2025 Northwest Public Works Institute – Public Works Leadership Skills Agenda

Dates: November 18–21, 2025
Location: Broadway Commons: Salem, Oregon
Target Audience: Public works professionals in supervisory or leadership roles in water, wastewater, stormwater, and related infrastructure services.

TUESDAY – November 18, 2025

7:00 - 8:00 | Breakfast and Registration
8:00 - 8:30 | Welcome and Introductions – Jenifer Willer
8:30 - 8:45 | *Northwest Public Works Institute Overview* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Overview of the program and how it supports leadership in water, wastewater, and stormwater operations.

8:45 - 9:15 | *Overview of Public Works Leadership Skills* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Introduces core leadership skills that promote effective utility team supervision and regulatory compliance.

9:15 - 10:00 | *Leadership Roles in Public Works* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Defines key leadership roles from field crew to executive in water/wastewater and infrastructure departments.

10:00 - 10:15 | Break
10:15 - 11:15 | *Ideal Leader & Core Competencies* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Focuses on developing essential traits to lead public utility teams and promote environmental service quality.

11:15 - 12:00 | *Leadership Styles Assessment – – Toby Rickman*
12:00 - 1:00 | Lunch
1:00 - 2:15 | *Self-Assessment Workshop – – Rickman & Willer*
2:15 - 2:30 | Break
2:30 - 3:15 | *Time & Energy Management in Utilities* – CEU Requested – *Jenifer Willer*
Teaches strategies for prioritizing and managing time in regulatory operations and emergency response scenarios.

3:15 - 4:00 | *Motivation & Supervision* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Provides tools for motivating utility staff, including operators, maintenance crews, and permit specialists.

4:00 - 4:30 | *Resilience in the Workplace* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Focus on cultivating emotional resilience for field crews and operators facing utility emergencies and stress.

4:30 | Adjourn

WEDNESDAY – November 19, 2025

7:00 - 8:00 | Breakfast
8:00 - 8:30 | Q&A and Group Check-In
8:30 - 9:15 | *Delegation & Empowerment in Operations* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Guides supervisors in delegating technical tasks across water/wastewater teams for efficiency and safety.

9:15 - 10:00 | *Hiring and Training for Regulatory Readiness* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Develops frameworks for hiring and training utility staff to meet compliance, safety, and permit standards.

10:00 - 10:15 | Break
10:15 - 11:00 | *Coaching & Counseling Techniques* – CEU Requested – *Jenifer Willer*
Demonstrates strategies to mentor utility employees to support job performance and system reliability.

11:00 - 12:00 | *Organizational Assessment* – CEU Requested – *Jenifer Willer*
Provides tools to evaluate public utility structure, effectiveness, and readiness for audits or certifications.

12:00 - 1:00 | Lunch
1:00 - 2:15 | *Organizational Culture in Public Works* – CEU Requested – *Delora Kerber*
Explores how team culture influences safety, sustainability, and service in stormwater and water systems.

2:15 - 2:30 | Break
2:30 - 3:30 | *Organizational Structures & Span of Control* – CEU Requested – *Delora Kerber*
Reviews structural models used in utility departments for efficient chain of command and service delivery.

3:30 - 4:30 | *Conducting Effective Meetings* – CEU Requested – *Delora Kerber*
Leads participants in best practices for operations, safety briefings, and coordination meetings in utilities.

4:30 | Adjourn

THURSDAY – November 20, 2025

7:00 - 8:00 | Breakfast
8:00 - 8:30 | Q&A and Group Check-In
8:30 - 9:15 | *Building Effective Teams* – CEU Requested – *Rickman & Willer*
Builds team dynamics and leadership techniques for plant operators, maintenance crews, and admin staff.

9:15 - 10:00 | *Negotiation Skills in Public Works* – CEU Requested – *Rickman & Willer*
Equips leaders to negotiate contracts, inter-agency agreements, and vendor services for public utilities.

10:00 - 10:15 | Break
10:15 - 11:00 | *Labor/Union Relations* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Outlines key elements of union relations affecting water/wastewater and infrastructure workforce planning.

11:00 - 11:30 | *Working with Regulatory Agencies* – CEU Requested – *Jenifer Willer*
Provides insights into collaborating with DEQ, EPA, and OHA on permits, violations, and inspections.

11:30 - 12:00 | *Communications & Social Media* – – *Marion Suitor Barnes*
12:00 - 1:00 | Lunch
1:00 - 1:30 | *Public Engagement Strategies* – – *Marion Suitor Barnes*
1:30 - 2:15 | *Crisis Communications Planning* – CEU Requested – *Marion Suitor Barnes*
Covers crisis messaging for boil water notices, sewer overflows, or stormwater flooding events.

2:15 - 2:30 | Break
2:30 - 3:15 | *Working with Governing Bodies* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Teaches how to communicate utility needs and environmental compliance priorities to elected officials.

3:15 - 3:45 | *Introduction to Management Systems* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Introduces CMMS and asset management systems for tracking infrastructure, maintenance, and compliance.

3:45 - 4:30 | *Financial Management* – CEU Requested – *Jenifer Willer*
Reviews public utility budgeting, rate setting, and capital improvement planning for water and wastewater.

4:30 | Adjourn

FRIDAY – November 21, 2025

7:00 - 8:00 | Breakfast
8:00 - 8:30 | Q&A and Group Check-In
8:30 - 9:15 | *Strategic Planning & Case Studies* – CEU Requested – *Rickman & Willer*
Teaches strategic approaches for utility master plans, capital projects, and regulatory timelines.

9:15 - 9:45 | *Land Use & Infrastructure Planning* – CEU Requested – *Rickman & Willer*
Connects land development policy with utility infrastructure capacity and water system design.

9:45 - 10:00 | *APWA Accreditation Overview – – Jenifer Willer*
10:00 - 10:15 | Break
10:15 - 11:15 | *Policy Development* – CEU Requested – *Toby Rickman*
Guides development of written policies for SOPs, safety, and compliance in environmental services.

11:15 - 11:30 | Class Presentation Instructions
11:30 - 12:00 | Presentation Prep
12:00 - 1:00 | Lunch
1:00 - 2:00 | Finalize Presentations
2:00 - 2:15 | Break
2:15 - 4:00 | Presentations & Peer Review
4:00 - 4:30 | Graduation & Certificates
4:30 | Adjourn

Total CEU Hours Requested:

- **Instructional Hours:** 24.25 hours (excluding meals, breaks, and informal check-ins)
- **CEUs Requested: 2.4 CEUs** (rounded down from 24.25 hours / 10)