

By Harold G. Fravel, Jr.



AMTA: Ready for 2013

Association poised for growth & ready to tout membrane technology

The American Membrane Technology Assn. (AMTA) offers a number of opportunities to learn, network and promote during several events in 2013. The San Antonio AMTA/AWWA (American Water Works Assn.) Joint Membrane Technology Conference & Exposition will be held Feb. 25 to 28, 2013, and will be one of the largest membrane conferences to date. The event includes five pre-conference workshops and two facility tours of existing membrane plants. Attendance is anticipated to be high.

At the Helm

After the retirement of Ian Watson as AMTA executive director, the AMTA board of directors announced my appointment as the new executive director of the association.

Having recently retired from the Dow Chemical Co., Dow Water and Process Solutions, I come to the position with more than 25 years of experience with membrane and desalination processes. I also bring experience working with non-profit organizations as a past president of Southeast Desalination Assn. (SEDA) and as SEDA's liaison to the AMTA Board. I served as the program chair for the SEDA Fall Symposium in Miami, which was dedicated to low-pressure membrane technology, and I have been active in the training of SEDA and AMTA members through presentations

at symposiums, workshops and the SEDA Membrane Operator Certification course. I hold two patents and recently was given the SEDA Instructor of the Decade award.

AMTA is on the brink of a step change in its presence in the water industry and needs strong, dedicated leadership. Coordination with other associations is imperative to AMTA's strength, and working closely with the AMTA affiliates is necessary. Retaining the current membership is imperative, but reaching out to other membrane industry users and suppliers will broaden AMTA's scope and the role it plays in the membrane industry.

On the Cutting Edge

Membrane technology continues to grow in all aspects of water treatment and should play a pivotal role in the expansion of water reuse and in solving produced water issues. Likewise, AMTA will be reaching out to all membrane users in a number of fields, including industrial process, beverage manufacture and other areas of water treatment. The growth of low-pressure ultrafiltration and microfiltration membranes, along with membrane bioreactors, will continue in 2013. The recent final approval and activity for the Carlsbad Seawater Desalination plant is a good sign that the U.S. is ready for seawater treatment. High-pressure

reverse osmosis, seawater and nanofiltration membrane element manufacturers continue to innovate improvements, which will make membrane treatment more affordable and efficient.

In addition, four Technology Transfer Workshops will be held jointly with the affiliates SEDA, South Central Membrane Assn. and Northwest Membrane Operator Assn. in 2013 in Chesapeake, Va.; Des Moines, Iowa; South Padre Island, Texas; and Salt Lake City. The Technology Transfer Workshops are smaller, more focused sessions that are held regionally to allow greater participation of AMTA members around the country. Each workshop will have a tabletop exhibit area and generally will include a facility tour and discussion of local case histories and topics of interest in that area.

AMTA also recently revamped its website, www.amtaorg.com. The new site features links to the AMTA and Affiliates events calendar, as well as a series of fact sheets for dissemination to the public to further the understanding of what membrane water treatment technologies have to offer. **MT**

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