



**MSAWWA PRECONFERENCE**

*“Water In The West: Building Resiliency & Optimizations”*

**Tuesday—April 28, 2026**

**7:00 am—5:00 pm Registration Desk Open (Dwell Space)**

**8:00 am—5:00 pm All Day Session including Lunch**

**5:00pm—6:30 pm Ice-Breaker—Beer & Wine and Appetizers (Exhibitor Area)**

<b>Preconference Session — Room location: Copper III</b>	
Moderators: Ben Rigby, MRWS; David Carlson, AE2S; Jonathon Pearson, City of Belgrade; Jeff Ashley, MM MSAWWA Education/Preconference Committee Team	
8:00 – 8:15	<b>Preconference Welcome and Overview—</b> Ben Rigby, David Carlson, Jonathon Pearson & Jeff Ashley
8:15 – 9:00	<b>Montana WARN—Resources &amp; Readiness for Water &amp; Wastewater Systems</b> Roger Skogen, MRWS & Kirk Yoder, MT DEQ
9:00 – 9:45	<b>Helena Water System Optimization and Resilience—From Source to Treatment</b> Ryan Leland, Helena Public Works Director, Jaime Clark, Helena City Engineer & Janice Sanderson, Helena Water Treatment Superintendent
9:45 – 10:00	<b>BREAK</b>
10:00– 10:45	<b>Belgrade—Planning For Growth While Protecting System Reliability</b> Jason Murphy, City of Belgrade
10:45– 11:15	<b>Water &amp; Wastewater Operator Workforce Development &amp; Apprenticeship Program</b> Cody Marez, MRWS; Apprentice TBD
11:15– 12:00	<b>Western Waters—Challenges of Optimization of Surface Water Treatment</b> David Carlson, AE2S
12:00 – 1:00	<b>Lunch (hosted) Room Location: Copper IV &amp; V</b>
1:00 – 1:45	<b>Small Systems Utilities: What Are You Doing To Build Resiliency—Q&amp;A Panel</b> Panel Moderator: Ben Rigby, MRWS Trevor Monk, City of Havre; Jason Murphy, City of Belgrade; Ryan Townsend & Adam Ballew, City of Livingston
1:45 – 2:30	<b>Cyber Security, SCADA, Alarms &amp; System Reliability for Water Utilities</b> James Sletten, AE2S
2:30– 2:45	<b>BREAK</b>
2:45 – 3:30	<b>Montana DES: Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery for Utilities</b> Panel Moderator: David Carlson, AE2S Jake Ganieany, Bureau Chief, MT DES Recovery & Mitigation Bureau; Sara Hartley, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, MT DES Recovery & Mitigation Bureau; Louis Engels, City of Billings
3:30 – 4:30	<b>Large System Utilities: What Are You Doing To Build Resiliency—Q&amp;A Panel</b> Panel Moderator: Nate Weisenburger, AE2S Louis Engels, City of Billings; Susie Turner, City of Kalispell; Chris Gaub, City of Great Falls; Nick Pericich, City of Bozeman
4:30 – 5:00	<b>Closing Session &amp; Wrap-Up</b>



**MSAWWA-MWEA 2026 JOINT CONFERENCE**  
*“Working Together To Protect Montana’s Water Resources”*

~Overview~

**Wednesday—April 29, 2026**

- 7:00 am—5:00 pm**      **Registration Desk Open** (Dwell Space)
- 8:00 am—11:30 am**    **Morning General Session** (Copper Rooms)
- 11:30 am —1:00 pm**    **Lunch & Awards** (Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom)
- 1:00 pm—5:30 pm**      **Afternoon Concurrent Sessions** (see breakout schedule)
- 2:30 pm—3:15 pm**      **Afternoon Break** (Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom)  
**SYP Poster Presentations**—(Exhibitor Area) On-going during and after break.  
 All are welcome!
- 5:30 pm—6:30 pm**      **Social Hour—Beer & Wine Reception** (Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom)
- 6:30 pm—8:30 pm**      **Banquet & Awards** (Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom)
- 8:30 pm—10:00 pm**    **Game Night!** (North Foyer) Come and play some fun games and network with your colleagues. There will be great prizes for the winners!

**Morning General Session**

<b>Wednesday General Session— Room location:</b> Copper Rooms Moderator: Jarrett Moran, MSAWWA Chair and Rickey Schultz, MWEA President	
8:00 – 8:15	<b>Welcome and Opening Session</b> Jarrett Moran, MSAWWA Chair Rickey Schultz, MWEA President J.P. Gallagher, Butte-Silver Bow Chief Executive
8:15 – 9:15	<b>AWWA &amp; WEF Guest Speakers</b> Kate Nutting, AWWA Chair, Technical & Educational Council Andrea Hall, WEF Trustee
9:15 – 10:30	<b>Butte Silver Basin Creek Dam</b> Justin Evertz, Great West Engineering & Jim Keenan, Butte-Silver Bow
10:30 – 11:00	<b>BREAK – Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom</b> <b>Exhibitor Presentation: TBD</b>
11:00– 11:30	<b>MSAWWA and MWEA Committee Presentations</b> Committee Chairs
11:30 – 1:00	<b>Lunch &amp; Awards (Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom)</b> <b>◆MSAWWA-MWEA Donald G. Willems Scholarship</b> Presented by—Greg Lukasik & Jackie Kuhl, Joint Scholarship Committee Chairs <b>◆MWEA Beneficial Reuse</b> Presented by—Jeremy Perlinski, MWEA Honors & Awards Chair <b>◆MWEA Stockholm Junior Water Prize</b> Presented by—Kristi Kline, SJWP Committee Chair <b>◆Early Bird Registration Prize</b> Presented by—Rickey Schultz,, MWEA President

**Wednesday—April 29, 2026**  
**Afternoon Concurrent Sessions**

<b>Drinking Water Sessions—Room location: Copper I &amp; II</b>	
Moderator:	
1:00 – 1:45	<b>Phillipsburg Water Treatment Improvements</b> Brooke Robinson & Emily Rutledge, HDR Engineering
1:45 – 2:30	<b>The City of Missoula’s Multi-Pronged Approach to Reducing Water Leakage</b> Logan McInnis & Aaron Metcalf, City of Missoula
2:30 – 3:15	<b>BREAK – Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom (SYP Poster Competition On-Going)</b>
3:15 – 4:00	<b>A Tale of Two Water Treatment Plants</b> Jeff Ashley, Morrison Maierle
4:00 – 4:45	<b>Glacier National Park—Swiftcurrent Water System Improvements</b> Rickey Schultz & Calvin Zehnder, HDR Engineering
4:45 – 5:30	<b>Water Treatment Plan Residuals Handling In The West</b> David Carlson, AE2S

<b>Wastewater Treatment Sessions—Room location: Copper III</b>	
Moderator:	
1:00 – 1:45	<b>How a Small Community Navigates Growth and an Aging Wastewater System</b> Jeremy Perlinski, Robert Peccia & Assoc.
1:45 – 2:30	<b>Infiltration Wetlands as Nature-Based Tertiary Treatment Systems for Nutrient Removal</b> Mohammad Mozaffari, MSU & Shawn Kohtz, City of Bozeman
2:30 – 3:15	<b>BREAK – Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom (SYP Poster Competition On-Going)</b>
3:15 – 4:00	<b>Navigating the Present and Future of Nutrient Trading in Montana</b> Ryan Thompson, AE2S
4:00 – 4:45	<b>Implementing and Defending Nutrient Compliance: From Permit Limits to Programs</b> Scott Buecker, AE2S
4:45 – 5:30	<b>The WWTP Won't Accept Septage - Now What?</b> Rika Lashley, Morrison Maierle

<b>Miscellaneous—Room location:</b>	
Moderator:	
1:00 – 1:45	<b>The Importance of Electrical System Maintenance</b> Adam Wahler, AE2S
1:45 – 2:30	<b>Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Fund Programs</b> Mike Abrahamson & Sandie Koenig, MT DEQ
2:30 – 3:15	<b>BREAK – Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom (SYP Poster Competition On-Going)</b>
3:15 – 4:00	<b>Great Falls WWTP Screen Replacement Project</b> Craig Nowak and Rika Lashley, Morrison Maierle
4:00 – 4:45	<b>Harmonic Solutions for the Water/Wastewater Industry</b> Sean Chycota, Allient TCI
4:45 – 5:30	<b>Cross Connections and Backflow in Montana—Optimize Your Distribution</b> Michael Kropp, MT DEQ PWS & Jim Keenan, Butte-Silver Bow

**Thursday—April 30, 2026**  
**Morning Concurrent Sessions**

<b>Drinking Water Sessions—Room location: Copper I &amp; II</b> Moderator:	
8:30 – 9:15	<b>Replacing Asbestos Cement Pipe via an EPA Approved Trenchless Method</b> Patrick Laidlaw, Azuria Water Solutions
9:15 – 10:00	<b>Smart Tanks: Distribution System-Based Water Treatment</b> Hayley Goddard, Cleanwater 1
10:00 – 11:00	<b>BREAK – Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom</b>
11:00 – 11:45	<b>A Filter Run Time Exceeding 300 Hours? Yes, for Helena!</b> Jamie Clark, City of Helena & Nate Weisenburger, AE2S
11:45 – 12:30	<b>Navigating Pump Curves: A Guide to Effective Water Pump Selection</b> Hannah Gibbs, AE2S

<b>Wastewater Treatment Sessions—Room location: Copper III</b> Moderator:	
8:30 – 9:15	<b>Navigating PFAS in Wastewater and Biosolids Amid Evolving Regulations</b> Kelsey Wagner and Sara Cochella, AE2S
9:15 – 10:00	<b>Philipsburg Wastewater Treatment Facility: A Case Study in Sustainable Design and DEQ Compliance</b> Austin Egan and Joel Rice, Great West Engineering
10:00 – 11:00	<b>BREAK – Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom</b>
11:00 – 11:45	<b>Odorous Threats to Wastewater—Odor Control</b> Anders Nord, HDR Engineering
11:45 – 12:30	<b>The Future of Cold Climate Lagoon Treatment: Meeting More Stringent Effluent Standards for BOD, TSS and Nutrient Removal</b> Tom Birkeland, Lemna Environmental Technologies

<b>Miscellaneous—Room location: Copper I &amp; V</b> Moderator:	
8:30 – 9:15	<b>Intense Intensification Modeling: Improved Sensitivity and Capacity Analyses of Densified Sludge</b> Luke Pinto, HDR Engineering
9:15 – 10:00	<b>Closing the Loop Around Water System Design, Operations, and Compliance</b> Jackie Kuhl and Katya Koepsel, MT DEQ
10:00 – 11:00	<b>BREAK – Exhibitor Area/King Ballroom</b>
11:00 – 11:45	<b>Polymer Dosing and Handling</b> Kevin Christofanelli, HDR Engineering
11:45 – 12:30	<b>Montana's AWOP</b> Michael Kropp, MT DEQ PWS

