

2018 Watermark Themes

Spring – Preparing for the Future of Water

Water and wastewater professionals face an ever-increasing number of concerns that affect their ability to deliver safe and reliable water services. Internal factors such as aging infrastructure, limited budgets, and workforce retirements create increased stress and demands on systems. External factors such as increasing populations, adverse events (flood, fire, earthquake, drought), climate change, security threats, and provincial and federal policy decisions all directly contribute to stress and demand as well.

With these risks come the opportunity to find more effective and innovative solutions. These may come from sharing of best practices, or stepping outside the box entirely. What does the future utility look like? How can we accommodate the growing needs of a community? What can we do to move towards a more resilient future state?

We are seeking articles for the spring issue of Watermark that address the concerns and risks going into the future as well as the optimism and innovation that ensures the long-term success of the industry.

Articles due March 2, 2018

Summer – The Power of Data

From the design and operation of water and wastewater facilities, to identifying opportunities for system and workforce optimization, to tracking water usage for rate-setting and focusing public education campaigns, data is playing an increasing role in water and wastewater systems. What are the challenges and opportunities for big data today and into the future? How can data be used to improve and transform the water and wastewater sector? Are there case studies of organizations that have used data in a new way to tackle an old problem? What new technologies are coming online to better gather information from source to tap to drain and back to the receiving environment? How can data help improve system security or prevent disasters?

We are seeking articles for the summer issue of Watermark that examine traditional forms of data usage, such as SCADA and IT, as well as new ways that data can be used to help ensure our water and wastewater systems continue to protect public health and the environment.

Articles due June 11, 2018

Fall – Water Sector Workforce

The 2015 BC Water & Wastewater Sector Workforce Profile identified a number of key challenges and opportunities for the sector moving into the future, including significant workforce turnover, the need for succession planning, recruiting young and diverse workers, and developing skills to match evolving industry needs.

Over one third of the water and wastewater workforce is over 50 years of age and more than half of this age group is expected to retire within the next 10 years, equivalent to approximately 1,150 employees. Yet, many employers do not have succession plans in place. More than 3,000 new employees are required with the next 10 years due to retirements, attrition and sector growth. Furthermore, only 23% of the sector workforce is between 19 and 35 years of age, compared to 33% of the general population of BC. For those interested in entering the industry, there are currently limited pathways and existing educational curriculum may need to be enhanced to prepare today's workers for tomorrow.

We are seeking articles for the fall issue of *Watermark* that highlight BC's evolving water and wastewater sector workforce, including examples of how the industry is preparing for these coming challenges on both a micro and macro level.

Articles due August 17, 2018

Winter – Green Opportunities

With the growing conversation around climate change, many organizations are incorporating a strong sustainability mandate into their planning and operations to help reduce their impact on the planet. While focus on environmental sustainability can sometimes feel like an additional constraint, there can also be a number of opportunities that arise from a "green" approach. What new products can be derived from waste materials? Are there cost savings to be gained from water conservation? What potential lies in water reuse? How can conservation programs be used to engage customers in other areas? How can natural assets be used to reduce infrastructure costs and increase the security of a community's water supply?

We are seeking articles for the winter issue of *Watermark* that examine the opportunities and innovation in the water and wastewater sector that is being sparked by a new focus on environmental sustainability.

Articles due October 22, 2018

Questions?

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