



# The Florida Flow

NEWS TO USE

SEPTEMBER 2023

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday November 3, 2023  
FWQA Fall Education Seminar  
Double Tree by Hilton  
4431 PGA Blvd  
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410

WQA Convention  
March 5-7, 2024  
Orlando, FL

FWQA Golf Tournament  
Celebration Golf Club  
June 12, 2024

FWQA Convention  
Education  
June 13. and 14, 2024  
Caribe Royale Resort  
Orlando, FL

FWQA Convention  
Trade Show  
June 13, 2024  
Caribe Royale Resort  
Orlando, FL

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**FWQA President**  
Jeff Sadonis

Writing any kind of state wide publication like this at this time of year is usually challenging. As I write this, we are just about to come out of another active hurricane season. No matter what side of the state you live on, there are always some of our members and colleagues that are affected by the storms of the season. Maintaining a business and supporting a family are put under a lot of stress every hurricane season and it's something that we as Floridians share with each other that most of the rest of the country will thankfully not go through. Hurricanes don't even have to make landfall to initiate that stress. Storm watching and people either leaving town or hunkering down will change that month end number that we are all chasing. Have a plan and know that we're all here to support each other personally and professionally.

The FWQA board members are busy planning the final details for this year's Fall Seminar on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please check your emails and visit our website for more details. We have a good variety of four seminars that will be presented by members of our industry that will be hands-on and a great way to get some of those new hires up to speed on things that they'll encounter on a daily basis in our industry. After the four presentations, we will hold a round table wrap up before breaking for the weekend. Breakfast and lunch will be served and we can't wait to see you there. Our last seminar was one of our largest attended educational events that we have put on, and we hope to best it this year.

We continue to stay up on any changes in regulation changes and are following the PFAS/PFOA topic which is very active in the news today. As these contaminants are becoming more visible and talked about, our industry has some great companies that are coming out with new technologies for all of us to offer to continue to offer clients the very best water quality. We look to help these technologies find an audience at our next convention next summer so be on the lookout for more information on that event.

Thank you everyone for your continued support and I look forward to seeing you in November.

## ***Officials jump into action after toxic chemicals found in South Florida tap water***

This came from an interview on Local 10 television station. We want to make you aware so you can address the issue with your customers should it arise. Please be sure to check out the related links for extra information.

**BROWARD COUNTY, Fla.** – Officials in Broward County are taking action after toxic chemicals were discovered in the water. The find was made after a review by Broward Commissioner Mark Bogen. He said this is part of a national problem the Environmental Protection Agency is trying to fight.

“PFAS is everywhere,” Bogen said. “People don’t realize it.” The per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances are better known as PFAS, or “forever chemicals.” Thousands of chemicals fall under this title and are found in everyday industrial and consumer products used for cleaning, packaging and cooking — just to name a few.

Long-term exposure to these chemicals are still being studied but have been linked to severe health issues, including cancer and other diseases.

“I think the people need to know what they’re drinking and what’s in the water, and if there’s something that’s potentially not safe, they need to know about it,” Bogen said.

Bogen and county officials tested tap water samples from six Broward County cities. Those samples were compared to two county samples along with several name-brand bottles of water. All bottled water came out on top. “None of them showed any trace of PFAS,” Bogen said during Tuesday’s commission meeting. “Where we did the six cities, it showed traces of PFAS,” he later told Local 10. “So people need to know that these are toxic chemicals — they’re forever chemicals and they can be harmful to you.”

The EPA is looking to cap PFOA and PFOS at four parts per trillion, essentially the lowest level at which they can be reliably measured. The Broward city samples showed numbers significantly higher than that.

The agency found nearly half of the tap water in the U.S. contains these “forever chemicals” as well and is looking to further regulate the water.

Broward County officials are planning ahead to meet the expected requirements in the future. Authorities are waiting for federal guidance as the studies continue, but believe this is a problem. “Cities in Broward County will need to take action in the future to reduce the amount of PFAS in the water,” Bogen said. “Usually that happens with reverse osmosis.” Broward County Mayor Lamar Fisher added that water plants would likely need to be retrofitted to properly treat the water.

### **RELATED LINKS**

**EPA on PFAS:** <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>

**EPA on polyfluoroalkyl substances:** <https://www.epa.gov/chemical-research/research-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>

**Florida Department of Environmental Protection on addressing PFAS:** <https://floridadep.gov/waste/waste-cleanup/content/dep's-efforts-address-pfas-environment>

## FWQA Scholarship

Are you going to College? Is someone in your family going to college? Now's the time to complete your application for the Florida Water Quality Association's Scholarship. FWQA and your employer (or parent's or spouse's employer) are pleased to offer you this exclusive scholarship opportunity. The amount to be awarded in 2024 is \$2,000.



### The Submission Deadline is March 1, 2024

#### To be eligible, an applicant must:

- Be a member in good standing with FWQA on dues and member may qualify the family member if applicable.
- Write a 400-word essay on why you deserve the scholarship to be submitted with application and transcript from high school to be sent to FWQA .
- Must have at least a 2.0 GPA for approval.
- Other pertinent information:
  - The awarded recipient can apply up to 2 times.
  - Moneys will go directly to school applied to for education.
  - Studies in the field of water will always be given first consideration by the Application committee.

You can apply online at <https://fwqa.com/fwqa-scholarship>.

There is a panel of 3 board members who will review and approve scholarship applications and choose the recipient.

The Scholarship recipient will be expected to be present at the FWQA Convention in June for presentation of the scholarship award.

### Who can use the FWQA logo?

Only those who are current members of the Florida Water Quality Association in good standing.

#### What is in good standing?

Your membership dues are paid and you are following the WQA code of ethics which FWQA endorses.

Others will be asked to remove the FWQA logo from their website and other materials.

## ***Study shows overall concern for quality of household water supply is growing***

Consumers report being far more concerned about the quality of their household water supply this year than in any previous year they have been surveyed as part of the Water Quality Association's biennial Consumer Opinion Study. WQA released the results of the 2023 Consumer Opinion Study during its Convention & Exposition in Las Vegas in April.

Survey results also indicated that while the overall perception of household tap water safety is high, safety concerns still remain. Also, more consumers are taking a larger role in improving their home water quality through the use of water treatment products, and they are more knowledgeable about the types of products available, results showed.

"This shows us that more and more consumers care about the quality of their water," said WQA Associate Executive Director Tom Bruursema. "The water treatment industry as a whole, and WQA member companies specifically, are well-equipped to provide the solutions to these quality concerns."

This year, a third of those surveyed (34%) reported being very concerned with the quality of their household water supply, and another quarter (24%) described themselves as "concerned." In 2021, less than one-quarter (23%) were very concerned and only 15% were concerned.

When it comes to perceptions of drinking water, the survey found this year almost three-fifths (59%) of households think their drinking water is safe versus 57% in 2021; however, this year 20% thought their drinking water was unsafe versus 15% in 2021.

Those with a home water filtration system other than a refrigerator water filter has grown significantly since 2021. The survey found almost half (45%) of households reported having a water filtration system in the home in 2023, whereas in 2021 only two-fifths (40%) had one.

Bottled water usage, which had been slipping in previous studies, remained similar to the previous study with seven in 10 households (71%) purchasing bottled water. Almost half (49%) did so because of the taste. The other primary driver was convenience.

Finally, lack of knowledge and cost concerns are two of the major deterrents among those who currently do not have a water treatment product. Still, two-thirds (65%) said they would consider installing a water treatment product if they undertake a major home improvement project.

The survey comes at a time of heightened awareness of water quality issues in Washington. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently proposed the first National Primary Drinking Water Regulation for six PFAS chemicals. In addition, the WQA-backed bipartisan Healthy H2O Act, which would offer federal grants for water quality testing and certified treatment technology in rural and underserved communities, has been introduced in both houses of Congress.

A public summary of the 2023 results is now available at [wqa.org/COS](http://wqa.org/COS). More detailed reports will be made available to WQA members in coming weeks.

The WQA Consumer Opinion Study presents the findings of a national online survey conducted by Applied Research-West, Inc. between January 5 and January 30, 2023. A total of 1,413 adults over the age of 18 and living in private households were interviewed. ARW used a random sampling procedure, and the survey results are accurate within +/- 2.6 percent.

## 2023 Fall Education

## The Cost of FREE

**Daniel Downing MWS, CI**

Have you ever received a phone call or some form of marketing offering something FREE? Maybe attended a timeshare presentation for free tickets to a theme park? If so, you are not alone; this is human nature to want something FREE. No doubt about it, FREE is a powerful word. The word stems from the psychological principle of *loss aversion*. The idea of losing out on a deal worth something of value affects our internal wiring. We do not want to miss out. The thought of receiving something of value at no cost entices us to take immediate action so we don't miss out on the 'freebie.' They make the offer incredibly good, so you are more likely to act now and buy.

In the water industry, offering something of value for FREE in exchange for a prospect's business is common. This may involve a free service, estimate, or product with a purchase. However, one freebie we overlook is our time. Although rarely considered, unnecessarily giving away our time comes at a considerable cost to us. The cost of our time isn't usually of concern because we assume that if our business isn't operating in the red, all is good. Your time is precious and of immense value to your business and bottom line. To your customers, your time and skills have merit, but the value they place on your time reflects how you value your time. If we don't understand the value of our time, we tend to devalue it and squander it away without much thought.

I have many great mentors inside and outside of our industry. Each one has had some profound influence in helping me increase my understanding of our industry and myself as a business owner. In one of my conversations, I was told, "Never prostitute your services!" This may sound harsh, but it has been one of the most valuable bits of wisdom given to me as a business owner. What my mentor was saying is that if other people want to work cheaply, let them. They have not discovered what their time is worth. He taught me to value my skills, my industry, and myself. You are a professional and professionalism comes at a cost.

As a Water Treatment industry professional, you have skills that everyone will need at some point. Whether a residential consumer or a commercial business requiring service, your experience with water and water-related products sets you apart. Experience treating water and maintaining water products has taken you considerable time, energy, and money to learn. The result is a skilled and valued professional who is operating a business to improve water quality for your client and the industry.

So, why is the resource of time so important? Operating a business requires a certain amount of income to cover all its operating costs and employee compensation and still turn a profit. Operational expenses include your lease, marketing, utilities, education, and many other costs. You are in an industry that requires regular training to keep up with industry trends and prepare for emerging contaminants. While this all sounds commonplace, the reality is operating your business is expensive in time and money. The way these costs are covered is from your gross business income.

Most businesses require at least \$65.00 generated per hour from each employee to cover business expenses, provide the employee's compensation, and provide the business with profit. For example, if we use a standard formula used by many business schools to find what hourly rate we should charge, it will look like this:

Add total LABOR paid out + all OVERHEAD costs + add the amount of PROFIT you want to earn, then divide by the general 2080 annual working hours = HOURLY RATE REQUIRED FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Knowing how much gross business income is required to operate your company allows you to calculate what each employee needs to generate per hour for the company. Knowing the rate of return needed from each employee helps in evaluating how we view everything about our business model, its structure, and income. It will also force us to consider what services to keep, drop, or modify. Knowing that there is no 'FREE' time helps us to see where we should concentrate our efforts to bring the greatest return on the investment of our time. This will also help you to examine how and to whom you market your products and services. Your ideal client will find value in your products and services and compensate you for them.

(The Cost of FREE continued)

**Let's look at 3 ways you can reduce your cost of FREE:**

**Your knowledge is valuable:** We can all use more training. Do an honest evaluation of your skill sets. If there is an area of weakness where you need training, seek out other professionals in the industry for additional training or help. Expect to compensate them if need be. The WQA offers many educational opportunities to increase your learning. Take advantage of them and raise your prices to reflect your higher learning and skill level. Having greater knowledge in the water treatment industry will give you the confidence to value your time, in turn, reducing your tendency to give away your time.

**Dress for the position you want:** Make sure that you and your employees dress professionally, this includes having your service vehicles organized, stocked, and ready to do business. If someone sees your business office from the road or your staff in public, do they mirror professionalism? If not, set a standard for these areas. Customers will equate presentation with value.

**Know your operating cost:** The danger in not knowing your hourly operating cost is the tendency to undervalue the service and knowledge you provide. It is easy to identify when a product is not priced appropriately, but *time* can be subjective. Since it's not recorded as a line item in your accounting software, it can be easily overlooked. So, you do not realize when you are wasting one of your most valuable resources. We all know that the customer determines the value, but if we do not know how much our time is worth, we will find ourselves operating below market value and operating in the red. The result could mean working for free.

At the end of the day, the customer will determine if they are willing to pay for what you are offering. As a business owner, know why you are worth what you charge. If you do not know, neither will the customer. You do not want to price yourself out of the market, but you also do not want to undervalue the knowledge, products, and services you offer. If you have evaluated your knowledge, business, products, and services, be confident in charging market value for your time. This could improve your bottom line and increase the value your business provides.

**Welcome to Our NEW Members!**

● Mr. Christopher Tutsch  
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The Board of Directors represents you, but you, the Florida Dealers and OEMs are our reason to have an association. We need not only your financial support through your dues but also value your input and participation. Consider attending a board meeting, volunteering for a committee or becoming a board member. Ask any board member or call the FWQA office to inquire.

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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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