

INDUSTRYINSIGHT

Compiled by Neda Simeonova



Tackling Georgia's Water Shortage

Forum offers short- and long-term strategies to achieve water sustainability

In recent years, water shortage has affected a number of regions across the nation. Georgia, specifically, has been in the midst of a severe drought that has led to water bans affecting millions in the Atlanta area.

Water & Wastes Digest recently spoke with Jeff Garwood, president and CEO of GE Water & Process Technologies, about GE's role in helping Georgia overcome its water shortage.

WWD: In December, GE Water & Process Technologies and Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce held Georgia's largest Water Sustainability Forum. What was the purpose of the forum?

Jeff Garwood: The forum was a thought leadership conference that brought together water experts from government, municipalities and business to explore sustainable approaches to tackle Georgia's water shortage. North Georgia is in its second year of an unprecedented drought that is stressing water reserves for Metro Atlanta and surrounding areas.

Our forum was an open discussion to broaden awareness and expand on everyone's role in developing technology, policy and conservation strategies that can help the region reduce, reuse and replenish water supplies. The forum also offered attendees practical workshops that covered short-term strategies to achieve the recent 10% water reduction directive and strategies to achieve long-term water sustainability in preparation for future water challenges. The Metro Atlanta area, which is home to about half of Georgia's population, has grown by 20% from 2000 to 2006. All stakeholders have to work together to ensure that sustainable water supplies will be available for continued growth and prosperity in the state.

WWD: Who participated in the forum, and what were the key elements of the conference?

Garwood: More than 200 guests from Georgia businesses, government and utilities joined us for the forum. Our morning session featured an incredible lineup of speakers that included Senator Johnny Isakson; Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin; Sam Olens, chairman of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners and the Atlanta Regional Commission; and John Rice, vice chairman of GE.

Dr. Wayne Clough, president of the Georgia Institute of Technology, moderated a panel discussion that I participated in, along with Dr. Carol Couch, director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division; Jack Dozier, executive director of the Georgia Association of Water Professionals; David Kubala, environmental affairs manager for the Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority; and Gregory Koch, managing director of Global Water Stewardship for the Coca-Cola Co.

During lunch, Congressman John Linder addressed our guests, and in the afternoon, we offered breakout sessions.

Four [key] areas included municipal, industrial, green buildings and long-term water sustainability planning.

WWD: What role will GE play in helping Georgia overcome its water shortage?

Garwood: As a technology provider, we will work with industries and municipalities to find ways to reduce water usage, reuse water that is already available and explore alternatives such as seawater desalination for sustainable new sources. Municipal water reuse with GE technology is already occurring in Gwinnett County, Fulton County and Forsyth County, to name a few. Our advanced filtration equipment and chemical treatment offerings can also help to reduce water consumption and reuse processes water in nonpotable applications such as cooling towers or other purposes.

As a member of the business community, GE is looking at its own plants in Georgia and evaluating and implementing water usage reductions at each of them.

WWD: What sustainability options were presented at the forum that you think will help Georgia reduce water demand and increase water reserves?

Garwood: There is no one solution that is going to solve the water shortage in Georgia; however, there are some options that could have a big impact.

During the forum, I had the opportunity to speak with representatives from several manufacturing and utility companies and was surprised to learn how many of them reuse little or none of their water. It may still be cheaper for industries to continue drawing water from the Chattahoochee River and other surface water sources in Georgia, but as supplies tighten, municipal drinking water requirements will take priority over other uses. As a result, the cost of water will likely increase for industrial users while supplies will decrease. This means industries must find ways to maximize every drop of water and reduce their demands on municipal supplies.

Seawater desalination is another option that should be carefully considered. There has already been some talk of desalination technology to provide coastal cities with freshwater or even constructing a pipeline to bring the water 250 miles inland to Atlanta. These are all possible solutions, but in order for Atlanta to continue to prosper, it must find new, sustainable water supplies soon. **WWD**

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Thomas Mills Named Chairman of WWEMA



The Water and Wastewater Equipment Manufacturers Association (WWEMA) announced that Thomas M. Mills, vice president of marketing and business development for Severn Trent Services, has been appointed chairman. Mills began his one-year term as chairman at WWEMA's 99th annual meeting, held Nov. 8 to 10, 2007, in Ponte Vedra, Fla.

According to Mills, "America's water and wastewater industry is confronted by unprecedented challenges of population growth, enhanced security, depleting water supplies and an aging infrastructure. WWEMA and its members are leaders in providing solutions to these challenges. Working with regulators, we drive innovation and bring new, cost-effective technologies to the marketplace while protecting our country's water resources."

Hydra-Stop Wins Nova Award



ADS, LLC announced that Hydra-Stop, one of its three operating divisions, is being

honored by the Construction Innovation Forum. The forum has selected Hydra-Stop's Insta-Valve Plus to win the 2007 NOVA Award for outstanding innovation in construction. Insta-Valve Plus is a liquid flow control valve insertion for immediate line stopping capabilities.

UV Disinfection Technology Ensures WRF Exceeds Fecal Permit Requirements



Aquionics announced its UV disinfection equipment is helping the Flat Creek Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) in Gainesville, Ga., exceed permit limits for fecal samples by a significant margin. Three medium-pressure InLine UV systems were installed at the facility more than six years ago, and three more were added in 2004. The Flat Creek WRF recently gained a second place National Clean Water Act Recognition Award for operations and maintenance from the U.S. EPA.

Public Invited to Comment on Nutrients Reduction Plan



The Gulf Hypoxia Task Force, chaired by the U.S. EPA, released its 2008 revised Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan that identifies efforts to track progress, update the science and adapt actions to reduce nutrients flowing from 31 states into the Mississippi River. The revised plan includes several improvements over the current action plan, first published in 2001. It increases accountability and specificity for state and federal partners; shifts the lead for nutrient reduction strategies from Mississippi River sub-basin teams to the states; charges federal agencies to prepare complementary federal nutrient reduction strategies for appropriate federal programs and projects; and enhances mechanisms for tracking and reporting.

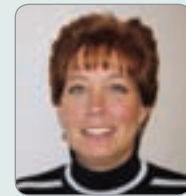
Council Seeks to Alleviate Water Supply Deficiencies

The Southern California Leadership Council (SCLC), a coalition of business



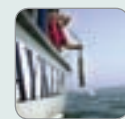
leaders and former governors, urges leaders in Sacramento to promote "aggressive and immediate action" on water supply and infrastructure issues. Under terms of a federal court decision, the Department of Water Resources is cutting its initial allocation for water deliveries in 2008. Approximately 60% of water comes from imported supplies, and Southern California is now facing extreme water supply deficiencies; however, "environmentally benign infrastructure improvements" can help improve the storage, capture and conveyance of water to the area, according to SCLC. The council suggests greater use of available groundwater resources and of the region's relatively inexpensive storage capacity.

KMS Announces New Northwest Regional Sales Manager



Koch Membrane Systems, Inc. (KMS), a developer and manufacturer of membranes and membrane filtration systems, has hired Karen McHale as its new northwest regional sales manager. In addition to providing strong support to existing customers, McHale will be responsible for growing business and increasing market share in the Northwestern U.S. and western provinces of Canada.

Second 'Minding the Planet' Grant Awarded to Citizens Combating 'Green Slime'



Friends of Casco Bay has received the second annual "Minding the Planet" grant from the YSI Foundation. The group was awarded the full \$10,000 grant for its Nitrogen Pollution Initiative. Friends of Casco Bay is a nonprofit marine stewardship organization in South Portland, Maine. The organization has a hypothesis that nutrient overloading in the water is having a harmful effect on the bay ecosystem. This has led to visible growth of slimy green algae. The organization plans to collect a large data set of nitrogen, dissolved oxygen, pH and chlorophyll levels at more than 30 sites around the bay. The data will be provided to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection for further analysis and modeling.

Des Moines Metropolitan WRA Installs New Sewage-to-Energy Technology



Sixteen communities in the Des Moines, Iowa, metro area are joint owners of the metropolitan wastewater reclamation authority and together have moved central Iowa into the future by installing a MicroSludge System. The technology processes sewage sludge and converts the sewage sludge to biogas, which contains methane that can be used by power generators. This new energy source can be used at the facility for other operations, such as heating the buildings, and reduce overall electricity use. Data on cost savings will be collected for the first six months of operation. Paradigm Environmental Technologies, the creator of MicroSludge, said that the system is the third full-scale system in operation and the first commercial installation in the U.S. **WWD**

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