



ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

E-NEWSLETTER

May 2018 | ISSUE 19

Water is the driving force of all nature - Leonardo da Vinci

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Exciting features from the **Alberta Water Council (AWC)** as well as director and alternate profiles.

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Find out about the great work project teams and working groups are doing!

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Your link to AWC business.

Drips and Drops

AWC board approves two new projects

At its last meeting, the AWC board approved two new projects. Details below.

AWC and CASA amalgamation

The human and capital resources that support AWC and CASA operations are being shared to deliver the outcomes of both organizations. More details below.

AWC releases videos on various water topics

Three videos on topics in water management were recently released. More details below.

Next AWC Board Meeting

The next AWC board meeting will be held Thursday 14 June, 2018 in Edmonton.

AWC Presentation Opportunity

Would you like to raise awareness in your group or sector about the AWC? Staff would be happy to present information about the AWC or updates on its projects. If you are interested in such a presentation, please contact staff or email info@awc-casa.ca

AWC Newsletter

The AWC's newsletter will arrive at your inbox after each board meeting, providing a quick update for stakeholders. Comments and suggestions are welcome, so please tell us what you think. Email your feedback to info@awchome.ca. We look forward to hearing from you!



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THE WATERFALL

Director Profile of Mark Brostrom, Large Urban Sector

Mark possesses a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Alberta. His introduction to water included fluid dynamics and the Bernoulli Equation and at one point (long ago) he could have told you how important that is and what it all means. His interest has evolved to the ecological importance of water, including protecting water quality and the importance of water for ecosystem health.

He has been employed with the **City of Edmonton** for more than 25 years. In that time, he has transitioned from looking at "end-of-pipe" environmental protection to taking a more integrated view of environmental issues through a sustainability lens. Mark's role at the City of Edmonton includes environmental policy development, and he recently assumed responsibility for developing a **Climate Adaptation Strategy** for Edmonton. An example of another City policy is **The Way We Green** (Environmental Strategic Plan), in which specific water-related goals include: "Water quality in the North Saskatchewan River sustains healthy people and healthy ecosystems" and "Edmonton's water supply meets its needs." This policy development role positioned him to become the City of Edmonton's representative for the Large Urban sector on the AWC's board.



Water management is complex and requires multi-disciplinary approach. Mark believes he can bring a unique municipal



Photo credits: Susan Sly, Mark Brostrom, and Anuja Ramgoolam.

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government perspective as well as a broader sustainability perspective to the AWC. Ensuring that cities plan appropriately to protect water quality and citizens and infrastructure from too much or too little water is crucial. I also believe that many citizens take water for granted, particularly in urban settings. We turn on the tap and water flows. Building better water literacy for Edmontonians and all Albertans will be an important step in protecting our water resources," says Mark.

With the diversity of groups and opinions around the table, Mark believes that the AWC's consensus decision-making process seems like the best way to come up with solutions to complex problems. "It allows all voices to be heard and enables us to work to a decision or solution that all can support." This can take more effort and time, but it also advances everybody's understanding of the various issues and perspectives, so the eventual solutions have the best chance of success. He notes, "If I had to tell someone who is thinking about volunteering on one of the AWC's committees, working groups or project teams, I would suggest that it is time well spent." While he would not sugar coat the commitment required, as it is a lot of work, the payoff is that contributing to a robust outcome is rewarding. While there are many accomplishments to choose from, Mark identifies the AWC's Water Conservation, Efficiency, and Productivity initiative as an accomplishment. "It brought many diverse sectors together to achieve a common outcome -- the conservation of water. All sectors have worked and continue to work to reduce their water consumption."

In the next 10 years, Mark thinks that the pressures on Alberta's water resources will increase due to population growth, industrial and agricultural growth, and growth in recreational opportunities, and we need to continue improving the way we manage this precious natural resource. Overlay the external factor of climate change, and he thinks we need to continue to "up our game" in understanding and managing water in Alberta.

THE CONFLUENCE

AWC board approves two new projects

o **Building Resiliency to Multi-Year Drought**

This project team is expected to produce a guide and workshop materials to assist Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils as they engage municipalities and communities in their watersheds to better plan for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from multi-year droughts. The project will highlight the importance of multi-year drought management in Alberta,

compile existing drought management information and resources in the province, and facilitate the delivery of customizable information to support small urban and rural municipalities before, during, and after a drought.

o **Protecting Sources of Drinking Water in Alberta Project Team**

This project team will document existing source water protection (SWP) approaches and provide guidance for protecting public, private, and individual drinking water sources in Alberta. It will focus on the quality of surface and groundwater supplies, while recognizing that water quality and quantity are related. This project will advance outcomes of *Water for Life* and *Our Water, Our Future: A Plan for Action*. The team is expected to synthesize SWP practices, processes, and risks to drinking water sources in Alberta, examine SWP approaches and risk management models in selected jurisdictions, and develop a guidance document that highlights best practices in SWP.

For more information, visit the [AWC website](#).



AWC and CASA Amalgamation

In 2017, the human and capital resources that support the operations of the AWC and CASA, two multi-stakeholder organizations that provide their members with provincial-scale environmental management advice, were amalgamated to optimize operational efficiencies. Although the two organizations follow similar processes, they remain independent with distinct mandates, boards of directors, and executive committees.

The past year has been bustling with activity for both organizations. Staff continued to support the boards and project teams to deliver their mandates while aligning daily operations for the administrative and physical amalgamation. In spring 2018, Operations Manager Douglas Mills joined the staff team to oversee operations and the project workloads. Cara McInnis will be shifting responsibilities from board coordinator and executive assistant to Program Manager, and we will be hiring another project manager and administrative assistant in the coming months.

Staff are building understanding of both organizations' history, processes, projects, and boards as they support the work of both AWC and CASA initiatives. For more on CASA and their projects, see their [website](#).

AWC releases videos on various water topics

Three videos on important topics in water management were recently released:

- **Water conservation, efficiency and productivity**

This video traces the history of CEP and summarizes the results of the AWC's Looking Back: Evaluating Sector Improvements in Water Conservation, Efficiency, and Productivity report.

- **Drought in Alberta: Learning from the Past and Planning for the Future**

This video reviews what droughts are and their history in Alberta while looking at climate projections and what drought resiliency means.

- **Source Water Protection in Alberta**

This video outlines challenges to source water protection, the multi-barrier approach, and how sources of drinking water are protected in Alberta through legislation, policies, programs, and on-the-ground partnerships.

To view and share these videos, click [here](#).

Check out the Water Channel!

The Water Channel was created by Alberta Environment and Parks to connect water literacy practitioners and policy makers, and to promote water literacy tools, events, networking, collaboration, and information sharing. Through this platform you will find information about water in Alberta, and opportunities to discuss water issues with other practitioners. Check out the Water Channel [here](#).

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