

# JOINT EXPO & OPERATOR DAYS

**Tue. Feb 10 & Wed. Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

Lansing Center, Lansing, MI

EGLE Course Code: 338

Drinking Water & Wastewater CECs available per day:

0.3 Technical OR 0.3 Managerial

(max of 0.6 in either category available)

Up to 6 PDHs

## TUESDAY, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026

### TECHNICAL SESSION – Tuesday

**7:00 AM – REGISTRATION OPENS**

#### **7:45 AM – 8:00 AM, Welcome & Overview**

Updates from MI-AWWA and MWEA Representatives

#### **8:00 AM – 8:45 AM, Maximizing Reliability: Weekly and Monthly Generator Checks for Water & Wastewater Utilities**

Max Nichol, Total Energy Systems

Reliable backup power is not just an operational priority, it's mission-critical for water and wastewater utilities to safeguard public health and ensure continuity. This presentation highlights best-practice maintenance strategies through routine weekly and monthly generator checks.

#### **8:45 AM – 9:30 AM, From Locks to Logs: Optimizing LOTO in Water Operations**

Kieyona Bailey, Great Lakes Water Authority

Darrin King, Great Lakes Water Authority

Tom Sims, Great Lakes Water Authority

Joy Lindsey, Great Lakes Water Authority

Clifford McCall, Great Lakes Water Authority

Discover how a large treatment plant redesigned its Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) process to improve consistency, efficiency, and accountability across all shifts. Attendees will learn how standardization and digital integration can streamline operations, reduce variability, and create a more cohesive, high-performing work environment within water utilities.

**9:30 AM – 9:45 AM (15) Minute Break**

#### **9:45 AM – 10:15 AM, Move It or Lose It: Why Valve Exercising Matters**

Caine Hornok, Great Lakes Water Authority

Just like muscles, valves need regular exercise to stay in good working order. This presentation explores the do's and don'ts of valve exercising, what to watch out for when things don't go as planned, and how consistent maintenance helps extend equipment life and build confidence in your system's performance.

#### **10:15 AM – 10:45 AM, A Closer Look at Liquid Chemical Metering Systems AKA Why the Plumbing is as Important as the Pump**

Joe Ciurlino, Solberg Knowles and Associates

Chemical dosing isn't just about choosing the right pump—it's about designing the entire system around it. Learn how piping, valves, and fittings affect accuracy, reliability, and maintenance in liquid chemical metering. Attendees will gain practical insights into common components, chemical challenges, and troubleshooting techniques for better system performance.

#### **10:45 AM – 11:15 AM, SCADA Best Practices for Reliability, Data Accuracy, and Operational Insight in Water and Wastewater Systems**

Andrae Savage, Great Lakes Water Authority

Robert Oliver Jr, Great Lakes Water Authority

Kyle Smith, Great Lakes Water Authority

SCADA systems are the backbone of water and wastewater operations, but their value depends on accurate data and informed interpretation. This session shares best practices for improving data accuracy, optimizing alarms, strengthening cybersecurity, and integrating SCADA insights into maintenance and reporting. Real-world examples will show how utilities can enhance reliability, coordination, and decision-making across their systems.

**11:15am - ADJOURN TO EXPO HALL**

### MANAGERIAL SESSION – Tuesday

**7:30 AM – REGISTRATION OPENS**

#### **8:15 AM – 8:30 AM, Welcome & Overview**

Updates from MI-AWWA and MWEA Representatives

#### **8:30 AM – 9:15 AM, Inclusive Leadership in the Water Industry: Building Stronger Teams Through Empathy and Advocacy**

Speakers TBD from MI-AWWA Membership Council

Effective leadership in the water industry depends on empathy, active listening, and advocacy. This presentation explores common leadership challenges and practical strategies to build resilient, high-performing teams. Attendees will learn how to navigate conflict, support team members, and foster a culture that promotes both individual and organizational success.

#### **9:15 AM – 10:00 AM - Trends in Project Finance & Funding**

Andy Campbell, Bendzinski & Co.

Explore the latest trends in financing water and wastewater projects, including emerging funding sources, innovative financial structures, and strategies for securing capital. Gain insights into best practices for project planning, risk management, and maximizing funding opportunities in today's evolving landscape.

**10:00 AM – 10:15 AM (15) Minute Break**

#### **10:15 AM – 10:45 AM, Michigan Water Policy Update: Key Legislative and Regulatory Changes**

Mike Compagnoni, Midwest Strategy Group

Stay up to date on the latest legislative and regulatory developments affecting Michigan water utilities. Led by the MWEA and MI-AWWA lobbyist, this presentation will review recent policy changes, upcoming regulations, and advocacy efforts that could influence operations, compliance, and funding opportunities for water utilities.

#### **10:45 AM – 11:15 AM, AMP It Up: Making Your Asset Management Plan a Slam Dunk**

Ashley Mitchell, Hazen and Sawyer

Zanna Leciejewski, Hazen and Sawyer

Learn how to turn your Asset Management Plan (AMP) from a "shelf document" into a winning strategy. This presentation will show practical ways to create, maintain, and integrate AMPs, using real-world examples to improve planning, team collaboration, and digital tools. Attendees will leave with actionable steps to make their AMP a game-changer for both their utility and community.

#### **11:15 AM – 11:45 AM, Knowing Your Numbers: Turning Data into Action**

Caine Hornok, Great Lakes Water Authority

Operators collect hundreds of data points every day—but what do they really mean? Learn how to interpret control room data to spot equipment issues early, predict system demand, and empower your team to use data for smarter, proactive decision-making.

**11:45am - ADJOURN TO EXPO HALL**

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## WEDNESDAY, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026

### TECHNICAL SESSION – Wednesday

**7:00 AM – REGISTRATION OPENS**

#### **7:45 AM – 8:00 AM, Welcome & Overview**

Updates from MI-AWWA and MWEA Representatives

#### **8:00 AM – 8:45 AM, Mastering Sample Collection: Ensuring Accurate Results Every Time**

Jessica Oniovosa, Great Lakes Water Authority

Carlos Solomon, Great Lakes Water Authority

David Sumler, Great Lakes Water Authority

Andrae Savage, Great Lakes Water Authority

Accurate sampling is critical for compliance, process control, and public health. This presentation covers best practices for water and wastewater sampling, including proper techniques, documentation, and communication with labs. Attendees will learn how to avoid common pitfalls, strengthen data reliability, and maintain regulatory compliance.

#### **8:45 AM – 9:30 AM, Inside the Pipe: Advanced CIPP Technologies for Modern Utility Rehabilitation**

Mark Chandler, United Felts

This presentation provides a technical introduction to cured-in-place pipe (CIPP), a trenchless rehabilitation method used to structurally restore deteriorated underground pipelines. The program covers the fundamentals of CIPP materials, manufacturing processes, installation techniques, and the quality controls to ensure consistent, long-term performance across all applications.

**9:30 AM – 9:45 AM (15) Minute Break**

#### **9:45 AM – 10:15 AM, A Day in the Life of a Water Chemist: Testing and Jar Trials**

Douglas Wybo II, Great Lakes Water Authority

Christia Wheeler, Great Lakes Water Authority

Go behind the lab doors to see a chemist in action and learn how water quality is ensured every day. This presentation walks through a chemist's shift, highlights key tests from routine to advanced, and demonstrates jar testing and its role in optimizing treatment.

#### **10:15 AM – 10:45 AM, Making Cross-Connection Control Work: Compliance Through Enforcement**

Gary McLaren, HydroCorp

Effective cross-connection programs combine proactive follow-up with clear enforcement. This presentation covers strategies to maintain compliance, hold non-compliant customers accountable, and align with EGLE rules to protect the public and build community trust.

#### **10:45 AM – 11:15 AM, Preventive Maintenance: Strategies for Reliable Operations**

Daniel Aman, Great Lakes Water Authority

Learn how to keep assets running smoothly with proactive, data-driven preventive maintenance. Best practices for scheduling, inspections, and cross-team collaboration will be covered, plus tools like CMMS and predictive monitoring to reduce downtime, cut costs, and extend equipment life.

**11:15am - ADJOURN TO EXPO HALL**

### MANAGERIAL SESSION – Wednesday

**7:30 AM – REGISTRATION OPENS**

#### **8:15 AM – 8:30 AM, Welcome & Overview**

Updates from MI-AWWA and MWEA Representatives

#### **8:30 AM – 9:30 AM, Fostering Operator Growth through the EGLE Certification Program**

Koren Carpenter, EGLE

Sarah Marshall, EGLE

An overview of EGLE's drinking water and wastewater operator certification programs and highlights how administrators and superintendents can support staff in advancing through the process. Attendees will learn about application requirements, practical tips for gaining experience across plant operations, and upcoming program updates. The discussion emphasizes strategies to help operators grow, succeed, and stay current in their professional development.

#### **9:30 AM – 10:00 AM - Smooth Moves: Mastering CMMS Implementation**

Teresa Johnson, Great Lakes Water Authority

Edwin Merriweather, Great Lakes Water Authority

Implementing a new Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) can be complex, but the increase in efficiency and reliability is worth it. We will explore common obstacles—like data migration, user adoption, and system integration—and offer practical strategies for planning, collaboration, and optimization to ensure a smooth rollout.

**10:00 AM – 10:15 AM (15) Minute Break**

#### **10:15 AM – 10:45 AM, Training at the Speed of Need: Modern Peer Approaches**

Christopher Steary, Great Lakes Water Authority

Charles McConnell, Great Lakes Water Authority

Donald Kraft, Great Lakes Water Authority

GLWA has reimagined peer-to-peer training to accelerate skill development for new operators. This session highlights a structured approach that combines classroom, self-guided, and peer training, with tools to track progress and ensure effective, timely onboarding in today's challenging workforce environment.

#### **10:45 AM – 11:15 AM, Small Gate, Big Impact: A Critical Collaboration to Beat the Clock**

Mary Koeger, Oakland County

What looks like a minor project can carry major consequences. See how a tight six-month gate replacement succeeded through agile project management, real-time problem-solving, and strong collaboration—proving that teamwork can be as impactful as technical expertise.

#### **11:15 AM – 11:45 AM, Crisis Comms: Mastering Social Media in Critical Moments**

Samarhia Giffel, City of Grand Rapids

Learn how to use social media strategically to guide your community during a crisis. You will understand the phases of crisis management, platform-specific strategies, and how to integrate these practices into your communication policies to become a trusted resource during events like boil water advisories, main breaks, or natural disasters.

**11:45am - ADJOURN TO EXPO HALL**

**LUNCH BUFFET AVAILABLE UNTIL 1:30PM (TICKET REQUIRED)**  
**EXPO HALL CLOSES AT 2PM**