

# LCA Staffing Survey Results

LCA Board Meeting  
May 20, 2024



Lehigh County Authority



## Jim Ginley

Jim Ginley Consulting, LLC, Littleton, CO

- 36+ years of experience in the municipal water sector – 16+ yrs. on American Water Works Association (AWWA) staff and 20 yrs. as a utility management consultant.
- Managed QualServe and Benchmarking; helped build Utility Management Stds.
- Helped build and teaches Effective Utility Management (EUM) framework.
- Specializes in organizational assessments, strategic plan development and implementation, benchmarking and organizational improvement strategies, workshop/focus group facilitation and classroom training.
- Active volunteer for AWWA, WEF, and Rocky Mountain Section AWWA.
- **Has worked on project with LCA in 1990s, 2000s, 2010s, and 2020s – 4 decades!**

# Overview of the survey process

- **Overall purpose** – connect with fellow utilities to ask a range of questions about the organizational structure, staffing, and functions in key areas.
- Development of survey questions
- Identification of utility participants
- Send surveys and receive/compile responses
- Identify areas of further discussion
- Develop working draft summary of key findings
- Develop and conduct March 27 workshop
- Generate key recommendations
- Distribute participant version of survey summary report
- Board presentation – today – May 20

# Participating utilities – 13 total

- **Lehigh County Authority**  
Wescosville, PA
- **Capital Region Water**  
Harrisburg, PA
- **Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority**  
Marietta, GA
- **Columbus Water Works**  
Columbus, GA
- **DC Water**  
Washington, DC
- **Erie Water Works**  
Erie, PA
- **City of Golden Public Works**  
Golden, CO
- **Greater Cincinnati Water Works**  
Cincinnati, OH
- **Hampton Roads Sanitation District**  
Hampton, VA
- **Lancaster Area Sewer Authority**  
Lancaster, PA
- **Loudoun Water**  
Ashburn, VA
- **Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority**  
Pittsburgh, PA
- **Portland Water District**  
Portland, ME

## **Two-part survey with option to follow up**

**Part 1 –Utility Organization Profiles**

**Part 2 – Response to Core Survey Questions**

**Part 3 – Follow Up Questions and Information Exchange with Fellow Participants**

## Profile information

- Type of utility by **services provided** – water, sewer, combined, other
- Type of utility by **organization** – city, county, authority, district
- Type of utility by **governance** – council, commission, board
- **Staff size, number of vacancies, and annual training budget**
- Size of utility – by **number of accounts** and by **population served**
- Service area size – by number **miles of distribution/collection lines**
- Type and capacity of **water and wastewater treatment facilities**
- **Capital budget** and staffing

## Profile Highlights

- **5 of 13 from PA** – others from Maine to Georgia to Ohio to Colorado
- **11 of 13 either an authority or special district** – with own board
- **Big range in size and complexity** – on purpose -- to get breadth of ideas -- examples -- DC Water and GCWW both have good lead line programs; Hampton Roads has good approach to communications across a region.
- **Handful of organizations line up as “best match”** – but every utility contributed something that we learned/benefitted from
- Several are willing to **help in specific areas** (capital, lead, etc.)

# Subject areas we asked about

1. HUMAN RESOURCES
2. COMMUNICATIONS
3. CUSTOMER SERVICE, BILLING, METERING, COLLECTIONS
4. CAPITAL PROGRAMS AND NEW DEVELOPMENT
5. LEADERSHIP SPAN OF CONTROL
6. FIRST REPORT SPAN OF CONTROL
7. SPECIAL ASSISTANTS (TO LEADERSHIP)
8. SPECIALIZED POSITIONS
9. ASSET MANAGEMENT
10. 24/7 OPERATION OF TREATMENT FACILITIES
11. LEAD LINE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM
12. STRATEGIC PLAN
13. CROSS-ORGANIZATION TEAM WORK/STRATEGY
14. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
15. ENGINEERING, PLANNING, PROJECT DELIVERY
16. PROJECT MANAGEMENT: IN-HOUSE VS. CONTRACTORS
17. ADJUSTMENTS TO ADDRESS SHIFTING STRATEGIES



## Areas where LCA seems well positioned

- **Human resources** – staffing, budget, programs all solid
- **Customer service** – current approach works well
- **Span of control** – both at top and for first reports are good
- **Strategic plan** – LCA's plan/implementation process is working well – received good examples from fellow utilities
- **Engineering** – Mix of outsourced engineering services & internal focus on project management is industry norm

# Areas where LCA needs to focus its attention

- **Lead line** replacement program
- **Capital project** planning and delivery – especially for expanding project scope and workload
- **Communications** – stretch to support strategic initiatives, grants, and partnerships
- **Finance** – stretch to support other areas (e.g. alternative funding for capital projects, rate & affordability analysis)
- **Human resources** staff vacancies – get them filled

# Focus for the March 27 staff workshop.

## Top Priorities

- Lead program
- Capital program

## Administrative Areas:

- Communications
- Finance
- Human Resources

**Other gaps?** -- e.g., asset management, technology, emergency response, others?

**Additional explorations and connections with survey partners,** e.g, lead program structure, capital project loads, community outreach to build support for projects

# Questions we asked and answered

- 1) Why is this area a top challenge for LCA?**
- 2) What is currently working? Not working?**
  - Organizational structure
  - Role/person in the role
  - Programs/practices
  - Technology/equipment
  - Resources/\$\$
  - Other
- 3) What actions should we take and when?**
- 4) What is our priority level and timing?**

## Key Results from March 27 workshop

- Strategic enhancements to organizational structure
- Identification of key positions to fill – existing and new
- Prioritization of sequence of changes, additions, etc.
- Connections to other organizations who might have ideas to share in key areas – lead line replacement, capital project planning, communications and strategy
- Identification of next steps
- LCA staff will refine and present more details in June

# Discussion

Questions?

