



# 2026 Conference & Trade Show

May 14, 2026

Lake Morey Resort

Tentative Schedule			
8 – 11:30 am	<b>Trade Show</b> Location: Terrace Ballroom (downstairs)		
8:30 – 9:30 am	<b>Drought Response and Emergency Response Management</b> 1 TCH – Water Location: Morey Room (main floor)	<b>SCADA Doesn't Have to Break the Bank</b> 1 TCH – Water & Wastewater Location: Theater Room (downstairs)	<b>Crisis Communications for Water &amp; Wastewater Operators</b> 1 TCH – Water & Wastewater Location: Water Lot Room (downstairs)
9:30 – 10 am	<b>Drinking Water Taste Test Judging</b> with Vermont Drinking Water Week Committee Location: Garden Room (main floor)		
10 – 11:30 am	<b>Regulatory Updates on Drinking Water</b> 1.5 TCH – Water Location: Morey Room (main floor)	<b>Choosing &amp; Maintaining a HDPE Infrastructure, Stretching Your Budget Further</b> 1.5 TCH – Water & Wastewater Location: Theater Room (downstairs)	<b>Regulatory Updates on Wastewater</b> 1.5 TCH – Wastewater Location: Water Lot Room (downstairs)
11:30 am – 1 pm	<b>Luncheon and Annual Membership Meeting</b> Location: Restaurant (downstairs)		
1 – 3 pm	<b>Trade Show</b> Location: Terrace Ballroom (downstairs)		
1:30 – 2:30 pm	<b>Combating Cyber Threats to Water &amp; Wastewater Utilities</b> 1 TCH – Water & Wastewater Location: Morey Room (main floor)	<b>Work Smarter, Not Harder: Using Metering and Technology to Solve Non-Revenue Water</b> 1 TCH – Water Location: Theater Room (downstairs)	
2:45 – 3 pm	<b>Raffle &amp; Door Prize Drawings</b> Location: Terrace Ballroom (downstairs)		

## Sponsors

### Gold

Blake Equipment  
 Pump Control Solutions  
 Culligan Water Technologies

### Silver

Weston & Sampson  
 Clear Water Filtration  
 New England Backflow  
 Aldrich + Elliott

### Bronze

F. R. Mahony & Associates  
 Clow Valve Company

# Class Descriptions

## **Drought Response and Emergency Response Management**

Time: 8:30 – 9:30 am

Location: Morey Room (main floor)

Credit: 1 TCH – Water (Water Treatment Category 1, Distribution Category 1)

Presenters: Eric Forand (*Vermont Emergency Management*) and Sille Larsen (*Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division*)

Last year, most of Vermont experienced some level of drought, causing wells to run dry, streams to hit all-time lows, and towns to need to conserve water. This session will discuss the 2025 drought response from the perspective of the State Emergency Operations Center. Eric Forand will outline the steps taken to create the 2025 response structure involving multiple state and federal agencies and provide lessons learned that are being used to update the state drought response plan. Sille Larson will review of the impacts of the 2025 drought and how water systems adapted and addressed issues.

## **SCADA Doesn't Have to Break the Bank**

Time: 8:30 – 9:30 am

Location: Theater Room (downstairs)

Credit: 1 TCH – Water & Wastewater (Water Treatment Category 2, Distribution Category 2)

Presenter: Ron Gehl (*EOS Research*)

Pressure from taxpayers to keep costs down? Bids came in too high for the upgrade? It's still possible to implement powerful, useful SCADA at reasonable cost. We'll talk about some of the elements that add unnecessary expense, strategies for cost savings in instrumentation and motor controls, and how to get more information from the devices you already have. By focusing on collecting "just enough" data from your operation, a SCADA system can be built that is informative but doesn't demand too much attention, so you can focus on keeping your operation running smoothly.

## **Crisis Communications for Water and Wastewater Operators**

Time: 8:30 – 9:30 am

Location: Water Lot Room (downstairs)

Credit: 1 TCH – Water & Wastewater (Water Treatment Category 1, Distribution Category 2)

Presenter: Mike McGill (*WaterPIO*)

Using case studies and his many years of experience working with utilities, Mike will guide participants in how to address public information challenges for water and wastewater operators. The talk will detail how to implement a multi-pronged plan that supports every aspect of compliance work while mitigating negative reactions and online misinformation that could sidetrack efforts. He will show how to craft COMMS plans for use both inside and outside a utility, including essential communications with local government agencies and officials. Finally, Mike will showcase how to work with the press, leveraging decades of experience in producing national and local news, and outline the various ways a COMMS plan can utilize new technologies, such as AI and inventory tracking platforms, to significantly support public communications efforts.

# Class Descriptions

## Regulatory Updates on Drinking Water

Time: 10:00 – 11:30 am                      Location: Morey Room (main floor)

Credit: 1.5 TCH – Water (Water Treatment Category 1, Distribution Category 1)

Presenter: Ben Montross (*Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division*)

Join Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division staff to discuss the 2026 Vermont Water Supply Rule updates to address PFAS and take a brief look at next steps for other federal rules.

## Regulatory Updates on Wastewater

Time: 10:00 – 11:30 am                      Location: Theater Room (downstairs)

Credit: 1.5 TCH – Wastewater

Presenters: Heather Collins and Michelle Kovarie (*Watershed Management Division*)

Join DEC Wastewater staff for program and staffing updates, exam information (there are now three ways to take an exam), an overview of the updated EDMR reporting, and new Total Phosphorus Monitoring Worksheet. These program updates will be followed by a Q&A session.

## Choosing & Maintaining a HDPE Infrastructure, Stretching Your Budget Further

Time: 10:00 – 11:30 am                      Location: Water Lot Room (downstairs)

Credit: 1.5 TCH – Water & Wastewater (Water Treatment Category 2, Distribution Category 2)

Presenters: John Bonnette and Jamie Phillips (*F.W. Webb*)

In this course participants will learn the definition of HDPE (High Density Polyethylene). We will look at the variety of applications that currently use HDPE across the globe. Participants will also see comparisons between traditional materials versus HDPE pipe and fittings and will learn about the advantages of HDPE. The presentation will cover the economic advantage of using HDPE for your current or new infrastructure. We will also spend time discussing some of the apprehensions of using HDPE in a municipal infrastructure. During the course we review different options for transitioning to other materials and fittings from HDPE. The class will conclude with hands-on repair and maintenance options for different HDPE applications.

## Combating Cyber Threats to Water & Wastewater Utilities

Time: 1:30 – 2:30 pm                      Location: Morey Room (main floor)

Credit: 1 TCH – Water & Wastewater (Water Treatment Category 1, Distribution Category 2)

Presenters: Leah Bogdanowicz (*FBI*) and Ryan McLiverty (*Vermont Intelligence Center*)

FBI cyber special agent Leah Bogdanowicz and VIC cyber intelligence analyst Ryan McLiverty will discuss the cyber threats facing the water and wastewater industry, common vulnerabilities, and practical strategies to mitigate the threats. There will also be a discussion of recent real-world incidents and mitigation techniques that would have prevented the breach.

# Class Descriptions

## **Work Smarter, Not Harder: Using Metering and Technology to Solve Non-Revenue Water**

Time: 1:30 – 2:30 pm

Location: Theater Room (downstairs)

Credit: 1 TCH – Water (Water Treatment Category 2, Distribution Category 2)

Presenters: Chris Rogers and Liam Flaherty (*E.J. Prescott*)

Water meters can't find water main line leaks, can they? You bet they can! Learn how utilities have discovered that integrated acoustic solutions within water meters—yes, water meters—are not only detecting leaks on service connections but on water main lines as well, at distances up to a half mile! Acoustic noise signatures are recorded and proactively alert utilities to both existing and new or growing leaks across their entire distribution system. This session will also discuss real and apparent losses, and how meter technology, low-flow capabilities, and long-term sustained accuracy play a major role in every utility's bottom line and level of service.

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## Luncheon

The luncheon will include Vermont Rural Water's annual membership meeting with results of the Board of Directors election, the Tony Torchia Award presentation ceremony, and the keynote speaker.

Speakers include:

- Ray Counter, Board President of the Vermont Rural Water Association
- Tom Goulette, Executive Board Member of the National Rural Water Association
- Misty Sinsigalli, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

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## Drinking Water Taste Test



**VERMONT  
DRINKING  
WATER  
WEEK**

Do you have the best tasting drinking water in Vermont? Well, here's your opportunity to prove it. The Vermont Drinking Water Week Committee welcomes public water systems to enter the 2026 Drinking Water Taste Test.

To be eligible, water systems must have a valid Permit to Operate with no state or federal drinking water violations during the previous calendar year. Submit an entry form by May 1. Full rules and the entry form can be found at [vtruralwater.org/conference](http://vtruralwater.org/conference)

Winners will be announced during the conference luncheon. The winning system will be entered into the Great American Water Taste Test, held by the National Rural Water Association, in February 2027.

We are also looking for volunteers to judge the taste test!