

Pacific Northwest Section of the American Water Works Association (PNWS-AWWA)  
Utility Management Committee Winter 2025 Training - “Recruit, Train, Retain”

Start	End	Theme	Description	Speakers	Moderator
9:00	9:15		Introduction and Announcements	<b>Ann Hajnosz</b> , PE, Harris & Associates	
9:15	10:15	RECRUIT	Panel of Academics focused professionals will discuss what students are learning about STEM careers and how academia and the water industry can partner to increase interest in water jobs. This discussion will focus on opportunities that do/do not require college degrees. We'll also hear from a college student to hear the perspective of an early-career job seeker to learn how the water industry can appeal to these folks.	<b>Sarah Woodard</b> , Holy Trinity School <b>Randy Scott</b> , Roosevelt HS <b>Greg Flores</b> , Portland State <b>Karli Kelsey</b> , UW Mechanical Engineer Student	Ann Hajnosz
10:15	10:45	RECRUIT	Talking to Kids about Water – This presentation will showcase the Vancouver Water Resources Education Center’s wastewater education program. The program engages middle and high school students through interactive tours, hands-on activities, and connects them to both wastewater treatment engineers and operators.	<b>Suzanne Hebert</b> , Water Resources Educator	Emily Murphy
10:45	11:00		BREAK		
11:00	11:45	RECRUIT	Panel of OR utilities will discuss the biggest challenges and roadblocks to bringing the right water candidates into an organization. They will discuss their experience on what approaches brought the most success for recruiting water and wastewater staff.	<b>Bhargavi Ambadkar</b> , PE, Portland Bureau of Environmental Services <b>Kylie Bayer</b> , Tualatin Valley Water District <b>Kimberly Kelsey</b> , PE, Parametrix	Kimberly Kelsey
11:45	12:15	RECRUIT	AWWA Rates and Charges Committee Workforce Goals – we need finance staff to work with operators and managers to ensure water costs are accurate and reasonable. This presentation explores how to recruit staff in this key area and provides perspectives on how finance staff work with operators as well as all staff through-out the water utility.	<b>Andy Baker</b> , Cascade Water Alliance	Ann Hajnosz
12:15	1:00		Lunch and Table Discussion – Attendees will discuss the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What workforce gaps have you seen in our industry?</li> <li>• What strategies have you seen be effective in recruiting new talent?</li> <li>• What strategies do you believe would be effective in recruiting new talent?</li> <li>• What partnerships or collaborations do you think could help attract and develop talent?</li> </ul>		Emily Murphy

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can we leverage technology to enhance our recruitment, training, and retention efforts?</li> </ul>		
1:00	1:30		Report Out from Lunch Discussions – a representative from each table will report out their table’s discussion.		Emily Murphy
1:30	2:00	TRAIN RETAIN	Training and Development at PWB involves a specifically designed and implemented bureau-wide programs that impact all staff, including operators. This program focuses on professional development as well as cross-group learning opportunities that enhance PWB staff’s job performance.	Phoebe Daurio, Portland Water Bureau	Joe Miller
2:00	2:30	TRAIN RETAIN	Skilled, technical, and competent water operators are critical to water operations and water quality. This presentation highlights how an organization can establish standards and metrics to recruit, develop, and retain skilled water operators to ensure safe and reliable drinking water.	Jon Roth, PE, and Andrew Holmes, Clark County PUD	Joe Miller
2:30	2:45		BREAK		
2:45	3:15	TRAIN RETAIN	<b>Creating a Workforce Training Program</b> The Sunrise Water Authority has been involved in creating a number of workforce training programs, including apprenticeships, scholarships and internships. The lessons learned may help other agencies create their own programs. Collaboration with local training programs, such as community colleges and high school trade programs, offer essential opportunities to engage and develop future water industry candidates.	Wade Hathorn, PE, Sunrise Water Authority	Joe Miller
3:15	3:45	TRAIN RETAIN	AWWA Mentor Program focuses on building the next generation and future water workforce focusing on needed skills and experience.	Chris Young, PE, Parametrix	Joe Miller
3:45	4:00		Close and Next Steps	Joe Miller, Consor	