



ANNUAL REPORT

2021

LOOKING AHEAD



Ron Burke President and CEO

Bill Christiansen Director of Programs

Rachel DeBruin Development Manager

Jeffrey Hughes Director of Operations

Liam McCarthy Membership and Outreach Manager

Molly Schaefer Accounting Manager

Brad Spilka Program Planner 2021 was another challenging year for AWE and our partners as drought – both prolonged and seasonal - continued across much of North America, with the prospect of increasing water supply instability because of climate change. At the same time, political divisions strained the ties that bind our nation together and threatened to prevent action on a host of pressing challenges, including the growing water crisis

But water is often a non-partisan issue that brings people together, and I am thankful that we saw that in 2021. Passage of the bi-partisan federal infrastructure bill includes \$55 billion for water and wastewater over five years, including new funding for water efficiency, conservation, and reuse. At the local and state levels, governments led by both Republicans and Democrats implemented innovative water efficiency programs and policies.

A new Florida law will require nearly all water captured by sewers to be reused, thereby limiting withdrawals from aquifers strained by the state's rapid growth while also improving water quality for rivers, lakes and the ocean. The federal government and seven states in the Colorado River Basin worked collaboratively to adopt emergency actions to manage rapidly diminishing water supplies brought on by climate change and population growth. And four more states adopted plumbing fixture water efficiency standards stronger than the federal standards.

For 14 years, AWE has helped drive these types of collaborative innovations by bringing together the community of water efficiency professionals who work for water utilities, government agencies, engineering firms, plumbing and water associations, and manufacturers. AWE and these dedicated professionals have worked with residents, customers, and policy makers to reverse the decades-long trend of North Americans using more water per capita.

Between 1995 and 2020, public water consumption in the U.S. remained essentially unchanged even though the population grew by 63 million. As climate change further shrinks available water supplies, water efficiency investments are needed to continue reducing per capita water use in order to ensure reliable, affordable water service. These investments also fight the root cause of climate change by reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions associated with treating, pumping, and heating water.

In 2021, AWE and our member organizations helped advance water efficiency by successfully advocating for \$400 million for water efficiency in the federal infrastructure bill. Other notable 2021 accomplishments include a successful legal challenge to weakened federal water efficiency standards, releasing an improved version 4.0 of the Water Conservation Tracking Tool, completion of the Cooling Tower Estimating Model, and upgrading AWE's Home Water Works website and accompanying water use calculator. Additionally, AWE conducted 10 webinars, launched the second year of our Learning Landscapes Grant Program, formed a Corporate Advisory Council to enhance collaborations with the business community, and added new members-only discounts for products and services.

We are excited to elaborate on these accomplishments, and more, in this report. Thank you to everyone who worked with us throughout the year. We are deeply appreciative, and look forward to continuing our collaborations in the future.

Sincerely

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Home Water Works Website Makeover

In addition to upgrading the graphics and overall site design, the HWW water calculator was updated to also include a Spanish language option and mobile functionality.



Ten Webinars

Nearly 1,700 water professionals participated in AWE webinars on topics ranging from cooling tower water use to preparing for drought. Special thanks to the California Water Efficiency Partnership, the EPA WaterSense Program, the APA Water & Planning Network, and all of our webinar partners.



A Glass Half Full: Planning and Source Water Protection

172 attendees, 82 YouTube views

Innovations in Efficiency - Affordable CII Water and Energy Savings Initiatives 58 attendees. 72 YouTube views

AWE/EPA WaterSense Outdoor Water Webinar - Benefits of Soil Moisture Sensors 196 attendees, 129 YouTube views

Water and Planning Network: Water and Comprehensive Planning - Theory to Practice 92 attendees, 108 YouTube views

AWE Cooling Technology Study: Identifying Cooling Towers and Estimating Water Use 83 attendees. 90 YouTube views

AWE/CalWEP Present - Preparing for Drought

90 attendees, 10 YouTube views

AWE/EPA WaterSense Outdoor Water Webinar - When in Drought: Lessons Learned 196 attendees, 93 views

Critical Elements of Effective Water Efficiency Programs - The New AWWA G480-20 Standard 107 attendees, 32 YouTube views

Version 4 of AWE's Water Conservation Tracking Tool 37 attendees, 25 YouTube views

Don Schlenger's Advanced Metering Infrastructure Guidance Manual: An Immersive Webinar 22 attendees

163 Organizational Members Participated in Advisory Committees

Our three advisory committees met 19 times, involving 204 individuals. Committees focus on education and outreach; water efficiency research; and WaterSense and water-efficient products.



2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

POLICY ADVOCACY

DOE Reverses Weakened Showerhead Standards, Aligns with AWE Lawsuit

In December, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) officially reversed weakened showerhead standards adopted under the Trump Administration. AWE rallied our network to oppose the



weakened standards for showerheads, as well as dishwashers and clothes washers, and filed a lawsuit when the unacceptable rules were adopted over our combined objections. AWE would like to thank Keith Bradley of Squire Patton Boggs, whose pro bono work on AWE's litigation helped achieve this result.

Federal Legislation Passes Supporting Tax-Exempt Water Conservation Rebates

In an ongoing effort to change the U.S. tax code to make water conservation rebates tax-free, AWE lobbied Congress, including submitting a letter signed by 58 of our members and partners. The U.S. House passed the change as part of the Build Back Better Act.

Federal Infrastructure Bill Approved with Additional Funding for Water Efficiency

AWE was the lead advocate for water efficiency in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that became law in November and includes \$400 million in new funding over 5 years for western states' water efficiency programs.

RESEARCH

Report Evaluates State Laws to Integrate Land Use and Water Planning

How communities develop and grow significantly impacts water demand, water availability, and water rates. But there is often a disconnect between land use and water planning. As cities grow, they will need to better coordinate urban plans with water utility projections of available supplies



A new report from AWE and the Environmental Law Institute examines whether U.S. states have enacted requirements that mandate closer coordination between local water utilities and land use planning agencies, and which states have the most robust requirements and can serve as models for other states. This research was supported and published by The Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy, a center of the Lincoln Institute.

A Review of Connection Fees and Service Charges by Meter Size

This new report was supported by IAPMO to better understand water connection fee and recurring service charge variability by meter size across major metropolitan areas in the U.S. It also explored the potential financial implications for water utilities that would be associated with a possible trend in downsizing the meter sizes of new connections.

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RESOURCES & TOOLS

New Model Helps Capture Water Savings from Cooling Towers

Cooling towers use large amounts of water to cool buildings, accounting for roughly 28% of the water used in a typical office building, for example. Too often cooling towers operate inefficiently, but a new tool from AWE helps local water agencies and building managers change that. The Cooling Tower Estimating Model helps identify where cooling towers are located, their water usage, and options and estimates for improving their efficiency and reducing water use.

Water Conservation Tracking Tool, Version 4.0

AWE's member-only water conservation tracking tool is used by more than 350 water professionals to evaluate the water savings, costs, and benefits of urban water conservation programs, and for projecting future water demands. The new version features a water loss management module, a landscape standards module, and updated modules for estimating water savings from plumbing fixture efficiency, conservation programs, local codes, and statewide standards. The new tool can track up to 200 separate conservation measures, including an expanded conservation program library with 50 pre-defined conservation measures. Version 4.0 update was done in collaboration with the California Water Efficiency Partnership, and a state-specific edition is available to members in California.



Grant Program Funds for Educational Gardens

AWE continued its work on the Learning Landscapes Grant Program, and in 2021 awarded a round of grants to five organizations for the construction or improvement of educational gardens to be used to teach students in grades 3-8 about outdoor water use efficiency.

The grant awardees are:

- Eugene Field Elementary, Chicago, Illinois: Funding used to restore and revitalize a school garden with water efficient plants. The garden will be used as an outdoor classroom for students of all ages.
- Menchaca Elementary, Austin, Texas: Funding used to create a waterwise butterfly garden at the elementary school and to teach children important water conservation facts.
- I Will Mentorship Foundation, Fort Meyers, Florida: Funds used to expand and improve a community garden that provides food to the local population that also teaches hands-on environmental lessons to students.
- White Deer Park, Garner, North Carolina: Funds used to create a sensory garden to help mentally disabled and visually impaired people interact and learn about the environment and their natural surroundings.
- Frontier Project Foundation, Rancho Cucamonga, California: Funds used to improve a demonstration garden with drought tolerant and California native plants that will teach students the importance of water conservation during drought.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Inaugural Member of the Year award was presented to the **Southern Nevada Water Authority** (SNWA). The award was established to recognize member organizations serving as leaders in the water efficiency and conservation community. SNWA founded and managed the WaterSmart Innovations Conference & Exposition since 2008. A national innovation leader, SNWA is an AWE Charter Sponsor and long-standing member.





Pictured (L to R): Mary Ann Dickinson, Doug Bennett, and Ron Burke

WATER STAR AWARD

Celebrating "unsung heroes" in water conservation, the 2021 Water Star Award was presented to **Denise Schmidt** of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. Denise has made extraordinary contributions to regulated water conservation and efficiency policy in the state of Wisconsin and beyond, and assisted water utilities with reducing their water losses and financial pressures.





Pictured (L to R): Ron Burke, Denise Schmidt, and Mary Ann Dickinson

RECOGNITION

U.S. EPA WATERSENSE PROGRAM EXCELLENCE AWARD

AWE was honored to be presented with an WaterSense® **Excellence Award for Strategic Collaboration.** We were recognized for our WaterSense and Water-Efficient Products Committee, partner webinar series, innovative research projects, and more. This is the fifth Excellence Award we have received for our collaborative work.





Pictured (L to R): Rachel DeBruin, Jeffrey Hughes, Ron Burke, Brad Spilka, Liam McCarthy, and Bill Christiansen

AWE HELPS MEMBERS EARN BEST PRACTICES DESIGNATIONS

The American Water Works Association G480 Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Operation and Management Standard identifies critical elements of an effective water conservation program that water providers can adopt voluntarily. As a benefit to members, AWE verifies and acknowledges water utilities that achieve various levels of compliance with the G480 Standard.

In February of 2021, AWWA updated and released a new version of this voluntary standard, the G480-20 *Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Operation and Management Standard*. In response to this update, AWE updated its verification program to reflect the new G480-20 Standard, and began verifying the first submissions for the new AWE G480-20 Leaderboard at the end of 2021.

The **City of Santa Barbara** (Platinum Status) became the first AWE member to be verified under the new standard, and AWE expects to certify more members for the G480-20 standard over the following years.



THANK YOU & WELCOME

FAREWELL MARY ANN

AWE said goodbye to its founding President and CEO, Mary Ann Dickinson, who retired in March after working for more than 50 years in water conservation and efficiency.

Mary Ann's career took her from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, to South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, to Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Then, after serving as Executive Director for the California Urban Water Conservation Council, she embarked on a nationwide tour to explore founding a national water efficiency organization, which ultimately became AWE!

AWE would not have developed into the organization it is today without Mary Ann's tireless efforts and expertise. Her vision for a national water efficiency advocate became a reality thanks to her leadership, and the determination and enthusiasm she imparted to everyone she worked with. We are grateful for Mary Ann's fifteen years of service as our President and CEO, and are pleased that she has stayed on as a Technical Advisor.



THANK YOU BILL

AWE would like to acknowledge its outgoing Director of Programs, Bill Christiansen, who left the Alliance after over 13 years of service.

As AWE's first official employee in 2007, Bill led the program department and worked on the Water Efficiency and Conservation State Scorecard, outdoor water savings research, the Water Conservation Tracking Tool, Cooling Tower Estimating Model and cooling technologies study, Sales Forecasting and Rate Model, and much, much more.

AWE members could always count on Bill to provide helpful, thorough and friendly technical assistance when they reached out with a question. His vast knowledge of all topics related to water efficiency was a tremendous asset to us all. We wish Bill all the best in his future endeavors, and thank him for his hard work and dedication.



WELCOME RON

Ron Burke joined AWE in March as our new President and CEO.

Ron's career has included time as Deputy Executive Director of the American Lung Association of Metropolitan Chicago's Programs and Policy Division, Associate Director for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Midwest Office Director for Union of Concerned Scientists, and Executive Director at the Active Transportation Alliance.

Ron's unique combination of experience and passion for environmental sustainability has made him a great fit to lead AWE forward.



THANK YOU & WELCOME

AWE would like to recognize and thank Pete DeMarco for his years of service on the Board of Directors and serving a Chair of the Board from 2017-2021. We also extend a warm welcome to our new Board members: **Julie Hernandez-Tomlin** (City of Chicago/SPAAN Tech Inc.) and **Paula Paciorek** (City of Houston).

Additionally, we thank and welcome our volunteers leaders serving on AWE's newly created Corporate Advisory Council, included are: Kirk Stinchcombe (Chair, Econics, Inc.), Troy Benavidez (LIXIL Int'l), Patrick Boyle (Sloan Valve), Susan Butler (Jacobs Engineering Grp.), Fernando Fernandez (TOTO USA), Warren Gorowitz (Hunter Industries), Russ Horner (Water Management, Inc.), Carol Kauffman Nowlin (Scott's Miracle Gro Co.) and Shannon Quinn (Procter & Gamble).

Thank You to Our 2021 Board of Directors:

Pete DeMarco (Chair, Jan-Jul) EVP, Advocacy & Research The IAPMO Group

Ron Voglewede (Vice-Chair, Jan-Jul; Chair, Aug-Dec) Global Sustainability Director Whirlpool Corp.

Karen Guz (Vice-Chair, Sep-Dec) Conservation Director San Antonio Water System

Bill McDonnell (Treasurer) Water Efficiency Manager Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Jennifer Walker (Secretary) Deputy Director, Texas Water Programs National Wildlife Federation

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Biju George EVP, Operations & Engineering DC Water

Julie Hernandez-Tomlin Executive Vice President of Business Affairs SPAAN Tech. Inc.

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Carl Yates CEO Atlantic First Nations Water Authority

Rob Zimmerman Director of Sustainability (retired) Kohler Co.

CONTRIBUTORS

The Board of Directors, staff, and membership would like to give special thanks to those individuals, organizations, and foundations who contributed additional financial resources to AWE in 2021. Without these contributions, we would not have been able to meet our financial goals and continue our mission of promoting the efficient and sustainable use of water.

Nathan Adams Anil Bamezai Lou Bendon Veronica Blette Ron Burke Anne Carroll Russ Chaney Tom Chesnutt Bill Christiansen Kendall Christiansen Rachel DeBruin Pete DeMarco Mary Ann Dickinson Rolf Donath Ben Emanuel Biju George

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The Scotts Miracle Gro Company

Southern Nevada Water Authority/LVVWD

Texas State University Texas Water Foundation Water Demand Management Water Efficient Gardens

Water Systems Optimization, Inc.

Whirlpool Corporation

And thank you to those anonymous contributors who gave via the AmazonSmile, Benevity Community Impact Fund, Giving Assistant, Network for Good, and PayPal Giving Fund, and other like services.

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Water - Use It Wisely

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Water Forum

Water Management, Inc.

Water Replenishment District of Southern

California

Water Services Association of Australia

Water Systems Consulting, Inc.

Water Systems Optimization, Inc.

WateReuse Association

Waterkind Consulting Services, Ltd.

Waterless Co., Inc.

Watershed, LLC

WaterSmart Software. Inc.

Waukesha Water Utility

West Basin Municipal Water District

West Harris County Regional Water Authority

Western Municipal Water District

Western Policy Research

Whirlpool Corporation

Winter Haven Water*

Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources

Wisconsin American Water Works

Association

Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply

Authority

World Resources Institute

Yates Water Management Inc.

Yucaipa Valley Water District

Zone 7 Water Agency

FINANCES

REVENUE

Membership Dues Special Projects Grants & Contributions Board Member Donations Investment Income Miscellaneous Income \$738,547 \$274,545 \$147,148 \$5,108 \$525 <u>\$15,655</u> **\$1,181,528**

EXPENSES

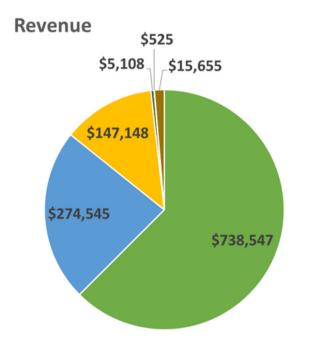
Program Services Administrative Fundraising

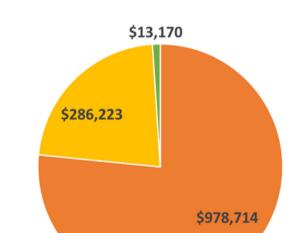
\$978,714 \$286,223 <u>\$13,170</u>

\$1,278,107

TOTAL NET ASSETS

\$281,461





Expenses

Alliance for Water Efficiency

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www.AllianceforWaterEfficiency.org www.Home-Water-Works.org www.FinancingSustainableWater.org



