



The Florida Flow

NEWS TO USE

DECEMBER 2022

UPCOMING EVENTS

FWQA Board Meeting
Thursday January 12, 2023
Grasslands Golf & Country Club
Lakeland, FL

FWQA Education Seminars
Friday January 13, 2023
Grasslands Golf & Country Club
Lakeland, FL

FWQA Golf Tournament
June 7, 2023

FWQA Convention
Education
June 8 and 9, 2023
Caribe Royale Resort
Orlando, FL

FWQA Convention
Trade Show
June 8, 2023
Caribe Royale Resort
Orlando, FL

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Message

Surviving Florida Hurricanes

Why 2022 was the
YEAR of Water

Water filtration- solutions to
lead contamination
Education Sponsors

Education Seminar Schedule

Your Customers Investment

EPA Water Quality Standards

Board of Directors

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



FWQA President
John Ladue

Since the last Florida Flow, we have combatted unfortunate natural disasters that have caused more obstructions in the water industry and everything else. A couple of months ago we were reestablishing a balance in supply and demand, something that we have been lacking since the start of the pandemic. Just when things were getting back to normal, we were hit by two major hurricanes, with one causing a substantial amount of destruction to the west coast. It required many workers to head over to Ft. Myers, Sanibel Island, and the surrounding areas to help

everyone clean up, restore, and rebuild from the natural disaster. I was ecstatic to see how many people came together to help the west coast recuperate from it and how fast people acted in this dire time of need. This event caused suppliers in the west coast of Florida to be exceptionally backed up on getting parts out to everyone that had damages to their water systems. At one point some suppliers had backorders on hundreds of parts that were needed. Nonetheless, everyone worked as swiftly and efficiently as possible to get it back up and running in a timely manner.

Just when we thought that hurricane season was nearing its end, we were hit hard again by Hurricane Nicole which affected many homes on the east coast of Florida. Although it was a Category 1 hurricane, it still resulted in major damages because of the storm surge that it brought with it.

We are working hard to assist everyone in this devastating moment and suppliers are doing everything that they can to dish out all parts needed to get all systems working again with the fewest delays possible. Optimistically once we get passed this supply shortage issue we are having again after the two hurricanes, we should have all of the supplies needed to keep up with the current demand we are facing.

As you all know, we had to move the Fall Education Seminar that was supposed to take place in Sarasota, FL to Lakeland, FL on January 13, 2023. I would like to personally thank all of our sponsors and speakers for taking the time out of their schedule and to all of you for joining us when time is in such short supply as the new year is coming quickly.

Happy Holidays
John Ladue

Mother Nature — Florida Hurricanes

Jeff Sadonis, FWQA Vice President

No matter how much you prepare for it, you can never be ready for what Mother Nature has in store for you and your family. Almost everyone on the East Coast of Florida was put on notice for the arrival of Hurricane Ian. Families bought their supplies, tied up loose ends, and even left town whether it was their own personal decision or decided for them based on their location. I spent almost 7 hours in the northern eye wall in North Port and it's something I wouldn't wish on anyone. This article isn't a retelling of my experience of the events of the storm, it's to inform you of the details that followed and how it relates to the business that we're all invested in.

Once the storm ended and everyone woke up the next day, everyone had different levels of damage. Everything was closed, almost no one had power, and families were in survival mode. Neighbors were helping each other clearing roads, clearing debris, and even taking families in that were worse off than they were. It was about 48 hours after the storm ended that we "opened" back up for business.

The software and phones we use at our company are all cloud based. This means that if you don't have power or internet, as long as someone in the company can access those things, you're in business. Thankfully, we had people outside of the state that could log into our software, book tickets, and answer phones as everyone local to the company either didn't have power, internet, cell service, or anything at all. This is how we were able to technically open so soon after the storm. Cell service was spotty at best as I was using it as a hot spot to my computer to manage the flood of tickets and calls coming in from customers new and old to report system damage to use. We are fortunate to have cloud based software when a storm of this magnitude hits because we'd be dead in the water if we lost our computers in the storm without the benefit of the cloud. We were able to run the business remotely until the office was functional as it didn't have power for days after the storm.

It was an all hand on deck approach at our company. Anyone that was able was asked to participate in helping our customers recover. Our approach was getting to as many homes as we could as quickly as possible and focus on getting these homeowners water and then we'd circle back to address equipment. Once the office opened back up fully, about 4 days after the storm, one of the first questions the office got used to asking was "do you have power." That question alone helped us manage who was a priority and who could wait a day or two until we could get there. I kept a running list of who had power and what area they lived in which helped us stay organized on where the power was being turned back on and what areas we could even access. North Port alone was almost broken up into 3-4 cities based on areas you couldn't access due to flooding and bridges that got all washed out and closed. You couldn't cut through the city like you normally could and we had to come up with zones that customers fell into so we didn't waste any time or fuel trying to get from one end of town to the other with detours that would have you lose precious minutes of the day. Our employees on the road were challenged daily with finding fuel for our fleet of work trucks and also for their personal vehicles just to get into work. It was a difficult but with planning and staying organized wasn't something that we couldn't work through.

Walking into the yards of the customers affected from the storm was a humbling experience. Besides organizing all this and scheduling it, I also visited dozens of homes to assess the damage to get a team member out to make the necessary repairs/replacements to get these family's water. Walking in some of these yards you can see how much people lost. Some seemed barely touched, and others were a complete lose. Having to climb over fencing, trees, and debris of all sorts just to find where the water softener once was is an experience I won't soon forget. Most customers were extremely grateful to get any kind of water and even happier when we repaired or replaced their equipment so they could get back to treated water. We had some customers that didn't get power back for 10-12 days after the storm, and some that still don't have anything as I write this just before Thanksgiving. We've assisted in helping homeowners and businesses getting water, getting water tested, and providing them all with treatment options.

The worst of the storm is over. We'll have a second wave of business as insurance checks start coming in, but for the most part, the busiest part of the storm is behind us. If I had to offer any advice to any one reading this article it would be to create a plan for your business and review it every season. Think twice about your choice of software and phone provider. When planning, plan for the worst. Can your business operate without power, internet, or cellular data? Should you send an employee or two out of the threat area to operate the business remotely? These are all questions to consider when creating your business plan. As good as a storm like this is good for business; this was a storm that I hope to never see again. If I do, I know my plans will be even better going into the next one.

Why 2022 Was ‘the Year of WATER’

During a presentation last month outlining some of the work done by the Biden administration, 2022 was described as “the year of water,” in Washington, D.C.

And, while the term may be corny and a bit self-serving, it’s not a bad description of what has happened in Washington this last year. It is certainly true from a funding standpoint. This year saw the largest investment from D.C. in our country’s water infrastructure in the last fifty years.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Acts, passed into law in November 2021, for example, saw more than \$80 billion dollars allocated to water infrastructure and water remediation projects. This included close to \$10 billion dollars to address the PFAS (Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) contamination and the largest investment into supporting water reuse and groundwater storage in U.S (United States). history.

But Congress and the Biden administration weren’t done there. They would also go on to invest another \$25 billion dollars into the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers’ civilian water projects through the Water Resources Development Act and \$4 billion dollars to support drought relief in the Inflation Reduction Act.

The year of water, indeed.

While most of us who think about water every day were supportive of these investments, the political landscape of course got a bit rockier when the administration began tugging on the regulatory levers.

2022, by federal government standards, saw fast actions by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) towards reaching its goal of a national PFAS drinking water standard by 2023. It also saw the EPA continue its push to create a more “durable” definition of Waters of the United States, which are waters deemed to be under federal jurisdiction.

The year also included a host of new regulations outside of the EPA that immediately impact the water industries, such as new requirements for truck drivers to obtain commercial driver’s licenses and stricter manufacturing and emission guidelines.

These regulations were met with the usual mix of cheers and jeers from those who felt they did not go far enough to protect the environment and others who felt they were being put in place too soon and ultimately harmed businesses and utilities.

So, why was 2022 “the year of water,” and what comes next? The why, to some extent, is simple to answer: one-party control of the White House and Congress and a country with a crumbling water infrastructure that could no longer be ignored.

From Water Quality Products

Our Members are the FWQA!

- As we approach a new year we look forward to improving the water for consumers in Florida and educating the public about the importance of good water.
- Your dues helps us to provide you with information about legislation and listing of your business on our website. We will be reaching out to our members to become involved in your area and help us keep abreast of current issues.
- FWQA Dues invoices will be going out the last week of December for 2023. We began sending our dues by email last year and had a very good response. It allows you to pay directly from the invoice.
- Thank you for supporting the FWQA and YOUR industry.

Happy Holidays!

Water filtration offers solution to lead contamination

From the Water Quality Association

As replacement of lead service lines across the country continues to see delays, the Water Quality Association recommends the utilization of certified water filtration products as a cost-effective solution to reducing lead contamination in homes immediately.

Investing in the nation's water infrastructure is an important initiative that has received billions of dollars, but it will also take years to complete and is still severely underfunded. A group of 15 U.S. Senators this week asked the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to require that all lead lines and pipes be replaced in the next decade.

In the meantime, communities will still need to look for ways to ensure they are providing clean drinking water. U.S. Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) has been urging for more immediate solutions such as water filters.

"We believe certified point-of-use devices such as pitchers and filters are a highly effective and relatively inexpensive means of treating drinking water with lead contamination," said WQA Associate Executive Director of Technical Programs Tom Bruursema. "We applaud efforts by Illinois Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi to encourage the use of filters for Chicago-area residents with lead contamination in their drinking water."

Drinking water that meets federal guidelines for safety when it leaves the treatment facility travels through miles of pipes and fixtures on its way to homes, and lead can leach from lead service connections, from lead solder used in copper piping, and from brass fixtures. Certified home water treatment products offer an immediate solution for lead reduction, especially for low-income residents, schools, and other vulnerable groups.

Unfortunately, drinking water issues expand well beyond urban areas, and often rural communities are left with a fraction of the funding to address these problems. To help assist these communities, the Water Quality Association has helped introduce the Healthy Drinking Water Affordability Act, also known as the Healthy H2O Act, in both the House and Senate.

The bill, which has received bipartisan support, would authorize a new grant program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture that would cover costs of water quality testing and the purchase, installation and maintenance of POU and whole house point-of-entry water filtration products certified by an ANAB-accredited body. Funding would go directly to individuals, licensed child-care facilities, non-profits, and local governments in rural communities.

Thank you to our sponsors for the Education Seminar





**FOCUS ON
FLORIDA WATER ISSUES**
THE 2022 FLORIDA WATER QUALITY ASSOCIATION
Education Seminars

Friday, January 13, 2023 8:30 am—3:00 pm

Grasslands Golf & Country Club
1600 Grasslands Blvd.
Lakeland, FL 33803

Call for FWQA Room Rate :
Courtyard by Marriott
3725 Harden Blvd., Lakeland, FL
863-802-9000
Call for FWQA room rate \$ 119.00 + tax

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UNTIL DECEMBER 20, 2022**

Cost \$60.00 FWQA Members
Each additional member \$50

\$90.00 Non FWQA Members

Sign up early, Seating limited !!!
Registration form at www.fwqa.com

We are excited to offer these outstanding **IN PERSON and HANDS ON** seminars this year... Hope to see you there!

Water Conditioning Troubleshooting Basics

Sponsored by Safeway Water Presenter Don Grace

Sulfur Block Systems With Peroxide Injection

Sponsored by WTW and Stenner Presenter Cindy Schieber

Undersink RO

Sponsored by Aqua Wholesale Presenter Larry Eaton

PUMPS 101: Installation/troubleshooting best practices

Sponsored by MD Pump Company Presenters Dennis Garcia and Richard Stolmpan

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Water Treatment - an Investment of Value for Your Customer

With the ever-growing list of contaminants in our water supply, the need has never been greater for residential water treatment to include both point of entry and point of use solutions. Not only is it a growing concern among consumers, but there are also discussions happening at both the state and federal levels that will bring new government standards on many of these issues. As these changes are announced, consumer awareness will grow and a demand for water purification will come with it.

Traditionally, reverse osmosis (RO) drinking water filters were often presented as an optional add-on as opposed to the most important piece when considering convenience, value and cost to the consumer. It is more important than ever for water treatment professionals to help consumers understand affordability and establish the true value for the products offered.

Nobody will argue that the cost of nearly everything has risen the past two years, and this includes water treatment. Even with the increased costs to the industry, justifying that investment and creating the value water treatment brings to a homeowner has never been better.

The Value Good Water Brings

Water treatment does not just make the water better, it makes nearly every minute you are in that home better for every single person. The first place to start with describing the value of quality water would be the benefits that come from it. The list continues to grow when considering the cost and savings for energy, cleaning supplies for the home, personal care products, wear and tear on the water supply lines, fixtures and water using appliances, laundry and bottled water.

Simply put, the more the above items currently cost, the more someone can save when using less of them. Offering the homeowner the best solution for their needs goes hand in hand with understanding what the products offered will do as well as the potential savings and value they offer.

Often consumers are unaware of what

is being wasted daily when they are constantly fighting against the effects of their water. As professionals, it is our responsibility to teach them about what they desire from their water, and also potential newfound needs of which they were previously unaware.

Everyone that sells water treatment knows that soft water saves money in a variety of ways. How much it can save is determined by the quality of the water being treated, actual cost and personal habits. One thing is certain, as an industry we can do a better job of informing the customer. I was often amazed when testing water and finding a working water softener, the homeowner was using the same amount of detergent per load of wash as if it were still hard water. It was obvious the person that sold the system did not do a great job on the benefit side of the equation.

And it is not just soft water that helps people save. If we look at somebody who is concerned with the quality of water they are drinking, bottled water seems like the safest solution. Imagine a homeowner buys a few cases of water a week. They also have a refrigerator filter attached to their water dispenser and change the filter every four to six months. It is determined that between bottled water and filter changes, the homeowner is spending a minimum of \$50 per month on those items combined.

Cost, Savings & Value

There are three main pieces to consider when investing in water treatment for a home: cost, savings and value. Cost is simple. The additional price (or monthly financing payment) of an RO, plus the dollars spent for on-going maintenance of the system is what a homeowner ends up paying to have this purification option. For example, a financed product would have the monthly total for both purchase and maintenance equal \$45 per month.

This family is no longer spending \$50 minimum per month buying bottled water, which means they end up saving \$5 per month immediately. Once the financing payments are complete,

the maintenance is approximately \$15 per month, meaning their savings will increase to \$35 per month.

But what is the value? Typically, people buying bottled water only use it for drinking, not filling their coffee pot, tea kettles or pots and pans while cooking. If you ask them "How many more bottles of water would have to buy if you used it for all beverages and cooking," often the answer is double or triple what they are spending today.

"Even with the increased costs to the industry, justifying that investment and creating the value water treatment brings to a homeowner has never been better."

The RO in this example not only saves the \$5 per month on things they were already buying, but also offers value to improve the water they are consuming in ways that are not being addressed today. It is a new benefit they did not even think about. All foods and beverages improved dramatically because of the product's capabilities and the education you provided to them.

When explained properly, our industry not only offers more benefits than nearly any other household purchase, but also creates savings equal or better than the investment.

Take the time to build the value into your products and services to care for what is best for them, and as a result your customer satisfaction will increase. Satisfied customers lead to more referrals, which means a more successful business. **WSP**

Jim Neidert is territory sales representative, dealer network, for A.O. Smith Water Treatment in North America. Neidert can be reached at jim.neidert@aosmith.com.

EPA: Florida must change water quality standards to protect citizens' health

By Douglas Soule and James Call of the Tallahassee Democrat

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has determined that Florida's antiquated water quality standards do not go far enough in protecting its citizens — particularly those who consume fish — from pollutants and adverse health effects. Florida's current criteria for 40 toxic pollutants runs afoul of the Clean Water Act, does not reflect the latest science and must be changed to safeguard a state that has a vibrant seafood industry, the agency said in a letter released Thursday by the federal agency.

A big issue: Florida's projection that its residents eat 6.5 grams of fish per day. That number came from standards adopted three decades ago, and the agency said it "does not keep pace with the current practices of Florida residents." Florida ranks 11th among American states for fresh seafood production with 87 million pounds harvested and a dockside value of \$237 million, according to a 2016 report by the Florida Department of Agriculture.

The EPA says it is "particularly concerned that people eating fish they catch for sustenance are being disproportionately impacted." More fish consumption means more exposure to the toxins within, meaning the acceptable amount of pollutants in waterways would need to be reconsidered.

EPA: Florida has no human health criteria for 37 pollutants

The agency also says the state has "no human health criteria" regulating 37 toxic pollutants. The EPA set a one-year deadline for creating standards, as well as for criteria changes for the 40 toxic pollutants. The decision came following a petition by the Environmental Defense Alliance and Waterkeepers Florida.

"These groups recognize that the 6.5 grams per day was not appropriate for Florida, and it results in potential exposure of humans who consume fish and shellfish to adverse health effects," said David Ludder, a Tallahassee lawyer representing the Environmental Defense Alliance. "The Clean Water Act says you have got to protect human health, and Florida is not doing that," he said.

Florida vows to update standards

A spokesperson for Florida's Department of Environmental Protection acknowledged receiving the EPA determination and said the agency is "evaluating next steps to further strengthen protection of Florida's waters. "Florida has long acknowledged the need and has been working to update its standards, and we look forward to working with EPA and stakeholders as we move forward in this process," said DEP's Alexandra Kuchta. "The department remains committed to a transparent public process as we move forward updating the state's Human Health Criteria." According to the EPA letter, Florida has previously acknowledged that criteria changes are needed, but its attempts to make them have "faltered." In the past, the state has estimated consumption rates multiple times larger than the current standard.

Florida last updated its human health criteria for surface waters in 1992. DEP took new standards to the Environmental Regulation Committee in 2013, but the board tabled them in part over questions about fish consumption data used to calculate limits. Then in 2016, after a months-long, bitter public battle with activists, Florida regulators voted to update human health criteria for 43 dangerous chemicals it regulates for rivers, lakes, streams and coastal waters. But the DEP would have allowed less stringent standards for more than half of the 43 toxic substances it currently regulates. Many of the limits would have fallen below those recommended by the EPA, activists said at the time. Regulators approved the standards in a controversial 3-2 vote, but the effort to modernize the out-of-date limits was withdrawn after a native American tribe challenged the standards, leaving the 1992 criteria in place.

Ludder said industrial interests and worry over economic consequences have played a role in the state not making the changes. "One thing I would say is that there are also economic consequences of adverse health effects," he said.

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We continue to update and correct our mailing list. If you have an error in the address of this mailing, please fax or email us the correction.

Our Mission

To promote increased use of industry products and services, to foster and maintain the professional competency of water treatment professionals, and work with governments, other organizations and the public on issues affecting water quality. Serving the water industry since 1975

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