

By WWD editorial staff

# ACE08

*a Peach*

World's water event highlights,  
promotes industry progress



**Atlanta**  
*Georgia*

*Thousands of water professionals gathered in Atlanta June 8 to 12 for the American Water Works Association (AWWA) 2008 Annual Conference and Exposition (ACE08). The 127<sup>th</sup> annual event featured an extensive professional program, committee meetings, special events, a bustling exhibit hall and more. In a city working to overcome severe and ongoing drought, the industry's best and brightest shed light on timely and crucial water-related issues.*

### State of the Industry

Moderator Jon Runge, AWWA, and presenter John Mann, principal for Mann Consulting, Inc., delivered an overview of 2007 State of the Industry Report findings. Approximately 1,900 AWWA members—more than half of whom possess more than 20 years of industry experience—completed and submitted industry surveys.



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Respondents expressed more than ever that the water industry's current and future stability is declining. Main areas of immediate concern include: source water, business factors, regulation, infrastructure and workforce.

Overall input, however, did not paint an entirely gloom and doom picture. On the utilities side, for example, approximately half of capital spending is being invested in expansion work—up 11% from 2006 findings.

AWWA will release 2007 State of the Industry results later this year.

#### Joint Announcement

The U.S. EPA and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) jointly announced at the conference that the CDC has become the first federal partner of the EPA's WaterSense program. The program encourages more efficient water use in residential, commercial and federal facilities. Dr. Julie Gerberding, CDC director, and Benjamin H. Grumbles, EPA's assistant administrator for water, signed the agreement.

#### Key Speaker

Former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo spoke before a large audience of water professionals at ACE08. Cuomo discussed water supply and shortages, infrastructure concerns and workforce challenges. He also touched on the economy and war in Iraq, urging political leaders to put aside their ideologies and work together for a consensus. Speaking about the upcoming presidential election, Cuomo said he would like to hear more from the candidates about water-related issues and spoke of Washington's need to recognize the importance of funding for water infrastructure and programs.

#### Local Leak Detection on Display

The city of Atlanta's Department of Watershed Management authorized the Pitometer Group of ADS Environmental Services to perform demonstrations of its large-diameter leak detection services at ACE08. The demonstrations were held throughout the day on Tuesday, June 10.

A leak correlation was performed on 1,300 ft of a 30-in. water distribution line located on Marietta Street, five blocks from the Georgia World Congress Center. The correlator sensors were placed on hydrants on the north end of the line near Simpson Street and on the south end. A brief baseline survey was taken and then a hydrant located on the corner of Marietta Street and Latimer Street was flowed briefly through a 3/4-in. needle valve to simulate the leak that was correlated.



This nonintrusive technique requires only a static connection to the water from the hydrants and requires little preparation.

#### Competitions Abound

The Louisville, Ky., Water Co. won the annual "Best of the Best" Water Taste Test at the conference. The event had North American winners of regional water-tasting competitions competing against each other. The Mal Paso Filtration Plant in Puerto Rico won second place and a water utility in Blythe, Ga., earned third place.

In the annual Tapping Contest, the team from Ohio's Columbus Water



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# ACE08 meet

came in first place for the second year in a row, with a time of 1:22.90. Placing second were the Four Jokers, representing California and Nevada, at 1:23.31, followed by the team from Birmingham, Ala., Water Works with a time of 1:23.44.

For the women's tapping contest, the Sassy Taps from the Pacific Northwest Section won first place with a time of 2:13.97. Taking second was the Nitro Bits, also from the Pacific Northwest, with a time of 2:47.06.

In the Meter Madness competition earlier in the week, Eric Kresmery of Elgin, Ill., won first place after assembling a working water meter from a bucket of parts in 40.66 seconds.

In the Top Ops competition, Florida's Palm Coast Water Buoys won first place for the second year in a row.

### Tackling Security

Abloy Security, Inc. exhibited its high-security locking solutions, which feature the Shut-Out Defender, at ACE08. This technology is a security solution for residential water control.

The Shut-Out Defender secures revenues by preventing redirection of piping to bypass residential meters. It fits snugly over the meter-coupling nut and defends against theft. Abloy designed the technology in the face of increasing residential theft from water and gas utilities across the nation.

### Meet the Editors

On the evening of June 9, the WWD exposition booth drew a large crowd when the magazine's editorial and sales team hosted its annual Meet the Editors networking event. Industry professionals—some old friends, some new—came together to enjoy good company, conversation, refreshments and hors d'oeuvres. The WWD staff thanks all who attended for helping make this gathering a great success and is looking forward to the next Meet the Editors event. [WWD](#)

The WWD editorial staff can be reached at 847.391.1011 or by e-mail at [wwdeditor@sgcmail.com](mailto:wwdeditor@sgcmail.com).

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#### About the Facilitator

Ian C. Watson, P.E., is president of Rostek Associates, Inc., an independent consulting firm specializing in membrane processes, and executive director of the American Membrane Technology Association. He has more than 30 years of experience in the design, construction and operation of membrane water treatment plants, a record that includes some 100 projects worldwide.

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