

# 2025

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# Florida Water Environment Association Utility Council

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# Annual Report



## A Message from the FWEA Utility Council President

The late, great Jimmy Buffett penned a line “Years grow shorter not longer...” in the song “Wonder Why We Ever Go Home.” Jimmy’s words never rang truer than my past year as your President. I feel like I just accepted the gavel from our excellent Past President Jeff Greenwell last year at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center in Kissimmee. We must be having fun because time flew working on the myriad of issues and events during our trip around the sun together. I had the pleasure of starting conversations with new people over the past year as well as continuing decades old conversations with great friends.

I first thank you, our valued members, for your investment and dedication to the Florida Water and Environment Association Utility Council (FWEAUC). We began in 1997 with 15 utilities and we are now an over 75 member organization from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. I am privileged and honored to be your President. It is one of the highlights of my life, not just my career. Knowing we provide the critical service of cleaning wastewater to levels that protect the public health and the environment for millions of Floridians and visitors motivates me every day. Simply put, our communities would not function and thrive without the great work our sector does 24/7, 365.

While our teams are bringing that service to our communities, our job at the FWEAUC is to advocate sound regulation and governing policies to ensure even more effective wastewater services for the future. I especially want to recognize our Board (please see Figure 1 and listed on back page) who put in countless hours, often at a moment’s notice, to find solutions to challenges and seek meaningful results from opportunities. It is an exceptional group of talented professionals and friends who are the very best at what they do each day.

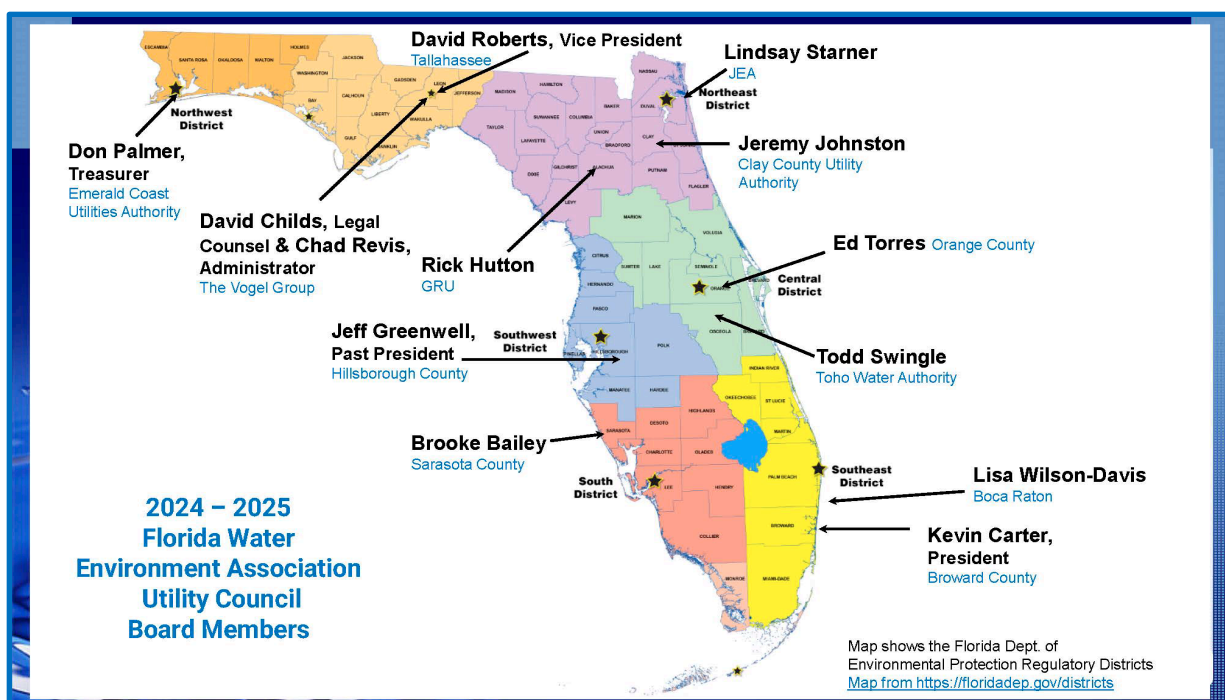


Figure 1. Map with the 2024-2025 FWEAUC Board Members.

Special thanks goes to Jeff Greenwell (Hillsborough County) and all our Past Presidents who set the table well for my tenure. My main job is just keep it on the tracks! Please [visit our website](#) and you will see annual reports all the way back to 1999. I encourage you to go back in time and reflect on the mountain of quality work accomplished by the UC in nearly three decades. Numeric Nutrient Criteria is so 2010! Jeff did not go quietly out to pasture but instead was as valuable and active Board member as always. Please see Jeff in a photo (Figure 2), when back in February 2025, he represented the UC extremely well, along with JEA's Robb Zammataro, at a [State Senate Committee Hearing](#) on 2021's Senate Bill 64. Once again, the State Legislature knew who their wastewater experts are and called upon us.



Figure 2. Robb Zammataro (L) and Jeff Greenwell (R) testify at Florida Senate Committee (Feb. 2025).

I also thank Vice President David Roberts for his excellent service and I know he will step right into the presidency and take us to even higher places when his turn comes. Last but definitely not least from the Board, Don Palmer has been our Treasurer for over a decade. You have no idea how much time and quality effort Don provides the UC. He is truly our treasure as treasurer and I thank him for continuing his excellent job.



*Figure 3. Many thanks to David Childs, Chad Revis, Faye Brainard and the rest of the Vogel Group team!*

Our Board would be a rudderless ship without the efforts of our Counsel, David Childs with the Vogel Group (Figure 3). His leadership, talent, experience, and dedication are exceptional. We are so fortunate to have David onboard for well over a decade. Thank you so much for our conversations and coordination over the last year. We also are very fortunate to have others from the Vogel Group work with us. In particular, Chad Revis, our administrator, who I thank for all his hard work and time getting us coordinated, meetings organized, and keeping our members informed. I am also thankful for Faye Brainard who I know does much quality work behind the scenes and anyone else from the office I missed.

As some of you know, the FWEAUC President also sits on the FWEA's Board of Directors which has been a very enjoyable experience. I thank FWEA President Joe Paterniti (Clay County Utility Authority), new FWEA Executive Manager, Laura Cooley and the entire Board for welcoming me to the team. They are very appreciative of our work and routinely thank me for our efforts. The FWEA Board of Directors is comprised of very talented, knowledgeable and fun-loving professionals. Through the FWEA Board, I had opportunities to perform outreach to FWEA members on who the FWEAUC is and what we do. In February 2025, I

excitedly drove two hours across Alligator Alley to present to over 35 FWEA Southwest Chapter members (Figure 4) on the beautiful Florida Gulf Coast University campus. The Southwest region is an area of future growth for the FWEAUC and I thank FWEA Board member Dustin Chisum (Ardurra) for the invitation and hospitality.



*Figure 4. My very engaged audience at the FWEA Southwest Chapter Winter Dinner (no snow though).*

I send thanks to the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association Water Utility Council (WUC) for excellent collaboration again this year. The WUC, led by Monica Wallis (Destin Water Users Inc.), and FWEAUC held 10 joint weekly 2025 legislative virtual meetings and have one more wrap up planned for Friday, May 9th. This is a very valuable core value of being a FWEAUC member. Through this dialogue, we help shape positions and even draft language for future state policy. Many thanks to the FSAWWA Executive Committee, FSAWWA staff including Executive Director Kim Kowalski and Section Administrator Peggy Guingona for their time and support. A big shout out to and thanks to The Arrow Group's Alex Kernan, Guntser's Greg Munson, and the rest of the team for the weekly spreadsheets and meetings which David also plays a big part in. All of the above are also integral for our Annual Tallahassee Fly-In that was postponed by the Freak Snowstorm of 2025 that brought out 'snow manatees' (Figure 5) and other new winter events. No one will forget that storm for a long time. Over 40 water sector



professionals visited over 50 legislators in our 'Tally Fly-In' rescheduled for the middle of February 2025. The regular scheduled session is set to end May 2, 2025, but the State Legislature has not passed a budget, yet. So more fun times ahead in Tallahassee. I thank David and Chad for another great session. I encourage you to read David's great summary in this year's report.



*Figure 2. Rare sighting of the Florida 'Snow Manatee' in Tallahassee, January 2025.*

Taking the 'waste' out of wastewater and beneficially reusing it is one of the great practices of both UC and WUC member utilities. Florida is an international leader in water reuse and we need to continue to be with 1,000 people or more moving to our state each year. A couple of years ago, I wrote a paper and presented the history of Florida Water Reuse at a Caribbean Water & Wastewater Association Conference & Exhibition. The City of Tallahassee kicked us and the nation off back in the 1960s and we now produce up to 900 million gallons a day. Importantly, we are at the dawn of a new water reuse era in Florida. In December 2024, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Environmental Regulation Commission unanimously passed the state's first potable reuse rule. Please see David's great article later in the report. The rule became effective in February 2025 and its passage represents years, if not decades, of dedicated and talented work. I thank David, FWEAUC Board members Jeff Greenwell (Hillsborough County), Todd Swingle (Toho Water Authority), and Ed Torres (Orange County) as well as JEA's Ryan Popko for participating in bi-weekly meetings for two years with DEP and other interested stakeholders. Your hard work paid off!

Now comes perhaps an even more challenging effort – public acceptance. The FWEAUC already started with our own Public Outreach Committee and contract with HDR that led to our rebranding, messaging products, and a new website over the last couple of years. I thank FWEAUC Board Member Lisa Wilson-Davis (Boca Raton) for having the vision to see the importance of ‘telling our story’ and having professional communicators help us frame it. Please take the time to read her excellent article in this year’s report. To me, a critical part of water reuse story is our utility technologies have come a long way since we started in the 1960s until now. We have parallels with other sectors such as the auto industry where you can see the technology of 1967 El Camino (still a classic!, Figure 6 ) compared to a driver-less Mercedes-Benz in 2025 (Figure 7). We have come a long way and now is the time to implement potable reuse in major fashion after the FWEAUC hard and quality work brought us a rule.

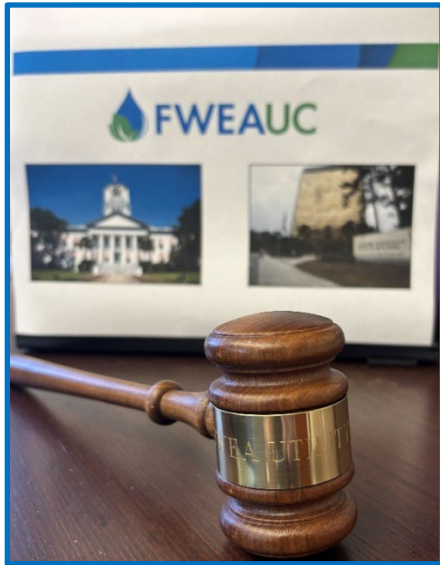


*Figure 6. The classic El Camino, circa 1967.*



*Figure 7. The present-day driverless Mercedes-Benz, circa 2025.*

One recent ‘call to action’ also epitomizes the ability of the UC to rapidly mobilize and effectively engage with a governing body or agency. Some of our members noticed the new draft DEP Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) required them to change their treatment level to advanced waste treatment ([AWT](#)) even though they are meeting their total maximum daily load requirements. A further statewide



*Figure 8. The FWEAUC President Gavel.  
Thank you for a great year. I look forward to  
the next one.*

investigation found DEP released 25 draft nutrient BMAP updates requiring 222 wastewater treatment facilities, which beneficially reuse reclaimed water for irrigation, to transition to AWT. The requirement is based on FDEP's determination that the irrigation use is "causing or contributing to the nutrient impairment" of surface waters. Fortunately, we have a good working relationship with DEP and David coordinated a meeting with leadership in late April. We had an excellent meeting, and they were receptive to hearing our side of the story. They committed to a more thorough review and requested

our members' comments. If you are in a BMAP, please review your document and submit comments to DEP as soon as possible as there is a June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

I hope you enjoy reading our 2025 Annual Report. I also hope to see you at our Annual Breakfast and Business meeting as part of the Florida Water Resources Council (FWRC) in West Palm Beach, May 7<sup>th</sup>. Breakfast starts at 8:30 AM and the meeting begins at 9:30 AM with our keynote speaker, State Representative Toby Overdorf. Please contact me at any time at [kcarter@broward.org](mailto:kcarter@broward.org) or 954-856-3879 with comments or questions. I look forward to our interactions this next FWEAUC trip around the sun and know we will have plenty to populate the 2026 report.

Sincerely,

Kevin Carter, FWEAUC President



## Florida Legislative Summary

*By David Childs*

The 2025 Legislative Session was marred by political acrimony and Republican Party infighting. As of the writing of this summary on the final day of the regularly scheduled session, the House and Senate still have not agreed to a



state budget. Indeed, they have not yet initiated the formal budget conference process. Notwithstanding Republican supermajorities in the House and Senate, disagreements over competing tax relief proposals and spending priorities persist. Lawmakers will return to Tallahassee in mid-May to complete the state budget. Despite the general rancor, it was a remarkably quiet legislative session for the domestic wastewater utility sector. There was no comprehensive water resource legislation, such as the Clean Waterways Act of 2020, nor was there a new utility mandate, such as the Senate Bill 64 surface water discharge elimination legislation. Several bills of interest, however, did pass and will be sent to the Governor:

- **SB 700 (Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services)** – The comprehensive Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services bill prohibits the introduction of any chemical, additive, or substance that is used in a public water system that is not used for the purpose of: (a) meeting or surpassing primary or secondary drinking water standards; (b) preventing, reducing, or removing contaminants; or (c) improving water quality. The intended effect of this provision is to prohibit the introduction of fluoride into Florida public drinking water.

- **SB 108 (Administrative Procedures)** – The Legislature passed a comprehensive update to laws governing agency rulemaking and regulatory planning. These modifications include a new requirement for agencies to report annually on their permit review and issuance timeframes, so the Legislature can identify programs that need reform or additional funding support. FDEP and water management district permitting programs will be subject to this new Legislative oversight.
- **SB 1228 (Spring Restoration)** – This legislation harmonizes and extends the schedules in Florida’s surface water discharge elimination statute and the springs flow restoration statute to facilitate a large and technically complex reclaimed water recharge project to restore Ichetucknee Springs and Santa Fe Springs. Several north central Florida utilities, FDEP, and the SJRWMD are involved in the project.
- **SB 1386 (Assault or Battery on a Utility Worker)** – This legislation reclassifies offenses that occur when a person knowingly commits an assault or battery against a utility worker while such utility worker is engaged in work on critical infrastructure, as defined in s. 812.141(1), F.S. This critical infrastructure definition includes “a water intake structure, water treatment facility, wastewater treatment plant, pump station, or lift station.” Notably, the definition does not include water or sewer pipes.
- **HB 11 (Municipal Water and Sewer Rates)** – This narrowly crafted legislation provides that a municipality which operates a water or sewer utility outside its municipal boundaries must charge consumers outside its boundaries the same rates, fees, and charges as it charges consumers within its boundaries if: (1) the consumers are located in a separate municipality, and (2) the municipality providing service uses a water or sewer treatment

plant located in the separate municipality to serve those consumers. Given these two parameters, this bill will likely only affect Miami Gardens.

- **HB 1123 (Sewer Collection Systems)** – This legislation clarifies that a municipality that operates a sewer utility can use revenue generated by the municipality’s operation of a central sewage system to expand the central sewage system.

In addition to engaging on legislative initiatives that passed the Legislature, the Utility Council also engaged on items that did not cross the finish. For instance, overly prescriptive sanitary sewer lateral assessment and rehabilitation bills (SB 1208 / HB 1187) were introduced and again failed to cross the finish line. Also, overly burdensome and prescriptive utility relocation language was stripped from the transportation package (SB 462) before it passed the Legislature.

Lastly, House and Senate resolutions in support of the “One Water Approaches to Water Resource Management” were introduced but only received one hearing in the House. The resolutions encouraged “One Water” methods to water resource management and the use of collaborative, integrated, resilience systems approaches to planning for and funding water resource projects.

## Potable Reuse

*By David Childs*

Over the past two years, the FWEA Utility Council participated in an ad hoc workgroup of FDEP and utility representatives in the development of a potable reuse regulatory program. Every two weeks, these committed professionals set aside their Friday afternoons to work through the complexities of establishing potable reuse permit conditions that protect the public health and the environment. The workgroup also carefully avoided rule requirements that would create regulatory roadblocks or cause undue economic burdens. The painstaking effort culminated in the Environmental Regulation Commission's unanimous approval of Potable Reuse Rule 62-565, F.A.C.

Key elements of the approved rule include:

- **Pilot Testing Program.** The rule generally requires a pilot testing program for all “Advanced Water Treatment Facilities” that produce potable reuse water. Utility Council representatives, however, secured rule language that allows utilities to reduce pilot testing based on the results of previous pilot testing programs, use of commercially proven technologies, available research and guidance, and operating experience at similar water reclamation and reuse projects.
- **Pathogen Treatment.** The rule requires a 12-log reduction of giardia lamblia cysts and cryptosporidium oocytes between the raw wastewater and the finished drinking water with at least 50 percent reduction achieved between a point where the source water is not subject to recontamination and a point downstream. For enteric viruses (including rotaviruses and noroviruses), the rule requires a 14-log reduction between the raw

wastewater and the finished drinking water with at least 50 percent reduction achieved between a point where the source water is not subject to recontamination. The rule describes how these reductions can be proven through the use of membrane filtration systems or UV treatment.

- **Constituent Monitoring.** The rule details the various constituents that must be monitored, the frequency, and location of monitoring points.
- **Off-spec Water Management.** The rule provides options for potable reuse providers to manage water that does not meet drinking water requirements, including storage and alternative disposal methods.
- **Operator Staffing.** The rule details operator staffing and certification requirements for potable reuse treatment systems, with an eye towards tailoring the wastewater or drinking water expertise to the nature of the treatment technologies being implemented.

Importantly, these new rule requirements were designed to avoid inadvertently impacting longstanding aquifer recharge practices and subjecting them to requirements that would not create environmental or public health benefits.

to develop state and regional policies regarding the use, treatment and regulation of reclaimed water. Most recently, this effort has involved the development of a potable reuse regulatory program in close collaboration with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Last year, FDEP withdrew its previously proposed amendments to Rule 62-610, F.A.C., regarding potable reuse. FDEP has determined that much of the proposed rule language would be more appropriately located in a new drinking water rule, which will be codified in a new Chapter 62-565, F.A.C.



Over the past several months, representatives of the FWEA Utility Council have met with FDEP several times and discussed all aspects of potable reuse regulation from operator staffing requirements to treatment technologies to pathogen monitoring. The focus has been on achieving a shared goal of a robust and efficient permitting program that protects the public health and the environment. FDEP plans to conduct rulemaking workshops this summer, with an eye towards adopting the potable reuse rules the close of 2024 and ratified by the Florida Legislature in 2025.

## PFAS

*By FWEAUC President and Joint PFAS Chair Kevin Carter (Broward County Water & Wastewater Services)*

Elections, appointments, and litigation over the last year will likely determine the fate of the many facets of PFAS regulation and legislation moving forward. The [2024 Florida Water and Environment Association Utility Council \(FWEAUC\) Annual Report](#) covered an exceptional period of PFAS activity, especially by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Implementing the PFAS Strategic Roadmap remained a high priority for EPA until mid-January 2025. In November 2024, EPA released its [PFAS Strategic Roadmap: Third Annual Progress Report](#).

With a new President in the Oval Office, EPA is reviewing all their recently passed rules and proposed rules. However, they kept the public comment process for their surface water PFAS human health criteria and biosolids risk assessment (more below). I don't have a crystal ball, but it is clear changes will occur at the agency, especially with budgets and personnel.

In fact, the nominee for EPA Assistant Administrator of Water is Jessica Kramer. Jessica and her team worked great with the FWEAUC and other state water sector organizations while she was the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Deputy Secretary for Regulatory Programs. We look forward to working with her in the new leadership role. The following are the main PFAS issues as we move forward with a new political landscape in Washington D.C.



## CERCLA (Superfund Act)

In April 2024, [EPA designated two per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances](#) — perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), including their salts and structural isomers, as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response,



Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) also known as the Superfund Act. [The final rule](#) went into effect July 2024 almost two years since the proposed rule was released in September 2022.

During the PFOS and PFOA CERCLA rulemaking, EPA stated they do not have authority to provide the water sector an exemption from the rule but would use “discretion” during final rule implementation. Indeed, EPA released a “[PFAS Enforcement Discretion and Settlement Policy Under CERCLA](#)” document stating they would not target sectors such as water and wastewater utilities. Unfortunately, third parties affected by a Superfund cleanup can sue utilities to pay for the cleanup costs. Thus, the water sector still bears liability with the CERCLA rule. As a reminder, the FWEAUC and the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association Water Utility Council as well as many water sector organizations including American Water Works Association (AWWA), Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) and Water Environment Federation (WEF) submitted [quality and comprehensive comments](#) on this proposed rule.

Potentially the water sector may find itself in a “Public Pays” instead of a “Polluter Pays” scenario (please [click here](#) for a Water Coalition Against PFAS resource). The Water Coalition Against PFAS is comprised of AMWA, AWWA, NACWA, National Rural Water Association (NRWA) and WEF and seeks to educate federal policymakers on the PFAS impacts to the water sector and advocate for valid, science-based PFAS regulations and legislation. The FWEAUC thanks all the Florida



utilities that submitted letters of support to Congress last year for a PFAS exemption bill. The letters were part of an education effort for the U.S. Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works ([EPW](#)) held on March 20, 2024. U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.), at the time Ranking Member of the EPW, reported [over 250 letters received](#) before the hearing, and I know there were more coming to her office from Florida. Importantly, Senator Capito is now Chair of the EPW after the Fall of 2024 elections. While there is no U.S. Senate exemption bill yet, we can likely expect one in the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress. Fortunately, a bi-partisan [H.R.1267 - Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act](#) was filed and referred to the [House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment](#). The Water Coalition [extended support](#) for this bill and please expect a call from the FWEAUC for support letters again in 2025.

While work continues in Congress for an exemption, the court systems will also have a role. The [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) along with other parties including [NACWA](#), WaterReuse, and WEF challenged the rule last year. EPA recently requested and

received a 60-day extension due, in part, to a change in their leadership and other key personnel. Potentially the case could go to court this summer. Please stay tuned as always with the FWEAUC as we stay engaged on this critical PFAS issue for our members.

### **Effluent Limitations Guidelines Plan 15: Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW) Influent PFAS Study**

In January 2023, EPA released a [Effluent Limitation Guidelines Plan 15](#) that focuses on numerous industry discharges across the country. The purpose is to develop effluent guidelines and pretreatment standards for industries with significant sources of PFAS. Initially, EPA focused on PFAS concentrations in wastewater facility influent. However, a draft PFAS monitoring plan released in Summer of 2023 recommended influent, effluent, biosolids monitoring, and sampling up to ten industrial users for PFAS.

The draft plan also recommended sampling at the largest 400 wastewater treatment facilities in the country. Of the 400, 19 are Florida facilities: Broward County, Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood, Sunrise (Sawgrass), Miami-Dade County (North, Central, and South Facilities), Boca Raton, Boynton Beach, South Central Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (Delray Beach & Boynton Beach), East Central Regional in Palm Beach County (West Palm Beach, Lake Worth Beach, Riviera Beach, Town of Palm Beach, portions of Palm Beach County), JEA, Orlando, Orange County, Pinellas County, Tampa, Tallahassee, Water Conserve II (Orlando and Orange County), Emerald Coast Utilities (Pensacola).

On March 26, 2024 [EPA posted](#) “Proposed Information Collection Request; Comment Request; POTW Influent PFAS Study Data Collection” to the Federal Register. Among many provisions, the EPA “estimates that approximately 400



POTWs with the highest daily flow rates of all POTWs in the U.S. will complete a mandatory electronic questionnaire.” Comments on the document were [due to the docket](#) May 28, 2024. EPA submitted a [second request for public comments](#) on October 10, 2024. Beyond contributing to the POTW Influent PFAS Study, this effort will contribute to the [National Sewage Sludge Survey \(NSSS\)](#).

The [POTW Influent PFAS Study](#) will collect nationwide data on industrial wastewater discharges of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) into the environment. This information collection will produce a robust, national data set that will enable the EPA to characterize the type and quantity of PFAS in industrial discharges. The EPA will use this wastewater sampling data to identify and prioritize industrial point source categories where additional study or regulations may be warranted to control PFAS discharges. However, the wastewater utilities selected for the study will bear the sampling and analysis costs which will be significant. In addition, NACWA points out in their comments the lack of public communication strategy on the results, especially for biosolids. NACWA requested the biosolids sampling be phased in after the other sampling took place. The survey and study remain at the Office Management and Budget Office and are likely delayed with the transition to the new administration.

## **Biosolids**

Per EPA’s [PFAS Strategic Roadmap](#), EPA planned to finalize a PFOA and PFOS biosolids risk assessment by “Winter 2024.” Although they did not finalize the document, they released a [Draft Sewage Sludge Risk Assessment for Perfluorooctanoic Acid \(PFOA\) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid \(PFOS\)](#) for public comment on January 14, 2025. The EPA will accept written comments from the public on the draft risk assessment ([Docket ID no. EPA-HQ-OW-2024-0504](#)) through August 14, 2025 (extended from the original March 17, 2025 deadline).

A major milestone to reach that goal was the EPA’s Scientific Advisory Board Final Report ‘Approach to Biosolids Chemical Risk



Assessment and Biosolids Tool released in October 2023. Both WEF and NACWA provided comments to the SAB with several concerns including practical implications of implementation.

As with other PFAS issues, the courts are involved on a couple of fronts. [NACWA](#) is seeking dismissal of a Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility’s (PEER) lawsuit to force EPA to issue federal Clean Water Act limits for PFAS in biosolids. Similar to previous filings, the [Federal Department of Justice and NACWA](#) stated Congress tasked EPA, not outside parties and courts, with determining pollutant regulations. NACWA expects court responses in the coming weeks. In a separate case, [five Texas farmers](#) sued a biosolids management company over PFAS in the material.

## Human Health Water Quality Criteria

In January 2025, EPA released [2024 Draft PFAS Human Health Water Quality Criteria](#) (please see table below). The public comment period originally ended on February 24, 2025 but was extended until April 29, 2025. Please click this link for [a technical fact sheet](#) and please note the proposed standards are lower than the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations. It is unclear how the new

**Table 1.** Draft Human Health Criteria (HHC) for Three PFAS.

PFAS	Water + Organism HHC (ng/L; ppt) <sup>1</sup>	Organism Only HHC (ng/L; ppt) <sup>1</sup>
PFOA	0.0009	0.0036
PFOS	0.06	0.07
PFBS	400	500

<sup>1</sup> Values are provided in ng/L units to aid in comparison to method detection limit (MDL).

administration will go forward but the FWEAUC will certainly be tracking this one closely.

### **National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR)**

On March 14, 2023, [EPA proposed NPDWR for six PFAS](#) including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA, commonly known as GenX Chemicals), perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS), and perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS). Thirteen months later they were finalized in [April 2024](#). While the rule focuses on drinking water standards, this rule has potential to affect water reuse, effluent limits, and cleanup targets among other rules down the road. I have a feeling you won't forget where you were the day the final rule is released. "[AWWA and the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies \(AMWA\)](#) on June 7 filed a petition with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to review U.S. EPA's Final PFAS Drinking Water Rule. AWWA and AMWA share EPA's goal of protecting public health. The associations are concerned, however, that EPA did not rely on the best available science and the most recent occurrence data and used novel approaches as the basis for portions of the rule. "The petitioners believe the rule underestimates nationwide costs and adds to affordability challenges without achieving the public health outcomes we all seek." Since the change of administration, EPA requested two delays in the litigation process for a total of 90 days. Potentially we will see some action on this in the next couple of months



## Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

On February 1, 2024, EPA released two proposed regulations under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA):

- Listing [Nine Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Compounds as RCRA Hazardous Constituents](#).
- Modifying the [definition of hazardous waste](#) as it applies to cleanups at permitted hazardous waste facilities to give clarification for emerging contaminants such as PFAS.

EPA's Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery ([ORCR](#)) implements RCRA. EPA is took [public comments](#) on these two regulations last year but has not moved forward with final rules. Both AWWA and NACWA stated the rule had good promise to hold polluters accountable. However, both organizations also stated if not implemented properly, the rule could negatively impact drinking water and wastewater utilities' waste stream management.



So that's some current PFAS highlights from Washington D.C. Certainly, never a boring realm. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us and visit our website for updated PFAS information. In addition, if your entity is not a FWEAUC member, please consider joining so you can be more involved and stay informed.



## FlaWARN 2025

*By FWEAUC President and FlaWARN Steering Committee Chair, Kevin Carter (Broward County Water & Wastewater Services)*

The Florida Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network ([FlaWARN](#)) is the primary group that responds to emergencies and recently global



supply chain issues and third party pipe damages. When part of the state is impacted, other areas in state respond with aid, “Utilities helping Utilities, Friends helping Friends.” Created in April 2005 because of the devastating impact that Hurricanes Charlie, Frances, Jeanne, and Ivan had in 2004. Unfortunately, FlaWARN found itself extremely busy in 2024 with almost as many hurricanes as the year it as founded. Hurricane Debby, Helene, and Milton found their way to Florida’s shores and caused devastation across our communities. Many of the areas, such as Pinellas County, were hit by more than one event but persevered with FlaWARN assistance. Below is a synopsis of the responses:

- FlaWARN responded to Category 1 **Hurricane Debby** in early August 2024. This storm made landfall in same region as 2023’s Hurricane Idalia so some systems, especially along the coast, that were recovering from the previous year suffered impacts. This was more a rainfall event than wind or storm surge:
  - 13 primarily, small utilities, due to the rural nature of the landfall, requested aid. 4 entities provided response led by the Florida Rural Water Association as they are very familiar with these systems and people. In addition, US Water provided critical relief as did two local, public utilities – Regional Utilities and City of Chiefland.




- FlaWARN responded to Category 4 **Hurricane Helene** which was the 3<sup>rd</sup> hurricane to hit the Big Bend Region in 13 months. However, due to primarily to storm surge, the Tampa Bay region such as St. Petersburg and their home county Pinellas County also needed aid as did the state's capitol Tallahassee.
  - Nearly 20 large, to very small (mobile home parks) systems requested aid during this event. Most requests were to repair damaged wastewater collection and drinking water distribution systems. The major equipment deployed included generators, bypass pumps, and control panels.
  - Over 80 water sector personnel from 7 utilities and FRWA responded to this event. The major equipment deployed included generators, bypass pumps, and control panels.
- FlaWARN responded to Category 5 **Hurricane Milton** in early to mid October, less than two weeks after Hurricane Helen's landfall. Hurricane Milton is second-most intense Atlantic hurricane ever recorded over the Gulf of Mexico and made landfall just south of Tampa Bay. Due to its size and population impacted, this storm required a larger FlaWARN response.
  - Over 13 major to small utilities including some of the states' largest ones requested mutual aid during this event. In addition, over 200 very small systems (e.g., mobile home parks) need generators which the FRWA focused on with DEP, state EOC, and local communities.
  - Over 100 water sector personnel from 11 utilities and the FRWA responded to this event. The major equipment deployed included vac

trucks, generators, bypass pumps, control panels, and replacement pipelines.



I am proud to say, the FWEAUC members were a major part of the relief teams including JEA, Clay County Utility Authority, and GRU. In addition, Toho Water Authority, Orange County, City of Tallahassee, and Bonita Springs Utilities sent in teams to different storms after they had been impacted. From South Florida, the City of Margate, City of Boynton Beach, and Palm Beach County sent in resources after Hurricane Milton. Our road warriors from the Panhandle – Regional Utilities – are always the first to respond and they were involved in all three storm responses. In addition, U.S. Water Corporation does an outstanding job as a FlaWARN responder.

FlaWARN could not exist without the Florida Rural Water Association and they also called upon four other states' Rural Water Associations. Finally, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection cannot be thanked enough for their



service and dedication in assisting FlaWARN. What is so great about the water sector, I received interest from at least 10 other utilities wanting to respond to each storm. We always can count on each other when we need help the most. However, I think we deserve some time off for good behavior.







## Public Outreach

*By Lisa Wilson-Davis*

The FWEAUC Public Outreach Committee remains dedicated to fostering engagement with elected officials, regulatory agencies, the public, and our members to raise awareness, understanding, and support for issues impacting the wastewater industry.


Our formal outreach efforts began in early 2021 with the enlistment of Public Relations, Branding, and Communication support from HDR Engineering, Inc. Initial efforts focused on crafting the FWEAUC "Brand" by defining Our Promise, Our Position, and Our Story, and developing an Outreach Strategic Plan. This phase also standardized fonts, colors, and templates for communication materials including envelopes, letterheads, memos, reports, and PowerPoint presentations.

Building upon that foundation, the FWEAUC and HDR conducted internal focus group sessions throughout June and July 2022 on potable reuse and asset management. Approximately 10 participants from diverse regions of the state contributed to each session. The resulting work products included an Asset Management and Potable Reuse Toolkit, along with customizable one-page informational documents designed to support member messaging.

Significant milestones achieved in 2024 include:

- **Completion and Launch of the FWEA UC Website:** Officially launched during the April 5, 2024 Annual Business Meeting, the new website ([www.fweautilitycouncil.org](http://www.fweautilitycouncil.org)) serves as a central hub for information





dissemination, resource access, and member engagement. It includes a public section and a dedicated members-only portal.

- **Creation of a Potable Reuse Informational Video:** A one-minute educational video is being developed to support potable reuse outreach initiatives. The video is designed for use in a variety of platforms, providing a concise, accessible introduction to potable reuse for a wide range of audiences.

Looking ahead, we continue to explore opportunities to expand our reach, including leveraging social media platforms to amplify our messaging and engage stakeholders in real-time.

Through these concerted efforts, the FWEA UC Public Outreach Committee is building a strong, consistent voice for the wastewater industry and strengthening connections with stakeholders across Florida.



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