stairs
- d. Catenary screen -
  - 2. Interlocking links, no lower sprocket.
- e. Continuous self-cleaning screen -
  - 4. Integrated wash press
- f. Perforated plate screen -
  - 6. Rectangular openings limited in height and width
- g. Stair screen -
  - 7. May be located in a bypass channel
- h. Inclined cylindrical screen -
  - 3. Efficiently removes hair and stringy material

**ANSWER:** *Incorrect (the correct matches are: A = 5, B = 7, C = 1, D = 2, E = 6, F = 3, G = 8, H = 4)*


To wrap things up, I asked ChatGPT one final question.

**PROMPT (Ben):** Could you replace a wastewater operator?

**RESPONSE (ChatGPT):** No, I cannot replace a wastewater operator. I can provide information and answer questions to the best of my knowledge, but practical tasks and onsite responsibilities require the expertise of a qualified professional.

**Conclusion:**

In the end, ChatGPT got 8 of 14 certification prep questions right. That is only 57%. I think wastewater operator jobs are safe, and ChatGPT agrees. However, ChatGPT understands various types of questions and will attempt to answer them.

Here is a link to the ChatGPT session [www.chat.openai.com/sbared37265435-8783-4b97-9f27-ab8cbdcdf46e](http://www.chat.openai.com/sbared37265435-8783-4b97-9f27-ab8cbdcdf46e). 



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# 2023-2024 BUYERS' GUIDE

The *Digested News* Buyers' Guide consists of two sections: a listing of products and services categories and an alphabetical listing of companies/organizations and contact information.

1. Search under CATEGORICAL LISTINGS for the products/services you require.
2. Note the companies listed under your products/services.
3. Refer to the COMPANY LISTINGS for those companies' contact information.

## CATEGORICAL LISTINGS

### Activated Carbon

Carbon Enterprises Inc.  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Goble Sampson Associates

### Advanced Metering Infrastructure

Mountainland Supply Company

### Aeration Systems/Diffusers

Aqua-Aerobic Systems, Inc.  
Cogent  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Waterford Systems, Inc.

### Blowers/Instruments/ Gas Detection

The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Sulzer Pumps Solutions

### Catch Basin Cleaning Equipment

Goble Sampson Associates  
Val Kotter & Sons, Inc.

### Coatings, Lining, and Corrosion Control

Integrity Inspection Solutions, Inc.

### Contractors

Archer Western Construction  
DN Tanks, LLC.  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Twin D, Inc.  
Val Kotter & Sons, Inc.

### CSO and Stormwater Equipment

Aqua-Aerobic Systems, Inc.

### Design-Build Services

Archer Western Construction  
Carollo Engineers  
DN Tanks, LLC.  
Goble Sampson Associates

### Electrical, Instrumentation/ Controls/Generators

AE2S  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
SKM Engineering

### Enclosures, Shelters, and Buildings

Shelter Works

### Engineers/Consultants

AE2S  
AQUA Engineering  
Bowen Collins & Associates, Inc.  
Brown and Caldwell  
Carollo Engineers  
Davidson Sales & Engineering  
Forsgren Associates, Inc.  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Maise Technology  
SKM Engineering  
Sunrise Engineering, Inc.  
Val Kotter & Sons, Inc.

### Filtration

Ambiente H2O Inc.  
Aqua-Aerobic Systems, Inc.  
Carbon Enterprises Inc.  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Davidson Sales & Engineering  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Waterford Systems, Inc.

### Filter Media Remove, Supply, and Install

Carbon Enterprises Inc.

### Grit Removal Systems

Lakeside Equipment Corporation  
Smith & Loveless, Inc.

**Grit Removal and Washing**

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DC Frost Associates  
Davidson Sales & Engineering  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Waterford Systems, Inc.

**Headworks Screening**

Ambiente H2O Inc.  
Cogent  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Waterford Systems, Inc.

**Installation and Removal of Pumps**

Nickerson Company Inc.

**Intake Screens**

Lakeside Equipment Corporation

**Inspectors/Locators**

Integrity Inspection Solutions, Inc.

**Manhole Inspection/Location/Mapping**

Integrity Inspection Solutions, Inc.  
Twin D, Inc.  
Val Kotter & Sons, Inc.

**Odor Control**

Cogent  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Goble Sampson Associates

**Packaged Pump Stations**

Cogent  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Hidrostal USA  
Nickerson Company Inc.  
Waterford Systems, Inc.

**Packaged Treatment Plants**

Lakeside Equipment Corporation

**Pipe Cleaning and Televising**

Integrity Inspection Solutions, Inc.  
Twin D, Inc.  
Val Kotter & Sons, Inc.

**Pumps/Pump Systems**

Ambiente H2O Inc.  
Bowen Collins & Associates, Inc.  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates

Davidson Sales & Engineering  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Hidrostal USA  
Lakeside Equipment Corporation  
Mountainland Supply Company  
Nickerson Company Inc.  
Smith & Loveless, Inc.  
Sulzer Pumps Solutions

**Regulatory Compliance**

AE2S  
AQUA Engineering  
Maise Technology

**Residuals/Waste Management**

Carollo Engineers  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Goble Sampson Associates  
Smith & Loveless, Inc.  
Sulzer Pumps Solutions

**Resource Recovery**

AQUA Engineering

**SCADA**

Bowen Collins & Associates, Inc.  
SKM Engineering

**Sewer and Storm Drain Rehab**

Val Kotter & Sons, Inc.

**Sewer Flow Monitoring  
(Sanitary, Storm, and CSO)**

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Goble Sampson Associates

**Septage Receiving Systems**

Lakeside Equipment Corporation

**Sludge Dewatering**

Ambiente H2O Inc.  
The Coombs-Hopkins Company/  
DC Frost Associates  
Hidrostal USA  
Sulzer Pumps Solutions

**Storage Tanks/Reservoir Systems**

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DC Frost Associates  
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Goble Sampson Associates  
Mountainland Supply Company  
Pittsburg Tank & Tower Maintenance Co.  
Sunrise Engineering, Inc.

**Stormwater Detention and Treatment**

DN Tanks, LLC.

**Studies/Master Plans**

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Brown and Caldwell  
Sunrise Engineering, Inc.

**Tank Inspection and Maintenance**

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**Tools and Equipment**

Mountainland Supply Company

**Ultraviolet Disinfection**

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DC Frost Associates  
Goble Sampson Associates

**Valves**

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Nickerson Company Inc.

**Video Pipeline  
Inspection Equipment**

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Val Kotter & Sons, Inc.

**Water/Wastewater  
Treatment Systems**

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Aqua-Aerobic Systems, Inc.  
Archer Western Construction  
Bowen Collins & Associates, Inc.  
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Sunrise Engineering, Inc.

**Water/WW/Pipeline/  
Environmental Design**

AE2S  
AQUA Engineering  
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## COMPANY LISTINGS

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3400 North Ashton Boulevard, Suite 105  
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### Carbon Enterprises Inc.

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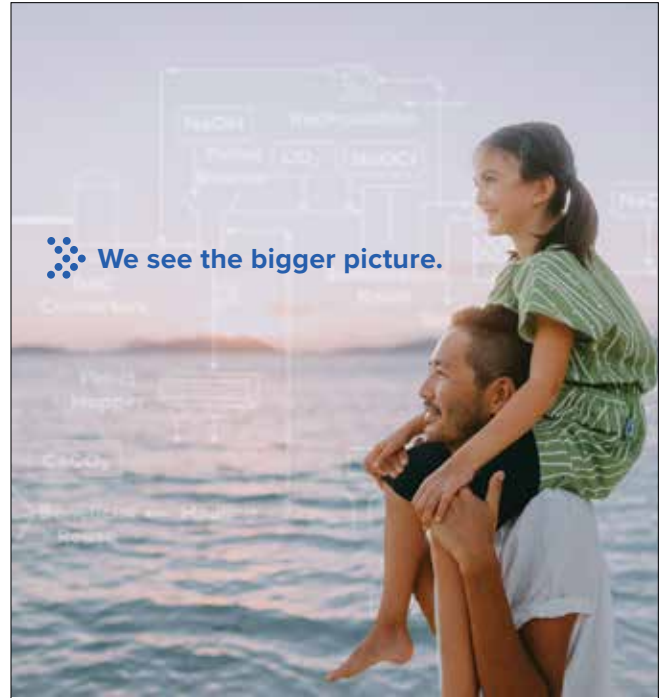
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