



36th Annual WateReuse Symposium
Annual Business Meeting

State of the Association

Remarks by Patricia Sinicropi, Executive Director, WateReuse Association

March 22, 2021

Good morning and thank you for participating in the virtual 36th Annual WateReuse Symposium. I was pleased to see that so many of you were able to participate in our live roundtables last week and join the breakout rooms for some face to face interaction. We have three more live roundtables with breakouts this week and a live closing session that I hope you will find beneficial and informative.

The format of this year's Symposium is based on feedback that we have received from you – our members and Symposium attendees. You told us that you wanted more opportunities to interact with colleagues on the issues that are critical to your water recycling projects, and our staff and volunteer leaders have worked hard to bring that to you. This is a reflection of what we do as an Association; we work to meet the needs of our members and to advance the practice and acceptance of water recycling.

Faced with a global pandemic, the past year has been challenging for us all professionally and personally. We are pleased to report, however, that despite these challenges, the WateReuse Association had a tremendously successful year. Although typical in-person activities and actions took place virtually, our work continued and our successes mounted.

In fact, the pandemic did not slow us down at all: We used our webcasts and publications to continue providing members with technical education and timely news; we released an educational video to support our public health and medical community initiative; we participated on an advisory group to the U.S. Green Building Council to incorporate water reuse in LEED accreditation; we supported the work of the National Blue Ribbon Commission for Onsite Non-Potable Water Systems; and released a Profile in Reuse on industrial water recycling.

Among our top achievements of the past year is the development and publication of the National Water Reuse Action Plan, also known as the WRAP. This initiative to accelerate the adoption of water recycling is hugely impactful because it's a collaborative effort among diverse stakeholders, including federal agencies, utilities, businesses and national water sector organizations.

WateReuse worked with our members and partners to help shape the final WRAP and organize its roll out on February 27, 2020. Three cabinet secretaries joined the WRAP release event, marking the importance of the effort. WateReuse is now leading or partnering on the implementation of nearly half of the actions identified in the WRAP. I hope you are taking advantage of the opportunity to learn more about WRAP activities during this Symposium. Four live roundtable discussions and five on-demand technical sections feature WRAP-related content, action leaders, and team members.

In addition to our work with the Administration, we worked with Congress over the past year to introduce legislation in both the House and Senate to advance key WateReuse priorities. These priorities include the creation of a federal Interagency Working Group on Water Reuse as well as the reauthorization of both the Title XVI competitive grants program and the Alternative Water Source Grants Program. We also had our first ever virtual Water Week fly-in last spring, during which we hosted a virtual town hall with congressional staff from the U.S. House and Senate.

Many of you also joined us for the 35th Annual WateReuse Symposium, which was only six months ago since we've permanently moved the Symposium from September to March. Our Symposium has become the premier education and networking event on water recycling. We hosted more than 800 virtual participants in 2020.

We also have to applaud the work of our seven state and regional sections. They have continued to hold virtual meetings, host education events, and advocate for water recycling in state capitols throughout the pandemic. We can only accomplish all we do with enthusiastic member engagement both nationally and locally. We really appreciate your commitment.

Even though this has been a tough year for many financially, I am pleased to report that WateReuse continues to be in a financially stable position. The Association achieved 97.4% of the annual dues budget. While moving the Annual Symposium to a virtual event resulted in a decline in revenues, it also resulted in a decline in expenses. The Association ended the year with an excess of income over expenses of \$169,060. It was an excellent year in spite of the many challenges.

It has indeed been a busy year for the WateReuse Association. We didn't take a break when the world seemed in chaos a year ago. We only worked harder to achieve the goals of this association. At this year's annual meeting, we have a list of accomplishments that we can be proud of. This kind of success only comes when you have an engaged membership invested in the goals of the association, a hard working staff, and volunteer leaders that are generous with their time and expertise. We have all of these things and we are reaping the results. I look forward to the many things that we can accomplish together over the next year and beyond. Thank you so much for your continued membership. It is my pleasure and my privilege to work with each of you.