

WaterSmart Innovations Highlights the Importance of Conservation Initiatives and Programs

Various water challenges exist across our country, and water utilities and systems are increasingly being challenged by water scarcity, climate variability, changing regulations, and conservation needs. That is why continued collaboration and working together for solutions are vital more than ever.

Recognizing the world of water is finite, conservation and green infrastructure professionals, water resource planners and engineers, water quality specialists, and public affairs managers from across the country gathered at last week's [WaterSmart Innovations Conference and Expo \(WSI\)](#)

hosted by the American Water Works Association. It's an annual event that provides a forum to discuss the development of new technologies, strategies, and programs to protect and conserve water supplies. WSI is the largest urban water-efficiency conference of its kind, which is why AMWUA and member municipalities have participated in the event since its inception in 2007. This year, staff members from AMWUA and many of the AMWUA cities participated in the event as speakers, highlighting the level of expertise across the Valley. It also showcased their leadership to other conservation departments from across the country.

Throughout the two-day event, there was an expansive range of sessions where attendees shared innovative ideas and engaged in passionate discussions about the impact of conservation across the country and water demand trends. This year's sessions focused on conservation incentive programs, water loss management, data use, outdoor water use, codes and policy, drought, compliance solutions, and marketing, just to name a few. Pre-conference workshops on water efficiency solutions for commercial properties, advanced metering infrastructure, cooling towers, and a Hoover Dam tour were also provided as extra learning opportunities.

In addition to WSI's workshops and break-out sessions, attendees spent time at an expo, where they learned more about the latest technologies to enhance efficiency and options for expanding programs, advanced water products, services, water-saving technologies, and conservation programs that exist across the country, including AMWUA's efforts. Being a part of the expo was a prime opportunity to highlight the diverse [conservation programs, resources, and tools](#) offered by the AMWUA cities to help residents save water inside and outdoors, further deepening our strong conservation ethic here in the Valley.



Overall, the event motivated and educated attendees about the importance of continued collaboration to advance water conservation, which is even more critical due to growing water challenges and our changing climate. The conference was also an opportunity to build working relationships with other passionate water professionals from across the country. Ultimately, it's about having shared goals for the common good and advancing water conservation, so we all become more water-smart.

Some of the sessions led by AMWUA and its members at this year's event included:

- *Smart Irrigation Controllers: From Pilot to Rebate Program (Gilbert)*
- *Conservation in a Time of Drought: How the City of Phoenix is Adapting to a World with Less Colorado River Water (Phoenix)*
- *Privately Funding Utility Water Conservation: Phoenix is Listening: Enhancing Municipal Water Conservation Outreach (Phoenix)*
- *The City of Phoenix Cooling Tower Program's Public-Private Partnership (Phoenix)*
- *Cracking the Conservation Content Conglomerate: Assessing the Efficacy of K-12 Water Conservation Education Materials (Phoenix)*
- *The Previous HOA President Was an Obstructionist (Phoenix)*
- *Building a Bespoke Commercial Rebate to Encourage Efficient Real-Time Water Management (Scottsdale)*
- *A Flood of Demand- Diversifying an HOA Program to Fit All Water Conservation Needs (Scottsdale)*
- *Elevating Conservation with Collaborative and Coordinated Initiatives (AMWUA)*

For over 50 years, the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association has worked to protect our member cities' ability to provide their communities with assured, safe, and sustainable water supplies. For more water information, visit www.amwua.org.