



APWA-NC President's Message



Our Annual Conference and Equipment Show is right around the corner. Chapter President-Elect James Martin has put together an outstanding program filled with informative technical sessions, local and nationally recognized speakers along with a variety of vendors and exhibitors to help you get your job done more effectively and efficiently!

Our technical division boards have been busy planning educational conferences and workshops as well. Highlights of the upcoming conference schedule include:

- July 17-20 Administrative Management/Technology Divisions, Sunset Beach
- Aug 8 -10 Solid Waste Division, Sunset Beach
- Sept 17 -18 Stormwater Management Division, Asheville
- Oct 3 - 5 Equipment Services/Streets Divisions, Asheville

Be sure to check the chapter calendar regularly for updated information on all of our workshops and conferences. <http://northcarolina.apwa.net/events/chapter/>

In addition to the excellent technical programs designed to meet the needs of our membership, there is plenty of time to network with your peers and suppliers. We'll also have opportunities to have some fun and give back to the communities we visit. I do encourage you to attend our conferences and workshops to receive an outstanding value in professional development. I look forward to seeing you there!

We certainly have a lot to be proud of in North Carolina! I'll begin with Mr. Dan Mikkleson, Public Works Director for the City of Salisbury. Dan was chosen as one of APWA's Top 10 Public Works Leaders of the Year for 2012. Dan was recognized on May 15th in front of the Salisbury City Council. Presiding over the recognition ceremony was National APWA President-Elect Ms.

Elizabeth Treadway. Joining her were Keith Pugh, Past President, and Russell Byrd, Vice-President. Congratulations are in order for Dan and his City of Salisbury family for this award. Dan is the 11th Top Ten winner from North Carolina in the 51 year history of the award. You can follow this link to read more: <http://www.salisburypost.com/News/050912-Dan-Mikkleson-wins-professional-award-qcd>

I'm also proud to report that the City of Raleigh's Transit Operations Facility has been chosen as the recipient of Project of the Year in the highly competitive \$5 million to \$25 million category. This new facility is designed and constructed to be energy efficient, environmentally sustainable, and to use the most up-to date Green Building technologies. The project has been submitted to the Green Building Council (GBC) for review and approval. At submittal of this application, the GBC has completed their design review and is conducting construction review. The project is anticipated to achieve LEED Platinum, the first such integrated facility in the nation to do so.

APWA-NC recently lost a true friend with the passing of Bob Linker. Bob has been involved with APWA-NC for as long as I can remember. Bob's presence and HDR's support/sponsorship, have been synonymous with so many events at both the State and National level. When you met Bob, you were always greeted with that warm smile and firm handshake. . .didn't matter if you were a client, vendor, friend, or competitor. Maybe that is just Bob, a true gentleman who treated everyone equally. I am proud to have known Bob and on behalf of APWA-NC I wish to convey deepest sympathies to his family. Rest in peace Bob Linkner - we will miss you.

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APWA Government Affairs Committee

By Keith Pugh, PE, PWLF (with excerpts from Kurt Corey, GAC Chair)

The National APWA Government Affairs Committee (GAC) is working hard on behalf of communities all across the country. We understand that no community can exist without public infrastructure. It makes us safe, healthy and able to enjoy the quality of life we have come to expect.

As such, APWA is a committed advocate for our public infrastructure. The GAC and other member advocates are implementing efforts to create partnerships with key stakeholders, establish new lines of communication with policy-makers and extend our outreach into the center of public policy discussions. And we are making an impact. Our advocacy is focused on advancing the interests of all APWA members and the communities we serve. Five principal objectives guide our advocacy efforts and form the basis of our legislative and regulatory priorities and our positions on the issues:

- ◆ Support for adequate investment in public infrastructure
- ◆ Respect for local authority
- ◆ Reasonable regulations and protection from unfunded mandates
- ◆ Support for streamlining government oversight
- ◆ Support for sustainability and environmental stewardship

During our recent visit to Washington, DC to *Storm the Hill*, the GAC met with Congressional representatives to discuss five critically important issues requiring immediate attention.

1. Support for Surface Transportation Reauthorization
2. Implement Streamlined Transportation Project Review
3. Pass a long-term and adequately funded National Flood Insurance Program
4. Wastewater and Drinking Water Infrastructure Funding
5. The Farm Bill - (limit nutrient run-off)

Even with this progress, we can always use help with our advocacy efforts. You can get involved by joining APWA Advocates. By joining this effort, you will have a direct line of communication with the Congressional representative(s) in Washington who represents you. You can sign up for this initiative by following this link: http://www.apwa.net/be_involved/apwa-advocates. You will receive information concerning pending legislation and APWA's official position concerning that legislation. You will also receive guidance on a suggested response to your Congressional representative. The entire process is fairly painless and surprisingly effective! We encourage everyone to be involved, but we really need APWA Advocates in the following NC Congressional Districts:



APWA President-Elect Elizabeth Treadway, Senator Kay Hagan and GAC Member Keith Pugh.

District 1 G.K. Butterfield	District 2 Renee Ellmers
District 3 Walter Jones	District 4 David Price
District 7 Mike McIntyre	District 8 Larry Kissell
District 11 Heath Shuler (Transportation & Infrastructure Committee)	District 13 Brad Miller

The year ahead presents APWA with many new opportunities to build upon the successes we have achieved. We will continue to advocate for a public policy that invests in public infrastructure and the essential services public works provides all of our communities.

If you'd like more information, or be involved further, just give me a ring (336) 883-3197.

Short Session Preview

By Erin Wynia, NC League of Municipalities

NOTE: This summary first appeared in the May 15, 2012, edition of EcoLINC, the League's monthly electronic environmental newsletter. Sign up to receive this email newsletter once a month by sending a note to Lori Moyer.

Many proposals remain eligible for consideration by the N.C. General Assembly in the 2012 Short Session, which begins tomorrow. This overview by WRAL quotes legislative leaders promising a speedy session that will conclude by July 4. With the focus on state budget adjustments, controversial bills will not likely be considered.

Of top interest to League members, legislators have indicated priority consideration of hot-button local government authority issues of annexation and extra-territorial jurisdiction. The outcome of these discussions will affect the way communities grow and could dictate water and wastewater service areas for many utilities. In addition, legislators will likely vote on a constitutional amendment regarding governments' use of eminent domain, including for public utility purposes.

Other environmental legislation that could receive consideration this session includes the following topics:

Water. Beginning last session and continuing through the interim, the League has worked with a coalition of business and industry interests to advance changes to the state's reclaimed water laws, as well as statutory changes to increase water storage and ensure a smoother interbasin transfer process. Legislators may consider some of these ideas in the Short Session. In addition, the League will follow eligible bills that would prioritize the right of agricultural water withdrawers over the rights of all other water users and would require the interconnection of water and wastewater systems.

Regulatory reform. After overhauling the state's regulatory process last session, legislative leaders have expressed a desire to make further regulatory reforms in the Short Session. The Joint Committee on Regulatory Reform has met periodically throughout the interim period between sessions. Any proposals from this committee would be eligible for consideration in the Short Session.

DENR budget & regional offices. After slashing budget levels for the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in 2011, legislative budget-writers have proposed more modest budget cuts for the next fiscal year. In addition, budget guidelines indicate that funding of the Clean Water Management Trust Fund may become subject to further negotiations, while the required state matching funds for the State Revolving Funds may come from other budget reductions within the DENR budget. Calendars indicate that the House budget bill will be released the first day of session. Legislators will also consider an interim study recommendation against eliminating any DENR regional offices.

Asheville water system. The Metropolitan Sewerage/Water System Committee has recommended that legislators consider a bill in 2013 that would mandate the merger of Asheville's water system with the Metropolitan Sewerage District of Buncombe County. The committee report states that if the governments develop their own plan, "due consideration would be given." The League opposes this proposal and delivered this letter to the committee and Speaker Thom Tillis.

State buffer program. Pursuant to a 2011 legislative directive, DENR produced a report in February regarding the Neuse and Tar-Pam buffer rules. The report examined whether the two sets of buffer rules might be amended or implemented in a different way to achieve the same level of water quality protection while reducing the impact to riparian property owners in the two river basins; and whether to exempt from the rules all single-family residence lots of two acres in size or less platted before the rules became effective. Legislators may consider these proposals in light of the report's recommendations to keep the buffer rules in place.

RETIREE'S CORNER

by Stewart Sykes

As time moves on, I find that using the rule of seven helps more and more. Yes, tell me seven times and I'll remember! So, as the General Assembly begins its' 2012 "short session", the word needs to be spread quickly as follows: The National Institute on Retirement Security's report clearly indicates 2 very important points that other State and Local entities have already learned. 1) Defined Benefit retirement plans (like we have now) are more cost efficient over Defined Contribution plans due to higher returns and longevity risk pooling, and 2) Defined Contribution plans (most times where the employee must choose their investments, a 401(k) type plan) do not close funding shortfalls, and can actually increase employer costs. Again, we hope the DB/DC issue has been put to rest; however, we must watch out for those who want to chip away at the current plan, thinking only of short term gains in lieu of long term results. As indicated in an earlier article, Local Government decision makers must realize that diminishing retirement security will have significant negative impacts on police officers, firefighters and the many other dedicated employees they have now and want to have, especially in the future.

Requests for the General Assembly to consider include a modification to G.S. 128-28(k) that will clarify the role of the Local Government

Employees Retirement System (LGERS) Board of Trustees authority to grant COLA's as long as any changes are not inconsistent with the actions of the General Assembly. While this memorializes the way business has been conducted for years and looks rather simple on the surface, it is being requested in anticipation of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) making changes that might call for our type of Retirement System to be put into a position of granting automatic COLA's vs. the current method of ad hoc increases, thus creating unfunded long term liabilities. Unfortunately for retirees, last year's efforts to modify the very same section of this statute under Senate bill 538 is not included. You may recall this bill would grant the LGERS Board of Trustees authority to grant COLA's of up to 4% without being tied to the Consumer Price Index. This change would allow the Board to deal better with the 1990's GASB requirement to use the 5 year smoothing rule which when combined with the above referenced 1970's statute sets up a scenario whereby retiree benefits fall behind the Consumer Price Index much faster, and make it impossible for retiree benefits to ever catch up with inflation.

Other issues in this year's Legislative program include the "Protect the Pension Act of 2012". If passed as

written, it will provide whistleblower protection for reporting fraud, provide tools for conducting fraud investigations, provide authority to prevent "salary spiking", make it a crime to keep a disabled decedents benefit and clarify authority for Medical Board appointments.

Lastly, an "un-official" update on the value of the State's Pension program. In the fall of 2007, as the recession started, the Pension Plan had a value of \$77.4 billion. At its low point, February, 2009, the plan's value had dropped to \$54.6 billion! As of December 31, 2011, the value had recovered to \$71.8 billion. And now, I am pleased to report the value as of March 31, 2012 was \$75.9 billion, an increase of \$4.1 billion in three months! While we are within \$1.5 billion of where we were in 2007, we must remember the program is set up to grow by 7.25% per year (including 3% for inflation) just to maintain the actuarial integrity of the plan (no COLA's), so we are still behind, possibly by as much as \$25 billion. We must remember the plan serves some 850,000 with the local system serving 213,000 active and retired servants from 890 employers!!!

Hope to see you each of you at the upcoming 55th Annual Equipment Show and State Chapter Conference.



Buildings and Grounds Division

By Gary Smith

The Buildings and Grounds Division hosted an Ornamental Turf & Right of Ways seminar on April 25th in conjunction with the ODB Equipment Show at the NC State fairgrounds. This was the pesticide credit session that we have offered for the past couple of years and it was a great opportunity for participants to get credits needed to maintain their license. We had 32 in the Turf grass session and we had 28 in the Right of Way session. Special thanks to Will Wigal for all his efforts in coordinating this event!



Technology and Administrative Management

By Doran C. Maltba, PWLF, CGPM, Director

The Technology and Administrative Management Divisions have been very busy since our last blog. We have participated in three joint meetings to finalize our plans for what is shaping up to be an outstanding conference. First, the location; as they say in business *location is everything*, and that is why we have chosen to return to Sea Trail Golf Resort and Conference Center at Sunset Beach. Aside from the great scenery and warm weather, the conference itself will provide an outstanding opportunity to network and socialize with peers. However, there is a very serious

focus to this event. Too many of us have learned the hard way about preparing for emergencies. Therefore, this year's conference will attempt to mitigate our past planning, response and recovery failures by delivering focused sessions on how to prepare before the proverbial or in some cases, real storm. With that said, the appropriate theme for this year's conference is "The Role of Public Works in Emergency Management".

Both divisions have been inundated with requests for conference information from members and other

non-APWA agencies. We even have APWA Chapters from outside of North Carolina interested in attending. We believe, therefore, that the attendance level will be high. That is why we must limit the conference to the first 150 registrations. You may register online or by mail, please visit the NC-APWA website for more detailed information.

We look forward to seeing you there!

SAVE THE DATE

2012 Stormwater Management Division Conference
September 17-18, 2012
Crowne Plaza, Asheville, NC

Congratulations to Dan Mikkleson 2012 Top Ten Public Works Leader



Elizabeth Treadway presents the 2012 APWA Top Ten Public Works Leaders award to Dan Mikkleson, City Engineer, Salisbury, NC.

Equipment Services Division

By Barry Neel

The APWA North Carolina Chapter Equipment Services Division held their Second Fleet Tour Event on 17 April, 2012 at the City of Winston Salem Equipment Services Division Facility. This event was attended by 19 people.

The Meeting was hosted by Vincent "Mac" McAlexander and James Mitchell, Facilities & Fleet Management Director with the City of Winston Salem. We had a chance to tour the shop facility, both heavy equipment and light equipment ends. It was noted that this facility was built in 1965 and is still very functional for the City. Mac then gave an overview of how the Equipment Services Division for the City was setup, operates within the City, how work is charged out and the size fleet that they own.

A catered lasagna lunch was served on site and this was followed by question and answer period of how the city operated. This was followed by an open discussion of what APWA can do for its members and topics that everyone would like to see on our conference schedule this fall in Asheville.

Our next Fleet Tour is set for July 18 at the Town of Wake Forest Fleet Department.



New 24/7 Online Library Available July 1

By Brad Patterson Chapter Membership Manager

Beginning July 1, all APWA members will see a significant increase in the value of their membership. On that date, APWA members will be able to participate in live Click, Listen & Learn presentations without a registration fee, access previously recorded Click, Listen & Learn programs at no charge, access content from past International Public Works Congress and Exposition sessions at no extra charge, read downloadable versions of select books from the APWA Store at no charge, view select podcasts and track Continuing Education Units and Professional Development Hour credits without an administrative recording fee.

Members will be able to access this content at any time, making scheduling and the approval process no longer necessary.



The APWA board approved a dues increase of \$15 per member (excluding retired and student members) to fund this new benefit. For example, an individual membership will be \$164 (up from \$149 a year) ago, beginning with the July 1, 2012 membership renewal cycle. However, the cost for just ONE Click, Listen & Learn program is \$175 for members and \$300 for non-members. Taking advantage of just one of the resources in the 24/7 online library more than pays for the increase in your individual membership.

The renewal cycle will remain the same. As an example, a member whose membership does not expire until January, will be able to take advantage of the new 24/7 online resource library for six months without incurring any additional cost.

For more information, contact your Chapter leaders or call APWA at 1-800-848-APWA (2792).

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Newsletter Submission Dates

By D. J. Señeres, Newsletter Chair

Please mark your calendars with the newsletter deadline of August 15, 2012 for the Fall issue.

Thanks for the past submissions from Division Presidents. Please remember to attach your article text and any supporting photographs. Include below the title of the article who the author of the article is and the organization he or she represents as shown below:

Article for Newsletter
By John Doe or Jane Doe, Name of Organization



The American Public Works Association is dedicated to education in the related areas of public works. We help our members, the public, and policy makers work together to provide the public works services needed to keep our communities operating smoothly and safely in concert with the latest environmental and public health standards. Through the national association and our 63 chapters in the US and Canada, we offer a comprehensive array of services to meet this educational mission.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Thanks to all who have contributed to APWA-NC News.
Please send your news to:

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