

2017 ACWA Priorities



ACWA priorities are reviewed and set annually by the ACWA Board, with input from the ACWA Committees. The priorities are used to set the ACWA annual budget and work schedule. The Board-adopted ACWA priorities for 2017 are shown below.

HIGHEST PRIORITIES	EXPLANATION	2017 ACTIONS
ONE WATER STRATEGIES		
<p>Develop and Implement a Multi-Pollutant Approach for Clean Water Act Compliance for Oregon Wastewater & Stormwater Utilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Board – All Committees 	<p>Many water quality standards pose challenges for wastewater water quality permit holders including temperature numeric limits, human health criteria, ammonia, and other standards. Wastewater and stormwater agencies have limited resources and need to focus on the most effective solutions to water quality problems.</p> <p>Wastewater and stormwater utilities should be developing overall, comprehensive strategies to improve watershed health while achieving appropriate water quality goals.</p> <p>A variety of tools and strategies should be deployed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality trading • Natural treatment systems • Green stormwater treatment • Use of recycled water • Innovative discharge options • TMDL implementation plans • Willamette River Alliance • Variances • Site specific criteria • Compliance schedules <p>ACWA will develop short and long term NPDES permitting strategies, in concert with DEQ and other stakeholders.</p> <p>ACWA will develop a long-term toxics compliance strategy, likely in concert with wastewater treatment system managers in neighboring states.</p> <p>ACWA will reach agreement with DEQ on the elements of a mercury minimization plan and provide technical resources to ACWA members to develop appropriate plans.</p> <p>ACWA will emphasize a consistent message of the importance of toxics reduction through pollution prevention to achieve a variety of environmental objectives (biosolids quality, water quality standards compliance, stormwater programs).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water Quality, Stormwater, and Groundwater Committees: Collaborate to be better informed about overlapping interest areas (options: annual joint committee meetings and quarterly meetings of committee chairs focused on coordination and collaboration on common interest areas). 2. Water Quality Committee: Complete the Willamette Alliance Feasibility Study. 3. Stormwater Committee: Presentation/meeting on interconnections between green infrastructure and climate adaptation. 4. Executive Director, Water Quality and Legal Committees: Continue to meet quarterly with DEQ regarding permit options and compliance strategies. 5. Biosolids and Recycled Water: Advocate for recycled water rule change. 6. Legal Committee: Continue to track the potential impact of litigation on our members. 7. Pretreatment Committee: Finalize Mercury Minimization Plan template. 8. Water Quality Committee: Complete a bis-2-ethyl hexyl phthalate chemical profile and pollution prevention plan (with input from other committees). 9. Water Quality Committee: Continue to coordinate with counterparts in Washington and Idaho regarding toxics regulation implementation (option: host workshop to include regulators from all three states) 10. Stormwater and Groundwater Committees: Explore use of aquifer storage and recovery of stormwater (potential meeting topic/ presentation) 11. Education Committee: Form Clean Rivers and Streams team and explore grant opportunities.
<p>Promote Effective Affordable Stormwater Control Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Groundwater Committee – Stormwater Committee 	<p>ACWA will provide coordination and support to its members with MS4 Phase I permits, UIC permits, and the renewal of the MS4 Phase II permit. The focus will be on continuing to develop effective, sustainable, and affordable stormwater control programs, with an emphasis on green stormwater treatment systems.</p> <p>ACWA will develop improved information tools to curtail illicit discharges.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stormwater Committee: Assist MS4 Phase II communities with new permit implementation (option: post-session at Stormwater Summit). 2. Stormwater Committee: Develop guiding principles for renewal of Phase I permits and explore the efficacy of a permit template (for use by permit writers, similar to WWTP permit template).

HIGHEST PRIORITIES	EXPLANATION	2017 ACTIONS
ONE WATER STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)		
<p>Resource Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Board – Biosolids & Recycled Water Committee – Energy Committee – Pretreatment Committee 	<p>ACWA will develop strategies and tools for members to recover and market resources for beneficial use including, but not limited to: energy, recycled water, biosolids, and nutrients.</p> <p>ACWA will stay current and inform members on state and federal programs and rules impacting resource recovery (energy, biosolids, recycled water, and/or other recoverable commodities)</p> <p>ACWA will provide current information on resource recovery technology, operations, and maintenance.</p> <p>ACWA will promote water as a resource, including recycled water use and infiltration of stormwater to recharge aquifers.</p> <p>ACWA will pro-actively support environmentally- sound biosolids practices, including land application. ACWA will assist members in using effective pollution prevention programs to continually improve biosolids quality.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biosolids and Recycled Water Committee: Plan and execute an ACWA biosolids workshop covering a comprehensive list of issues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of industrial source control BMPs for protection of biosolids quality • Communication of the benefits of beneficial use land application of biosolids • Myth-busting; putting in context the risks of contaminants of emerging concern • Best of the best—10 O&M strategies for successful biosolids management • Agronomic Rate methods • Biosolids quality sampling and monitoring 2. Biosolids and Recycled Water Committee: Hold at least 3 committee meetings.
<p>Sustainable Utility Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Board – Energy Committee – Utility Management Committee 	<p>ACWA will provide tools and information to members on the following three pillars of Sustainable Utility Management:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance and Sustainable Cost Recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management • User Rates • Finance • Revenue streams from enhanced resource recovery 2. Resource Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy • Human • Technology • Materials • Facilities 3. Communication of Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure costs • Public health and environmental benefits • Building positive relationships with rate payers and decision makers <p>As appropriate, the Utility Management Committee will partner with other water-related organizations to provide information on building positive relationships with ratepayers and decision makers.</p> <p>ACWA will partner with other interested organizations to develop useful tools for Oregon utilities to voluntarily develop and implement wet weather control and Sewer Collection System Asset Management programs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Energy and Utility Management Committees: Plan and execute a Sustainable Utility Management Workshop possibly hitting on the following topics (among other things) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth Sailing – Critically-based planning for asset maintenance and replacement • Connecting with the “Ratepayers of the Future” (experience from peer agencies; Salem, Bend, Portland, CWS, MWMC) • Resource Recovery, Best of the best national examples (examples including recycled water, energy, biosolids, nutrients) • Valuing your green infrastructure • WEF Lift—Moving innovation into practice 2. Energy Committee: Plan the next Sustainable Energy Management cohort, to occur in 2018, focusing on the Mid-Willamette Valley region.

HIGHEST PRIORITIES	EXPLANATION	2017 ACTIONS
OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT		
<p>Work to Engage All Partners in a Watershed to Tackle Pollution Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board - Education Committee - Groundwater Committee - Pretreatment Committee - Stormwater Committee - Water Quality Committee 	<p>ACWA will work collaboratively with other partners to reduce water pollution from all sources – point and nonpoint.</p> <p>ACWA will support the regional collaborative outreach effort.</p> <p>ACWA will build and sustain partnerships across all sectors to focus on pollution prevention efforts, including drug take back programs</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education Committee: Explore options for ACWA support to Clean Rivers and Streams initiative. 2. Education Committee: Explore opportunities to expand messaging on drug take back programs to target youth.
<p>Provide Assistance, Information, and Outreach to all Members, especially Smaller Member Agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board and All Committees 	<p>ACWA continues to be a reliable information conduit for its members, especially in providing assistance and information to smaller members.</p> <p>ACWA should facilitate idea exchange between its members.</p>	<p>All committees: Ongoing activity.</p>
WATER QUALITY STANDARDS COMPLIANCE		
<p>Support Attainable and Meaningful Water Quality Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board - Legal Committee - Water Quality Committee - Groundwater Committee 	<p>ACWA will actively engage with water quality standards adoption and implementation, and other regulatory processes that may lead to future water quality standards.</p> <p>ACWA will monitor development of water quality standards in other EPA Region 10 states including Washington and Idaho.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water Quality and Legal Committees and Executive Director: Meet quarterly with DEQ regarding water quality standards development and permit compliance strategies. 2. Executive Director and Water Quality Committee: Convene and facilitate quarterly regional water quality standards coordination group. 3. Water Quality Committee: Track the development and implementation of the updated 303(d) list.
<p>Promote Permit Compliance Solutions for Effluent Discharge Limits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board - Legal Committee - Water Quality Committee - Legislative Committee 	<p>ACWA will support information gathering and development of pollution prevention plans and coordinated public outreach with DEQ.</p> <p>ACWA will track pertinent legislative activity and will seek opportunities for partnering on potential legislative actions related to toxics reduction.</p> <p>ACWA will advocate for more streamlined and less burdensome permitting of alternative discharge (such as recycled water uses and natural treatment systems).</p> <p>ACWA will continue its involvement with ongoing development of Oregon's water quality trading program, including tracking Water Quality Trading IMD updates.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water Quality Committee: Identify partnering pathways with DEQ on phthalate reduction. 2. Legislative Committee: Coordinate legislative and water quality interest in pollutant reduction legislation for ACWA support via LOC/SDAO. 3. Water Quality Committee: Support permittees proposing alternative discharge practices. 4. Water Quality and Legal Committees: Develop a water quality trading summary for ACWA members on current regulatory status and opportunities/threats.
<p>Promote Positive Partnerships to Protect Oregon's Groundwater</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groundwater Committee 	<p>ACWA will continue to facilitate communication and information sharing between its members receiving and implementing UIC WPCF permits.</p> <p>ACWA will engage with drinking water providers and wellhead protection programs.</p>	<p>Groundwater Committee: Ongoing activities.</p>

HIGHEST PRIORITIES	EXPLANATION	2017 ACTIONS
WATER QUALITY STANDARDS COMPLIANCE (CONTINUED)		
<p>Promote Permit Compliance Solutions for Effluent Discharge Limits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Board – Legal Committee – Water Quality Committee – Legislative Committee 	<p>ACWA will support information gathering and development of pollution prevention plans and coordinated public outreach with DEQ.</p> <p>ACWA will track pertinent legislative activity and will seek opportunities for partnering on potential legislative actions related to toxics reduction.</p> <p>ACWA will advocate for more streamlined and less burdensome permitting of alternative discharge (such as recycled water uses and natural treatment systems).</p> <p>ACWA will continue its involvement with ongoing development of Oregon's water quality trading program, including tracking Water Quality Trading IMD updates.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water Quality Committee: Identify partnering pathways with DEQ on phthalate reduction. 2. Legislative Committee: Coordinate legislative and water quality interest in pollutant reduction legislation for ACWA support via LOC/SDAO. 3. Water Quality Committee: Support permittees proposing alternative discharge practices. 4. Water Quality and Legal Committees: Develop a water quality trading summary for ACWA members on current regulatory status and opportunities/threats.
<p>Promote Positive Partnerships to Protect Oregon's Groundwater</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Groundwater Committee 	<p>ACWA will continue to facilitate communication and information sharing between its members receiving and implementing UIC WPCF permits.</p> <p>ACWA will engage with drinking water providers and wellhead protection programs.</p>	<p>Groundwater Committee: Ongoing activities.</p>
CORE ACWA ACTIVITIES		
<p>Maintain Effectiveness of Organization/ Administration</p>	<p>ACWA will support the Executive Director to achieve a successful transition of administrative functions.</p> <p>ACWA will maintain effective Board governance and representation through clear communication and decision making, ongoing succession planning for committees and Board members, and maintaining/tracking a regional and national presence by ACWA and its member agencies.</p>	<p>Board: Conduct timely evaluation of office locations and support systems.</p>
<p>Maintain ACWA Leadership on Water Quality Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Board and All Committees 	<p>ACWA will continue to provide environmental leadership on water quality issues in Oregon and nationally.</p>	<p>Board and all committees: Ongoing activity.</p>
<p>Provide Leading Edge Services to Its Members and Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Board and All Committees 	<p>ACWA will provide assistance and coordinate municipal efforts to promote water quality. ACWA will use available tools and technology to facilitate members' access to information.</p>	<p>Board: Evaluate and implement improved technology to facilitate effective remote meeting participation.</p>
<p>Leverage Collaborative Partnerships to Achieve Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Board and All Committees 	<p>ACWA will actively seek partnerships with state agencies; other state, regional, and national wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater associations; environmental public interest groups; energy utility support groups; foundations; watershed councils; and others to achieve our priorities.</p>	<p>Board and all committees: Ongoing activity.</p>
<p>Maintain an Effective and Constructive Relationship with DEQ and EPA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Board and All Committees 	<p>ACWA will continue to build effective communication and involvement with DEQ and EPA, and find opportunities to highlight our common focus on effective water quality protection approaches.</p> <p>ACWA will continue to work with DEQ on permit issuance, accountability, and long-term funding solutions. ACWA will work to maintain a constructive and effective relationship with DEQ and EPA. ACWA will focus on streamlining permitting where possible, the effectiveness of DEQ programs, and looking for opportunities to assist DEQ in improving its programs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board: Explore opportunities for involvement of DEQ, EPA and NGOs in ACWA's 30-year celebration. 2. Board and Committees: Continue to invite and include DEQ staff to workshops, conferences and other venues as appropriate.

Adopted by ACWA Board of Directors, 11/16/16