

MI-ACE 2025

87TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 9-12, 2025

BLUE WATER CONVENTION CENTER • PORT HURON, MI



MI-ACE 2025: WHERE LEADERSHIP MEETS INNOVATION

Protect public health and safety. **Share** knowledge and expertise. **Care** for every person. **Innovate** to build resilient infrastructure. **Engage** the public to build support and understanding. Join your fellow water peers and the Michigan Section of the American Water Works Association to continue the efforts of the Section's strategic plan by attending the 87th Annual Conference and Exhibits (MI-ACE 2025).

Get ready for another exciting and insightful MI-ACE Conference, packed with valuable information to help you tackle everyday challenges. We look forward to welcoming you back to the Blue Water Convention Center in Port Huron this September!

Who Should Attend?

Directors, managers, superintendents, supervisors, engineers, and anyone with a career goal of being a leader in the water sector.

Attending Will Help You:

Connect with fellow water industry professionals.

Gather new ideas to share and implement with your team.

Stay Informed about emerging trends and the future of Michigan's water sector.

TOP 10 REASONS TO ATTEND MI-ACE 2025

1. **Spark Innovation** — Discover new ideas and breakthrough technologies that will drive your organization forward.
2. **Take Your Skills to the Next Level** — Gain practical insights and strategies to sharpen your expertise.
3. **Run Smarter Operations** — Learn how to optimize processes, cut costs, and maximize performance.
4. **Collaborate with Industry Leaders** — Engage in open discussions with top professionals who understand your challenges.
5. **Get the Inside Track on Emerging Trends** — Stay informed about what's next in water.
6. **Tackle Today's Toughest Problems** — Walk away with actionable solutions to issues impacting your day-to-day work.
7. **Recharge Your Passion** — Reconnect with your purpose and reignite your enthusiasm for the industry.
8. **Explore the Expo Hall** — Meet leading suppliers, see new products firsthand, and find partners to power your success.
9. **Invest in Your Credentials** — Earn valuable Continuing Education Credits (CECs) and Professional Development Hours (PDHs).
10. **Expand Your Influence** — Build lasting relationships that open doors and grow your career.

FEATURED PRESENTATIONS



AWWA Visiting Officer:

Ken Kawahara, Vice President of AWWA and President of Akinaka & Associates, Ltd.

We're excited to welcome Ken Kawahara, Vice President of AWWA, as the Visiting Officer at this year's MI-ACE. Ken brings a unique blend of public and private sector experience, with a background in civil engineering, water resource management, and environmental services. He currently serves as President of Akinaka & Associates, Ltd. and is a proud University of Hawai'i engineering alum. Ken will be sharing updates on current AWWA affairs during the Wednesday morning session, so don't miss it! And if you see him around, be sure to say hello – he's looking forward to connecting with the Michigan water community.



Keynote Speaker

Michelle Stockness, Executive Director of Freshwater

Get ready to be inspired by Michelle Stockness, Executive Director of Freshwater, as she takes the stage as our keynote speaker. With over 20 years of experience tackling complex water issues – from PFAS contamination to sustainable infrastructure – Michelle brings both passion and expertise to the conversation. Since joining Freshwater in 2023, she's led transformative efforts like the Greater Lakes Promise land conservation initiative and collaborative groundwater governance across EPA Region 5. Her keynote promises to energize and empower us all to think bigger and act smarter in protecting our most vital resource.

REGISTRATION HOURS

- **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2025**

4:00 pm – 8:00 pm

- **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025**

7:00 am – 6:00 pm

- **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025**

7:30 am – 4:00 pm (closed during Fuller Lunch)

- **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025**

7:30 am – 10:00 am (times may vary)

SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

Additional fee required * By invitation only **

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

8:30 am	Golf Outing Fundraiser * (Simultaneous tee-off)
9:30 am	Fort Gratiot Lighthouse Tour *
6:15 pm	Board and Sponsor Dinner **
7:30 pm	Opening Dessert Reception & Trivia Night (hosted by the Young Professionals)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

7:15 am	Early Morning Coffee with Exhibitors
8:00 am	Attendee Continental Breakfast in the Exhibit Hall
8:00 am	First Time Attendee Orientation and Continental Breakfast
8:45 am	Awards & Opening General Sessions
12:00 pm	Lunch in Exhibit Hall
1:35 pm	Breakout Sessions
4:35 pm	Happy Hour in Exhibit Hall
After Hours	Sponsor Event

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

7:45 am	Business Meeting and Breakfast
8:25 am	General Sessions
12:00 pm	Fuller Awards Luncheon *
1:35 pm	Breakout Sessions
4:35 pm	Women on Water Networking *
6:00 pm	Networking Dinner *

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

7:15 am	Tom Newhof Leadership Breakfast **
8:00 am	Attendee Continental Breakfast
8:25 am	Closing General Sessions



Exhibit Hall Show Hours

Wednesday, September 10 from 7:15 am until 6:00 pm

Featured Times

Early morning coffee with Exhibitors: 7:15 am – 8:00 am
Breakfast with Exhibitors 8:00 am – 8:40 am
Break in the exhibit hall 10:05 am – 10:20 am
Lunch with Exhibitors 12 pm until 1:30 pm
Break in the exhibit hall 3:15 pm – 3:30 pm
Attendee Happy Hour 4:35 pm until 6:00 pm

SWIE Chance Auction – during Exhibit Hall Happy Hour

Chance Auction items are displayed in the Exhibit Hall and have a basket placed near them. Place your ticket in the basket of the item you most want to win. Winners are drawn randomly from the assigned baskets for each item. There is no limit to the number of tickets you can place in any basket. The SWIE Chance Auction is open Wednesday, September 10th during Happy Hour in the Exhibit Hall.

Tickets – 3 for \$10 and 10 for \$20

The SWIE Committee is seeking items for the Chance Auction. To donate an item, please email info@mi-water.org. Thank you in advance to our item donors.

EXHIBITORS 2025 Exhibitors (as of May 29, 2025)

Aquatics Informatics
Badger Meter
Batco Inc
Blue-Water Solutions
Bluewater Tanks and Covers
C&S Solutions
ClearFlow



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ENTERTAINMENT AND NETWORKING

Opening Night Reception: Treats, Trivia, and More

Tuesday, September 9 – 7:30 pm

Hosted by the Young Professionals and open to all attendees, this lively evening at the Blue Water Convention Center features a dessert reception, beverages, and optional trivia games. Mingle with colleagues, make new connections, and kick off the conference with fun, laughter, and learning. Whether you're

here to network, test your trivia skills, or just enjoy some sweet and savory treats, there's something for everyone. Admission is included with your conference registration.

First-Time Attendee Orientation and Breakfast

Wednesday, September 10 – 8:00 am

Those attending MI-ACE for the first time are invited to attend an orientation

breakfast before the Opening General Session on Wednesday. Leaders of MI-AWWA will provide you with some tips for how to get the most out of attending. This is a great opportunity to get acquainted with other attendees prior to sessions starting. RSVP is required during registration.

TICKETED EVENTS



MI-AWWA Annual Golf Outing

Tuesday, September 9 – 8:30 am

This year's Outing will be held at Solitude Links Golf Course & Banquet Center in Kimball, Michigan – just 14 minutes from the Blue Water Convention Center. This beautifully maintained, links-style course offers 18 holes of Bentgrass tees, fairways, and greens, set against a backdrop of native sand bunkers, fescue rough, and gently rolling terrain. Four lakes come into play on 12 of the 18 holes, and the course features island greens that add both beauty and challenge to your round. Solitude Links is a par 71 course, stretching 6,674 yards from the championship tees and 4,289 yards from the forward tees, offering a dynamic experience for golfers of all skill levels.

Network on the course while supporting two important causes: Safe Water in Ecuador and AWWA's Water Equation.

Golf hole sponsorships are available for \$250 – an excellent opportunity to promote your company while supporting a great cause!

Separate registration required.

Registration – \$150 single


Registration – \$585 per foursome (savings of \$10)

Mulligans – 2 do-overs for \$5

Fort Gratiot Lighthouse Tour

Tuesday, September 9 – 9:30 am

Join us for a guided tour of the historic Fort Gratiot Lighthouse, Michigan's oldest lighthouse, built in 1814 during the War of 1812 to guard the strategic juncture of the St. Clair River and Lake Huron. A shuttle will depart from the Blue Water Convention Center and take attendees to the lighthouse for a one-hour tour. Following the tour, we'll stop at a local café for lunch before returning to the Convention Center.

 **Tickets: \$40 (includes transportation, tour and lunch)**

Fundraising Beneficiaries

Safe Water in Ecuador (SWIE), a program of MI-AWWA, works to bring clean, safe drinking water to indigenous communities in Ecuador.

Water Equation, a program of AWWA, offers training scholarships and leadership development to young professionals.

(Separate registration or fee required)

Fuller Luncheon

Thursday, September 11 – 12:00 pm

A time-honored tradition, the Fuller Luncheon honors Michigan Water Utility Hall of Fame inductees, the Raymond J. Faust Awardees, and the George Warren Fuller Awardee. Come enjoy lunch and celebrate the titans of the water sector in Michigan. Faust and Fuller awardees are announced during the luncheon.

 **Tickets: \$20**

Women on Water

Thursday, September 11 – 4:35 pm

Women are becoming more common in the water sector but there are still issues unique to women. This networking event offers the opportunity for women in the water sector to connect and share experiences.

 **Tickets: \$25**

Thursday Networking Lawn Party

Thursday, September 11 – 6:00 pm

Spend Thursday evening relaxing, dining, and networking with old friends and new acquaintances, all while enjoying great food, refreshing libations, and the stunning views of the Saint Clair River.

 **Tickets: \$60**

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LEARN MORE

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Schedule of Recognition

Wednesday, September 10, at 8:45 AM

- Silver Water Drop Award
- Gold Water Drop Award
- Life Member Status Award
- EGLE Edward Dunbar Rich Award

Thursday, September 11, at 8:00 AM

- Chuck Van der Kolk Volunteer of the Year
- Young Professional of the Year
- Executive Directors Award
- Excellence Award – Individual and Organization
- Operator Meritorious Service Award
- Richard Husby Public Awareness Award
- Research and Technical Practices Award

Thursday, September 11, at the Fuller Luncheon

- Michigan Water Utility Hall of Fame
- Raymond J. Faust Award
- George Warren Fuller Award

VOLUNTEERING AT MI-ACE

Did you know MI-ACE's success is made possible thanks to the generous time and efforts of our volunteers? We invite you to lend a helping hand at MI-ACE 2025! Volunteers are needed for registration, session moderating, member booth, and more. A volunteer sign-up form will be available this summer.



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TECHNICAL PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

8:45 AM – 9:00 AM

1.1 Opening Remarks, Welcome and Awards

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

1.2 KEYNOTE: The Future of Water – How Lucky Are We!

Michelle Stockness, Executive Director of Freshwater

Water is vital – and in this time of increasing risks and challenges, we can also view it as a time of big opportunities. In this engaging session, Michelle Stockness explores the future of water through the lens of innovation, equity, communication, and resilience. Drawing on over 20 years of experience and her leadership at Freshwater, she will highlight real-world projects addressing water quality, water reuse, groundwater governance, and workforce development. Let's talk about what's at stake – and how we can work together to protect this precious resource for generations to come.

10:20 AM – 10:50 AM

1.3 Building a Healthier, Informed Community: Our Community Water Advisory Council & Lansing School's Drinking Water Flushing Program

Angie Goodman, Lansing Board of Water and Light

The Lansing Board of Water & Light (BWL) has removed all known active lead service lines and, through its Community Water Advisory Council (CWAC), has implemented several methods to enhance public awareness and reduce water quality risks. Focusing especially on vulnerable populations like children, BWL and the Lansing Schools launched the Drinking Water School Flushing Program to minimize lead exposure by flushing faucets for 30 seconds each morning. The program is simple and engaging, with a weekly "Water Safety Captain" in each classroom responsible for the task. This initiative empowers students to take an active role in water safety while reducing exposure risks. Through educational materials and this program, BWL is building good lifelong water habits and improving community health.

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM

1.4 After 20 years of planning, you landed a major industrial user. Now what?!

Ken Jewison, Stantec Consulting

Marguerite Davenport, City of Marshall

This presentation will include a brief history of the City of Marshall's Megasite development known as the MAJOR Campus, how it came to be, and how utility service was ultimately delivered to the site. The listener will be presented

with some clear-eyed takeaways for any community looking to attract a major industrial user. Navigating the web of stakeholder, regulatory, and engineering obstacles, can seem daunting, especially if the project is expedited. That's why building a trusted team of partners, and a coherent strategy is essential. This session will include discussion of planning and communication strategies, stakeholder engagement, permitting, alternate project delivery, and benefits to a programmatic approach for large projects.

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM

1.5 Insights from AWWA: Moving Water Forward

Ken Kawahara, Vice President of AWWA and

President of Akinaka & Associates, Ltd.

Join AWWA Vice President Ken Kawahara for an inside look at what's happening across the Association. Ken will provide updates on key initiatives, advocacy efforts, strategic priorities, and how they connect to the work being done at the local level.

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM

2.1 Find Your Hook: Answering Questions, Addressing Feedback, and Engaging Your Community When Deploying Advanced Metering

Jacob Jaspersen, Utility Metering Solutions

Utilities often face questions and concerns from their customers and the communities they serve when upgrading their metering infrastructure. Learn about the power of a community engagement program to address these objections and foster trust and goodwill between all stakeholders, along with helpful talking points, information, strategies, and tactics to address these objections and keep all involved informed and engaged.

2:10 PM – 3:15 PM

2.2 From Legacy to Innovation: A Multi-Generational Dialogue on Water

Ariana Wade, Fishbeck – Moderator

The water industry faces challenges both from the outside and within: we see emerging contaminants and new treatment technologies, an aging and emerging workforce, and an effort to strengthen the public's trust in water and their communities. This panel discussion will feature both young professionals from the public and private sector, as well as more seasoned professionals to share their experiences, thoughts, and opinions on the present and future challenges for the water industry and the changing workforce.

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

2.4 Michigan Water Asset Management Council – How and Why to Fill out the Survey

Sue McCormick, Water Asset Management Council

Members of the Water Asset Management Council will review the purpose and importance of the asset management surveys, how the data is used, and demonstrate how to complete the surveys.

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM

3.1 Utility Rate Setting and Policy Considerations

Shawn Koorn, HDR

Developing cost-based rates is paramount in maintaining the long-term financial sufficiency of a utility. This presentation includes the basic approach of establishing cost-based rates, and adequately funding annual O&M and capital expenses. A review of industry benchmarks and affordability approaches will also be discussed.

2:10 PM – 2:40 PM

3.2 Optimizing Utility Asset Management with GIS: Enhancing Efficiency, Compliance, and Sustainability

Mike Levandoski, ClearFlow.net

Discover how GIS-driven asset management is transforming utility operations by improving efficiency, reducing costs, and enhancing regulatory compliance. This session will explore how utilities can move from outdated, reactive maintenance to proactive strategies using real-time data and spatial insights. Learn how field crews and office staff can seamlessly collaborate, optimize workflows, and make data-driven decisions that extend asset lifespans. A real-world case study will showcase measurable results, including reduced emergency repairs and improved service reliability. If you're looking for practical solutions to modernize infrastructure management and maximize operational performance, this session is a must-attend!

2:45 PM – 3:15 PM

3.3 Prep Over Panic – Next Steps for LCRI Compliance

Carlee Fullenkamp, P.E., ENV SP, HDR

Following the Lead and Copper Rule Revision (LCRR) inventory deadline of October 16, 2024 and the release of the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) the week prior, many drinking water utilities are concerned about what needs to be done to remain in compliance with regulations. This presentation will begin by covering compliance requirements carried over from the LCRR and will then transition to future requirements and deadlines under the LCRI. We will also discuss actions that can be taken between now and November 2027 to ease the burden of certain LCRI requirements and potentially even waive certain LCRI requirements. These actions will range across various areas of the LCRR and LCRI, such as outreach,

compliance sampling, school and childcare sampling, and inventory updates.

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

3.4 Addressing Sanitary Survey Deficiencies at Drinking Water Storage Tanks

Joe Siwek, Fishbeck

In 2016, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released "How to Conduct a Sanitary Survey of Drinking Water Systems" as a guidance document for the best sanitary practices for finished drinking water storage. This document replaced outdated and sometime contradictory guidance from previous publications. As state enforcement agencies began to apply the new guidance to drinking water providers under their jurisdiction, many facilities are found to have deficiencies with various reservoir and storage tank components (vents, overflows, drains, hatches). This presentation will review the significant updates made in the 2016 EPA document, and display a case study on how the City of Ann Arbor applied the guidance in making improvements at their buried concrete reservoirs and elevated steel storage tanks.

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM

4.1 Revolutionizing Environmental Sampling and Monitoring: Digital Tools for Accuracy, Efficiency, and Audit Management.

Russell Schindler, SampleServe, Inc.

Digital transformation streamlines environmental monitoring by replacing paper-based systems with mobile data collection and automated field-to-lab transfers. Screen recording enhances compliance by capturing field activities with timestamps, GPS data, and user actions for remote auditing. Digital chain-of-custody (D-COC) improves sample tracking, reducing errors, accelerating workflows, and ensuring data integrity. Customizable alerts manage sampling schedules, preventing delays and ensuring compliance. Case studies, like a Texas drinking water initiative, show major cost savings, accuracy gains, and reporting efficiency.

2:10 PM – 3:15 PM

4.2 GAC and PFAS: the Next (re)Generation

PFAS treatment is evolving, and so is the role of granular activated carbon (GAC). This panel explores the latest innovations in GAC technology, real-world applications, and what the next generation of treatment looks like.

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

4.4 Four Tough Lessons to Avoid in Cross-Connection Control Programs

Gary McLaren, HydroCorp

Avoid costly mistakes in your cross-connection control program by learning from real-world failures. This session will highlight common pitfalls, from poor record-keeping to weak

enforcement, and provide strategies to prevent them. Discover best practices for compliance, stakeholder engagement, and maintaining a proactive program. Stay ahead of regulatory challenges and protect public health with proven solutions. Don't wait to learn the hard way – gain the insights you need to strengthen by attending this session!

4:05 PM – 4:35 PM

5.1 Design and Sustainability in an International Context

Mark De Haan, P.E., Life Giving Water International

When working with rural communities in an international context in low-middle income countries, there are a number of key considerations to achieving a successful project. In the work of Safe Water in Ecuador's partners in Ecuador, these considerations include cultural factors, community capacity, appropriate technology, and support and administration. This talk will share some of the important aspects of these four key considerations to a sustaining project in this specific context and examples of how these considerations are worked out in practice, as well as the engineering solutions that have developed as a result of this approach.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

7:45 AM – 8:20 AM

6.1 Annual Business Meeting and Attendee Breakfast

8:25 AM – 8:55 AM

6.2 People or Data. Who Drives Decisions?

Kaisra Osman, Bcom, IAM, CRL, Great Lakes Water Authority
Grant Holback, Great Lakes Water Authority

This presentation articulates a paradigm shift in how GLWA integrates data and people to enhance decision-making. It highlights key initiatives implemented to strategically plan, capture, store, and leverage data – demonstrating practical, scalable strategies that drive data-informed decision-making and operational improvements. By sharing GLWA's journey of integrating data and people, this presentation provides practical, scalable strategies for organizations – large and small – to create a strategic framework for managing, capturing, storing, and utilizing data. This journey is not just about technology – it's about fostering a data-driven culture that ensures long-term operational success.

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

6.3 Random Daytime, Fully Flushed and Manual Composite Approaches: Lead Sampling Norms of the Future?

Darren Lytle, Hazen and Sawyer

After decades of LCR sampling, the fixed volume first draw sample is the industry standard and has become the “go to” sample to answer all lead drinking water questions. Treatment effectiveness-based regulatory sampling has challenges and is

inappropriate to answer many questions including those associated with exposure. This presentation will discuss three alternative lead drinking water sampling methods (random daytime, fully flushed, and manual composite sampling) that address exposure and other questions while still considering treatment effectiveness. Lead levels in the different water samples collected from homes with and without lead service lines, and in communities with and without effective corrosion control will be compared.

9:35 AM – 10:05 AM

6.4 State of Michigan Source Water Assessment Program: An Update

Ian Smith, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)

Beginning in 2024, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy began an effort to update source water assessments for Michigan's public water supplies. Updates have begun, following the established framework for source water assessment scoring and ranking, and with EGLE staff coordinating site visits with our public water supply partners. This presentation will provide an overview of this method, as well as a detailed breakdown of the different components which go into each evaluation, leaving the audience with an understanding of how susceptibility is determined. Additionally, we will provide an overview of the statewide strategy for updating source water assessments in Michigan over the next 2 – 4 years, as well as potential outcomes.

10:20 AM – 10:50 AM

6.5 Innovative Pretreatment Solutions: The St. Joseph Success Story

Brian Phillips, Fishbeck

This presentation will highlight the engineering and construction challenges faced during the upgrade of the St. Joseph Water Treatment Plant's pretreatment system. Attendees will learn about the innovative equipment selection and design features that improved maintenance and increased capacity. The presentation will also share valuable lessons learned during the multi-year construction process. Additionally, operational data on the performance of the new pretreatment equipment will be presented, making it essential for anyone involved in similar projects.

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM

6.6 Superpower Status Activated!

Jaime Fleming, City of Wyoming

“The things that make us different – those are our superpowers.” – Lena Waithe. Every person has a superpower. We know from the universe of superhero lore that the strongest teams are formed when people with unique powers come together around a common cause. Do you know what superpower you bring to the team? Do you know how to identify and appreciate other superpowers? In this presentation we will: Explore interpersonal differences

(generational, communication and relational styles, etc.) and recognize the power of diversity; Identify the powers your team needs and how to recruit talented superheroes; Learn how to enhance, leverage, and combine our powers to become (nearly) invincible.

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM

6.7 Communication During a Crisis via Social Media

Samarhia Giffel, City of Grand Rapids Water System

Communicating with the public through social media platforms must be strategic for your organization to position itself as a trusted resource. When a crisis strikes, social media communication can become very stressful especially without understanding the process and without having a plan. Learn the phases of crisis management and how to effectively use your social media platforms during each phase.

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM

7.1 Technologies and Techniques for Water Loss Management

Mark Beatty, Utility Technologies, LLC

The state of the industry in leak detection and prevention technologies will be shown. Attendees will learn how to integrate water loss management with GIS and Asset Management databases. Non-traditional leak detection technologies will be presented such as K-9, thermal imaging, tracer gas, and artificial intelligence or AI. Proactive methods of water loss management will be encouraged including leak and pressure monitoring and logging. The importance and integration of metering data and accuracy will be emphasized.

2:10 PM – 2:40 PM

7.2 Elevated Storage Evaluation using InfoWater Pro for Lansing Board of Water and Light

Scott Humphrey, P.E., GISP, HDR

Derek Ambs, Lansing Board of Water and Light

HDR and BWL developed an extended period simulation water model to evaluate storage alternatives and develop an operational strategy to incorporate elevated storage into the BWL water distribution system.

2:45 PM – 3:15 PM

7.3 Novi's Most Critical Asset – Managed through proactive Condition Assessment and Operational Determination

Evan Biedenbach, Pure Technologies U.S. Inc.

Jeff Herczeg, City of Novi

This joint presentation will showcase how the City of Novi successfully safeguarded its water system by proactively assessing a large-diameter transmission main. We will explore the key factors that drove this inspection, including the high risk and severe consequences of potential failure. The discussion will also cover the challenges faced, how they were addressed,

and the outcomes of the inspection – highlighting the significant reduction in failure risk achieved through these efforts.

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

7.4 Swimming Upstream: A Multi-Faceted Approach to Protecting Ann Arbor's Source Water

Molly Maciejewski, Ann Arbor Water

Gwen Kubacki, Arcadis

In March 2024, Ann Arbor Water completed its first Comprehensive Source Water Protection Plan. The Source Water Protection Plan considered the impact of many factors on source water protection, including things like emergency preparedness, climate change, and land use, and provides recommended actions to work regionally to better protect our drinking water sources. This presentation will discuss the approach, key considerations, lessons learned, outcomes, and early implementation of the Comprehensive Source Water Protection plan. It will provide valuable information for groundwater and surface water utilities interested in developing a robust source water plan through internal and external stakeholder collaboration.

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM

8.1 PFAS: What to do Before You Do It

Chuck Ramirez, Clear Creek Systems

This presentation will provide an overview of the current PFAS regulations as well as providing an overview of current commercial technologies designed to help meet the MCLs. The presentation will also offer a roadmap to follow in developing a treatment system for drinking and non-drinking water applications. The presentation will also discuss the options available for destruction and disposal of media contaminated with PFAS.

2:10 PM – 2:40 PM

8.2 A Data-Driven Approach to Improving Aquifer Property Estimates for Michigan's Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool (WWAT)

Bailey Hannah, Fishbeck

Michigan's Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool (WWAT) is used to help communities, professionals, and regulatory agencies evaluate proposed water withdrawals and their potential impact on proximate streams and rivers. Hydrogeological parameters of the model include transmissivity of glacial and bedrock aquifers, aquifer thickness, streambed conductance, and aquifer storage coefficients. Advancements in data availability, geostatistical interpolation methods, and computational abilities now allow for significant improvements in the aquifer property estimates. This project aims to update the aquifer property data used in the WWAT, using advanced modeling techniques to modernize the tool to better represent the groundwater of Michigan. This project will strengthen the WWAT's ability to evaluate withdrawals, improving monitoring strategies for groundwater availability in Michigan and enhancing the ability of stakeholders to make informed decisions about resource management.

2:45 PM – 3:15 PM**8.3 Cross-Cultural and Generational Collaboration for a Sustainable Water Future***Sally Duffy, Hubbell, Roth and Clark, Inc.**Zanna Leciejewski, Hazen and Sawyer*

The water industry continues to grow and face new regulatory challenges, while also facing significant turnover and retirement in the industry. As the workforce changes, there may be issues working with demographics not formerly represented in the industry. This presentation looks at intercultural and intergenerational communication and its importance when facing the future of the water world.

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM**8.4 The Filter Files: Lessons Learned from Evaluating and Optimizing Granular Media Filters***Matthew Charles, PE, Hazen and Sawyer*

Filters are the heart of a water treatment plant and are a critical barrier against pathogens. Optimizing performance enhances the protection of public health while also providing operational and financial benefits to a utility. This presentation will cover three aspects of getting the best possible performance out of a plant's filtration process: pretreatment optimization, physical condition assessment, and backwash optimization. Each topic will be supported by in-the-field examples of where they were implemented and the benefits obtained.

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM**9.1 The Value of a Phased Approach: Assessing Aging Infrastructure with Pressure Data***Jane Burnett, HDR*

Understanding the condition of buried infrastructure is paramount for utility owners looking to create system resiliency and minimize the likelihood of main breaks. Reviewing available pressure data for buried linear assets is a relatively low-cost assessment methodology which provides valuable information that aids in the identification of system management improvements. Additionally, if high-resolution condition assessment methodologies are performed, incorporating data from the pressure analysis into the pipeline renewal decision process can help to simplify decisions and can ultimately help utility owners effectively assess and manage system risk. Using Great Lakes Water Authority's 36-inch Transmission Main of 24 Mile Road as a case study, this paper will discuss the benefits of evaluating pipeline pressure, considering overall risk reduction and improved renewal recommendations when performed in tandem with high-resolution inspection methodologies. Incorporating available pressure data into the pipeline condition assessment and renewal decision process helped to identify a solution to renew the transmission main.

2:10 PM – 2:40 PM**9.2 High Pressure Zone Creation, Booster Station Inception, and Complementing Booster Stations (oh my)***Sam Szaroletta, Spicer Group*

In 2023, Thomas Township was approached by an industrial entity exploring the feasibility of building a large-scale manufacturing facility that would be located directly adjacent to the Township's existing top water user. The proposed water demand was studied and was determined to have negative effects on the water system that required installation of a booster station as well as creation of a high-pressure district to support the two industrial users. Additionally, the added water usage requires upgrades to the Gratiot Road booster station, which supplies drinking water to Thomas Township, and other communities to provide future growth for the communities and allow for a factor of safety during peak water usage of the system. The Gratiot Road booster station was limited by a variety of design constraints and required an unconventional approach to upgrading the system. Ultimately, the selected upgrade repurposed one of the three repumps used in distributing onsite storage water into the system to allow for the station to be upgraded from a triplex to a quadplex station to provide adequate flow for the communities being served.

2:45 PM – 3:15 PM**9.3 Transient Control and Mitigation, a System Approach***David McPherson, HDR*

Hydraulic transient modeling in a water 'system' is a mature science, and with that, very rarely are there unique or misunderstood causes of adverse hydraulic transients in a system. Because of this many engineers default to their experience to select, size and site hydraulic transient control. The fatal flaw to this 'been there, know that' approach is the word 'system'. Although the transient issues are well known, every 'system' is unique and how the transient pressures propagate and reflect within the system will control type, location, and size of the control required.

3:30PM – 4:00 PM**9.4 Paying for Water Infrastructure Projects: Municipal Bonds***Ivan Ivanov, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago**Nathan Anderson, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago*

This presentation shares analysis on how municipalities in Michigan and other states are using public debt markets to finance water infrastructure investments. It reviews data on the use of water revenue bonds and general obligation bonds and discusses municipal borrowing costs. It also discusses which cities are using municipal bonds to finance lead service line replacement and how they describe these efforts in their disclosure to investors.

4:05 PM – 4:35 PM

10.1 EGLE Source Water Protection

Program and Grant Opportunities

Jason Berndt, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), Drinking Water and Environmental Health Division (DWEHD), has established minimum requirements to obtain approval of a community's source water protection program plan (SWPP). This presentation will discuss each of the seven required elements of a program plan, transitioning from assessments to protection planning, and the periodic update of a SWPP plan, and also eligibility, application process, funding distribution, and reporting requirements for grant opportunities for the development and implementation of a SWPP plan.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

8:25 AM – 9:25 AM

11.1 Lessons learned and best practices for lead service line replacement in the State of Michigan

Jean-Pierre Nshimiyimana, PhD. Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) – Moderator

Tom Bulten, City of Grand Rapids Water – Panelist

Wayne Jernberg, PE, City of Grand Rapids Water – Panelist

David Fielder II, City of Detroit – Panelist

Samuel Smalley, City of Detroit – Panelist

Sean Knapp, Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YUCA) – Panelist

EGLE has established a program to provide a platform for water supplies to share best practices and lesson learned for lead service line replacement (LSLR) in Michigan. This program aims to foster mutual technical support, disseminate best practices, encourage sharing key logistics contacts for material acquisition and contracting, and support sharing of community engagement strategies among Michigan communities working on the removal lead or galvanized previously connected to lead (GPCL) service lines.

9:30 AM – 10:00 AM

11.2 Exploring Best Practices in the Management of Water Assistance Programs: A Case Study of the Great Lakes Water Authority's Water Assistance Program

Haran Stanley, Great Lakes Water Authority

Nicolette Bateson, CFO, Great Lakes Water Authority

In the United States, many households face challenges in affording their water bills. This issue disproportionately affects lower-income households, senior citizens, and individuals with permanent disabilities, as they often live on fixed incomes or have limited financial resources. In response to this need, the Great Lakes Water Authority implemented the Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) in 2016. This program provides direct assistance to households requiring help with their water

bill payments and any arrearage owed. A key component of WRAP includes a comprehensive home water audit that assesses the indoor plumbing for any issues that may be contributing to excessive water bills. Over the past four years, nearly 50,000 households have benefited from the services provided by WRAP, highlighting its significant positive impact on residents throughout Southeastern Michigan.

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

11.3 Drill, Baby, Drill...the Continuing Saga of Battle Creek's Wellfield Rehabilitation Project and Inadvertently Proving Why It Was So Critical

Aaron Davenport, PE, Jones & Henry Engineers

Perry L. Hart, City of Battle Creek

Following last year's critically acclaimed MI-AWWA presentation, "How a Hunch, Operator Experience, Investigation & Regulatory Transparency Led to the Largest Wellfield Rehabilitation Project in State History," Perry Hart and Aaron Davenport return with an exciting progress update on this groundbreaking initiative. Join them as they share insights from the drilling, development, testing, and permitting of 22 new 16-inch diameter, Type-I drinking water wells, including two in a high-traffic public park. They'll take the audience through the challenges, successes, and unexpected twists that have shaped this massive wellfield rehabilitation project. Perry and Aaron will also unravel a fascinating case of "unintended consequences", where old failed well casings, autumn leaf fall, and aquifer testing of new wells combined in an unexpected way to validate the necessity of this project with uncanny precision. Additionally, they'll discuss the City's approach to managing the total trihalomethanes (TTHMs) that arose as a result.

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM

11.4 Policy Update from Midwest Strategy Group

Mike Compagnoni, Midwest Strategies Group

Join Midwest Strategy Group for an overview of Michigan's water policy landscape. They will cover key regulatory updates, infrastructure funding, and political activity impacting the sector, highlighting issues like stormwater, lead service lines, PFAS, and broader legislative trends. With the current political temperature in water, this session will provide valuable insight into the policies shaping water management across the state.

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM

11.5 EGLE's Drinking Water and Environmental Health Division Update*Brian Thurston, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE)*

Hear the latest from EGLE's Drinking Water and Environmental Health Division, on key regulatory developments. This session will cover Michigan's Lead and Copper Rule, PFAS response

efforts, and recent funding initiatives. Additionally, a review of upcoming regulatory changes will highlight matters that directly affect the sector. Learn about staffing updates and process improvements aimed at enhancing technical and compliance support across the state.

12:00 PM

11.6 Closing Remarks

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Registration

Registration includes the following meals: Wednesday continental breakfast and lunch, Thursday full breakfast, Friday continental breakfast, and receptions on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Conference breaks are also provided throughout the event.

Ticket	June 2 – Aug 22	Aug 23 – onsite
ATTENDEE REGISTRATION		
Full Conference: Member	\$535	\$570
Full Conference: Non-member	\$625	\$660
Full Conference: Retiree member	\$310	\$345
Full Conference Small System: Member	\$310	\$345
Single Day: Member	\$325	\$360
Single Day: Non-member	\$415	\$450
Awardee	\$0	\$10
SPEAKER REGISTRATION		
Full Conference Speaker: Member	\$350	\$385
Full Conference Speaker: Non-member	\$440	\$475
Single Day Speaker	\$0	\$10
EXHIBITOR REGISTRATION – INCLUDES A 10'X10' AND WEDNESDAY REGISTRATION FOR 2 PEOPLE		
Exhibitor: Member with a 10'x10' booth space, full conference	\$1,000	\$1,035
Exhibitor: Member with a 10'x10' booth space	\$700	\$735
Exhibitor: Non-member with a 10'x10' booth space, full conference	\$1,190	\$1,125
Exhibitor: Non-member with a 10'x10' booth space	\$800	\$835
Additional Exhibitor: Member (<i>Wednesday only</i>) with purchase of booth space.	\$325	\$360
Additional Exhibitor: Non-member (<i>Wednesday only</i>) with purchase of booth space.	\$415	\$450
GUEST REGISTRATION		
Conference Guest	\$255	\$290
Awardee Guest	\$35	\$45
SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS		
Fort Gratiot Lighthouse Tour	\$40	\$40
Fuller Lunch	\$20	\$20
Woman on Water (W.O.W.)	\$25	\$25
Thursday Night Lawn Party	\$60	\$60

Cancellation and Substitution Policy

Substitutions:

If you are unable to attend, you may send a substitute in your place. Please email substitution requests to info@mi-water.org. Note that registration rates are based on membership status; if the substitute's membership status differs, additional fees may apply.

Cancellations:

If you must cancel your registration, please notify MI-AWWA by emailing info@mi-water.org. Refunds are issued according to the following schedule:

- 1. Cancellations received by 4:00 PM on August 15 –**
You will receive a full refund, minus a \$35 processing fee.
- 2. Cancellations received after 4:00 PM on August 15 but before 4:00 PM on August 31 –** You will receive a 50% refund of the registration fee paid. (Please note: there are no refunds for purchased meals or special activities.)
- 3. Cancellations received after 4:00 PM on August 31 or conference no-shows –** No refunds will be issued.

Lodging Information

A block of rooms has been reserved at the following hotels:

DoubleTree by Hilton Port Huron is attached to the Blue Water Convention Center. Use code "MAW" to receive the conference rate. Call 810-984-8000 or visit www.mi-water.org/mi-ace---lodging/ to reserve a room. Rooms are limited – be sure to reserve early!

Hampton Inn Port Huron is 2.8 miles from the Convention Center. To reserve call the hotel direct at 810-966-9000 or visit the MI-ACE conference webpage for a direct link to the hotel's reservation page. Use code "AMW" to receive the event rate.

Holiday Inn Express and Suites Port Huron is a 5-minute drive from the Convention Center. To reserve call the hotel direct at 810-662-3400 or visit the MI-ACE conference webpage for a direct link to the hotel's reservation page. To receive the event rate, make sure to mention the American Water Works Association.

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