

## Letter from the Chairman

2025 was a watershed year for The Water Council – one marked by transition, growth and renewed energy.

In May, we celebrated the remarkable 15-year tenure of our founding CEO, Dean Amhaus, as he retired. Dean's passion, vision and tireless dedication built The Water Council from the ground up and established Milwaukee as a globally recognized hub for freshwater innovation.

In June, Karen Frost was named executive director. She brings 10 years of experience with the organization, most recently as vice president of innovation and economic development. We are excited to see the energy and direction she brings to the next chapter of The Water Council.

This year we also became an affiliate of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC), strengthening our ties to the broader business community and expanding our ability to share resources and amplify each other's missions.


On the innovation front, we welcomed a new director of innovation programs, Katie Kollhoff Mouat, who immediately brought fresh ideas and energy to our BREW 2.0 Post-Accelerator and Tech Challenge programs.

In water stewardship, we launched WAVE: Action, a second verification tier that helps companies move beyond assessment to set targets and engage stakeholders on shared water challenges. We also launched a comprehensive water stewardship training program in partnership with the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB).

Our workforce development efforts continued to expand alongside our industry partners, supporting Community Water Services' H2OConnect internship program for teens and deepening our collaboration with Veolia North America on water workforce initiatives in Milwaukee.

The second annual Nexus Sustainability Leaders Summit, held in October in partnership with Marquette University's Sustainability Lab, offered outstanding content and drew strong attendee feedback.

None of this is possible without you – our members, sponsors and partners. Thank you for your continued commitment to solving global water challenges through freshwater innovation and stewardship.



**Scott Beightol**

The Water Council Board Chairman

## Innovation

The Water Council supports innovation in the water technology sector through matchmaking, member services, networking and our signature innovation programs: BREW 2.0 Post Accelerator and Tech Challenge.

In 2025, we hired Katie Kollhoff Mouat as our new director of innovation programs. Katie brought immediate impact, refreshing the Tech Challenge and BREW 2.0 programs with new structure, sponsors and engagement opportunities.

### BREW 2.0

We selected our 2025 [BREW 2.0 Post-Accelerator](#) cohort from a record-breaking 19 countries, ultimately choosing 10 companies from the U.S., Canada, Netherlands, U.K., Spain and Brazil. They received several weeks of virtual training, culminating in an in-person week in Milwaukee. This year's public event featured a new, interactive format with a mix of short pitches and exhibits, dubbed the BREW Showcase.

#### 2025 BREW cohort

### AQUAPOWER

**Aquapower** (Brazil) installs small hydro turbines in the water pipes of cities and industrial plants, harnessing excess pressure of the networks and converting it into electricity.



**BIOBOX** (Spain) offers nitrate bioremediation with no waste and the lowest operational cost on the market.



**Conatus Ambiental** (Brazil) harnesses AI and IoT to revolutionize water treatment, reducing chemical consumption and improving water quality through real-time optimization and automation.



**Green Steel Environmental** (U.S.) upcycles an industrial by-product, uses it to sequester important nutrients from renewable natural gas and wastewater, and reuses those nutrients as fertilizer.



**Legacy Watercare Innovations** (Canada) has built and patented the Legacy Clarification Reactor, a filter-less,

membrane-free, automated chemistry mixing system and a separation clarifier vessel.

**sum.**

**sum.** (U.S.) creates personalized, all-natural, science-backed beverages from beautifully designed fountains in fitness studios without single-use waste.

 **WASE**

**WASE** (U.K.) works with industrial manufacturers and farmers to maximize onsite biogas generation from their wastewater and bio-residues, unlocking the power of waste to make it the future of fuel.

**watergate**<sup>®</sup>

**Watergate** (U.K.) is transforming large-scale water management with Sonic, an AI-powered smart valve that can detect and stop leaks instantly while driving real behavior change.



**Weaver Labs**

**Weaver Labs** (U.S.) addresses the PFAS contamination crisis with its patented Fluor-Mop technology, which removes "forever chemicals" to non-detect levels and is regenerable – a comprehensive lowest lifecycle cost solution.

#### Sponsors

**BECKHOFF**

**xylem**  
Let's Solve Water

 **THALES**  
WATER ADVISORS  
(programming support)

#### Tech Challenge

We facilitated two [Tech Challenges](#) in 2025, drawing submissions from around the world. We also welcomed a new Tech Challenge sponsor, Xylem. The program connects water innovators with leading water technology companies, facilitating potential partnerships and helping new ideas and technologies gain exposure in the industry.

#### Spring Tech Challenge

The spring challenge focused on three pressing water issues – sensors for biological organisms and disinfectant byproducts, removal of organic contaminants from water,

and "lab on a chip" applications for water and wastewater. Winners were selected from dozens of submissions from 11 countries, and each received a \$10,000 prize:

- Atkinson Lab (Princeton University, New Jersey) develops biohybrid devices for sensing small-molecule chemicals and biological macromolecules and converting binding events into electrical signals.
- Nafura Advanced Technologies (Stoke-on-Trent, U.K.) is transforming industrial wastewater management with a plasma-based system that delivers industrial-capacity water treatment in one-thousandth the footprint and half the cost of traditional methods.
- Segura Water (Oxford, U.K.) transforms how utilities detect heavy metals in drinking water with a rapid, low-cost tool that provides lab-quality results in under five minutes right in the field.

### Fall Tech Challenge

The fall challenge issued a broad solicitation for water quality solutions, generating one of the strongest responses yet — more than 50 technologies submitted from 23 countries. Winners were:

- Geotek Water Solutions (Jos, Nigeria) — grand prize winner (\$10,000) and the first African company to win the Tech Challenge. Geotek uses low-enthalpy geothermal energy to treat water with up to 65% lower energy costs than conventional systems, providing resilient water infrastructure to emerging markets.
- Service ID (Fitchburg, Wisconsin) — runner-up (\$5,000). Service ID allows water utilities to identify lead pipes from homeowner-submitted photos using AI, eliminating the need for field inspections and helping communities meet lead and copper rule requirements.

### Sponsors



### Piloting

The Water Council continued its support of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's (MMSD) groundbreaking research and piloting facility, holding events and webinars to advance the project and gather input from engineering firms, startups and university researchers. Construction on the permanent pilot facility is expected to begin in 2026, further cementing Milwaukee's reputation as a global hub for water technology and innovation.

## Water Stewardship

### WAVE: Water Stewardship Verified



Our [WAVE: Water Stewardship Verified](#) program reached a major milestone in 2025: the launch of WAVE: Action, a second verification tier that builds on our original program, now known as WAVE: Assess. While WAVE: Assess helps companies assess their water risks, uses and impacts, WAVE: Action takes the next step by helping companies set targets to mitigate their highest-priority water risks and prepare to engage stakeholders in collaborative actions addressing shared challenges and opportunities.

A. O. Smith Corporation became the first company to achieve WAVE: Action verification in October – a remarkable accomplishment and a model for the industry.

Companies verified to WAVE: Assess in 2025 include Culligan International, Milo's Tea Company, Toyota Motor North America and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Sloan achieved re-verification, demonstrating continued commitment to water stewardship best practices.

#### 2025 Verified Companies

The Culligan logo features the word "Culligan" in a blue, cursive-style font with a trademark symbol.

The Toyota logo consists of the word "TOYOTA" in a bold, red, sans-serif font.

The Milo's logo features the word "MILO'S" in a bold, red, sans-serif font with a green leaf-like shape above the letter 'O'.

The logo for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee features the text "UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN" in a small, black, sans-serif font above the word "UWMILWAUKEE" in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. Below the text is a stylized graphic of three horizontal bars in yellow and orange.

The Sloan logo features the word "SLOAN" in a blue, sans-serif font with a green leaf-like shape above the letter 'A'. Below it, the word "(reverified)" is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

#### Additional Water Stewardship Activities

We continued to build our water stewardship advisory practice in 2025, adding the Vinyl Institute and Texas Brine as new clients, and furthering our established work with the American Chemistry Council on site-level water body risk assessment tools and resources.

In a significant new partnership, we launched a virtual, comprehensive [water stewardship training program](#) in collaboration with the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB). This self-paced introductory course provides an overview of best practices in the application of water stewardship at the enterprise and site level, making this critical knowledge more accessible than ever.

## Collaboration and International Work

### Workforce Development



Understanding that workforce is a key concern for members in the public and private sectors, The Water Council leveraged its network in 2025 to build meaningful connections strengthening the Milwaukee workforce.

We supported Community Water Services' new [H2OConnect](#) internship program for teens through a federal grant received via U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin's office. In the program's

inaugural year, teen interns learned about water filtration through field trips, presentations and hands-on experiments — an inspiring start to building the next generation of water professionals.

We also advanced our collaboration with Veolia North America through our joint MOU focused on Veolia's water workforce initiative in Milwaukee, gathering additional member organizations for discussions on how to strengthen career pathways in the water sector.

### Nexus Sustainability Leaders Summit

In October, we held the second annual Nexus Sustainability Leaders Summit in collaboration with Marquette University's Sustainability Lab. Attendees praised the content as some of the strongest the event has seen, with topics including the circular economy, artificial intelligence and the role of insurance in building resilience.



### WEFTEC



The Water Council team remained active at WEFTEC, the largest annual convention for water professionals, leading panels and participating in discussions that reflect our members' most pressing priorities. We were thrilled to include our members on panels about circular technologies to recover and reuse nutrients, sequestering and eliminating emerging contaminants, and integrating innovation for the future of wastewater.

## Our Members

The Water Council offers its members access to an unparalleled network of water industry thought leaders, policymakers and innovators aligned through one of the most influential freshwater technology hubs in the world. We are committed to convening, connecting and showcasing our members.

Our valued members are the heart of The Water Council and our activities.

Thank you for your support.

A. O. Smith Corporation	Fresh Coast Climate Solutions	Milo's Tea Company, Inc.
ABB Inc.	Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin	Milwaukee 7
APX10	Fund for Lake Michigan	Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District
Aquagga, Inc.	Global Water Works	Milwaukee Riverkeeper Inc.
Aquamonitrix Limited	Godfrey & Kahn, S.C.	Milwaukee School of Engineering
Aquarius Systems	GOSPACE Tech s. r. o.	Milwaukee Tech Hub Coalition
Atmus Filtration Technologies	Greater Milwaukee Committee	Milwaukee Water Works
Badger Meter, Inc.	Green Sports Alliance	Molson Coors Beverage Company
Baker Manufacturing Company	Green Steel	Mulcahy Shaw Water
bb7	Environmental, LLC	Newance
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BGEO OPEN GIS SL.	GRUNDFOS Pumps Corporation	NYCOA: Nylon Corporation of America
Biobox Water	Harbor District Inc.	On Track Technology Solutions
bNovate Technologies	Hunter Crown, LLC	ORIN Technologies LLC
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Cimbria Capital	Hydroflow USA, LLC	Pani Clean, Inc.
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City of Milwaukee	ITU AbsorbTech, Inc.	PolyGone Systems
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Council of the Great Lakes Region	Lakeside Water Treatment, Inc.	Ramboll
Covanta Environmental Solutions, LLC	Marlo Incorporated	Rapid Radicals
Culligan International Company	Marquette University	Redberry SAS
Dana Investment Advisors	Mathison Manufacturing	Regulosity LLC
Digital Water Solutions Inc	Matthews Strategic Services LLC	Riverwater Partners, LLC
DMR International Inc	McCotter Energy Systems	Robert W. Baird & Company
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Systems

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Watts Water Technologies, Inc.  
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WILO USA  
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Inc.  
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**Matt Howard**

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