



AWE UPDATE: CALWEP FALL 2022 PLENARY

- Successfully lobbied for \$90 million dollars in water efficiency grants included in the *Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act* that passed the U.S. House; Senate action TBD.
- \$4 billion for western drought response included in the *Inflation Reduction Act*
 - AWE organized a [sign-on letter](#) to Reclamation (sent 9/2) encouraging them to prioritize water efficiency and demand reduction
 - Surprisingly, the rebate tax revision wasn't carried over from the *Build Back Better Act*; AWE rallied members to urge inclusion – unsuccessful. Hopeful for passage in year-end budget and tax legislation.
 - Sign-on letter to Congress is planned
- AWE op-ed on the Colorado River Basin water crisis ran in the [Albuquerque Journal](#); pending with other newspapers
- Cooling Tower Water Efficiency Project is done, with final materials to be released later this month and a webinar in the Fall
 - How to Guide and Learning Cohorts planned to help agencies start a cooling tower program or improve an existing program
- AWE and CalWEP jointly published the research paper, [Advancing Water Resource Management Through Team Collaboration](#), in July; webinar Sept. 22
- AMI Leak Alert Study analysis complete; final report Fall 2022
 - Statistically significant reductions in leak volumes
 - Observations on what worked
 - 102 agencies completed follow-on survey of how they use AMI; results will be shared
- [Report on Learning Landscapes grantees](#) released
- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power earned the Gold-level AWWA G-480 certification



HIGHLIGHTS SINCE JUNE 2022 BOARD MEETING

- Check out past and upcoming [webinars](#), including
 - 10/27: Training on the Water Loss Module in AWE's Conservation Tracking Tool
- DEIJ policy statement approved by the Board in June; streamlined public-facing version on the agenda for September Board approval
- Draft 2023-25 Strategic Plan completed for Board approval
- Draft policy position on plumbing efficiency standards completed for Board approval
- [2021 Annual Report](#) completed and online
- Reimagined AWE Member Day at WSI October 4th. Please join us! Register [here](#).
- AWE's First Annual Symposium will be in July or August 2023, exact dates to be announced soon.
- Liam McCarthy has taken a new job after 7 years with AWE. Rachel DeBruin moved into the Membership Manager role, and AWE is recruiting a [Director of Communications and Policy](#).

NEW PROGRAM COMING SOON!

- Learning Cohorts
 - Small groups that meet regularly for 6 months-1 year to work on a similar project
 - Collaborative learning approach that offers support, structure, and accountability to participants
 - Participants learn and troubleshoot together, building relationships and connection with AWE community
- Will pilot with cooling towers
 - Call for applications will launch after Cooling Technologies final project webinar
 - Depending on interest, may segment into multiple cohorts depending on their current state (e.g. already have a program vs. starting a program)
- What other topics would fit this program model?
- Depending on success and feedback, may require a small participation fee

POTENTIAL RESEARCH IDEAS

Peak Demand Trends and Drivers

- Working group for initial scoping: American Water, Spokane, Brown & Caldwell, Santa Rosa, Region of Peel, Lixil, Turfgrass Water Conservation Alliance.
- Three potential research buckets:
 - **Foundational Assessment:** Changes over time, current peak, variation across geographies, utility sizes, water supplies, land uses, climates, and other drivers.
 - **Water Demand Strategies:** What approaches are used to address peak demand and how successful are they?
 - **The “Why”:** What are the benefits to understanding and managing peak demand? Climate change, population growth, ecosystem needs, infrastructure constraints/costs, operational factors, etc. This component would connect across utility departments.

WHY STUDY PEAK DEMAND?

- **Every utility's infrastructure and operations are influenced by peak demand.**
- Infrastructure and operations translate into capital improvement plans, cost of service, and the rates/charges customers face.
- Demand patterns vary across utilities, geographies, communities – and weather patterns.
- Climate change is expected to increase water demands and greatly influence peak demands. Utilities are already seeing the impacts of extreme heat and drought on water demands and the resulting impacts to infrastructure.
- There is no comprehensive assessment of the different strategies utilities currently employ to manage meeting fluctuating demands (e.g. size of treated water storage, mix of supply sources, etc.) even in times of no overall supply constraints.
- Water efficiency and conservation programs, policies and regulations have been adopted to reduce peak demand, but there is no comprehensive assessment of how successful these efforts have been, and what components result in more successful changes to peak demand.
- This research is critical to helping utilities become more adaptable and resilient organizations, and ultimately achieving a more sustainable water future.

POTENTIAL RESEARCH IDEAS

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)

- AMI Leak Notification project will be completed this fall
- Potential Phase 2 of AMI research: work with utilities to launch their leak notification programs as RCTs.
- RCTs are the gold standard for impact evaluation
 - Enable scientific, evidence-based program design
 - Can test multiple approaches
 - Scale-up with what works best
 - Results are easier to apply across contexts
 - Already working with Longmont, CO. Hosting a larger exploratory meeting in October
- Explore creating a guidance document with a sample of all the ways utilities are currently using AMI, include case studies.
 - Many utilities don't have AMI yet & recent AWWA study showed of those w/AMI, only 56% are using the data; 43% have customer portals.
- FYI: WRF and AWWA may also fund research on AMI. AWE could be suited to bid on both projects.

OTHER POTENTIAL RESEARCH IDEAS

- Behavior Change: 2nd priority topic identified by the Research Committee.
 - Working group in a learning/exploring phase. SO much to possibly research!
 - Next Step: convening a roundtable with staff at utilities who regularly do internal research
 - BONUS, this will also help us explore how to share individual utility research with members
- Next phase of Outdoor Water Savings Studies
 - Could include update of water savings estimates, descriptions of program designs beyond the traditional per sq. ft. rebate (e.g. direct install, design services, mulch drop off, etc.)
- Trends in Water Use series:
 - Partnership with Flume. Aiming to do 1st Fall Ed. Looking at responsiveness to irrigation restrictions in CA, TX, and MA in 2022.
- EM&V – In partnership with CalWEP – more to come after their board meeting.
- Water Reuse/Use of Alternative Water Sources?



UPCOMING PROJECTS

- Direct Install Pilot for underserved households in Long Beach and Houston
- Trends in Water Use Report (partner with Flume)
- Partnering with Bonneville Foundation to find water saving projects that corporate clients can fund to help offset their water footprints. (So. Cal and Dallas-Ft. Worth areas)