

Innovating for Water's Future

WWEMA/U.S. Water Alliance Roundtable Discussion

More than 60 policy makers, regulators, manufacturers and others gathered in Washington, D.C., on March 4, 2013, for a first-of-its-kind roundtable discussion on "**Innovating for Water's Future**," co-sponsored by WWEMA and the U.S. Water Alliance.

[Download a summary of the discussion here.](#)

"As budget numbers go from bad to ugly, there's real beauty in the water innovations that spring from public-private partnerships," said USWA President Ben Grumbles. "We have common ground on the urgent need to innovate and collaborate now to sustain water and invest in America's future."

"It is imperative that our industry join together to address the barriers to innovation," added WWEMA President Dawn Kristof Champney. "Factors such as the 'low bid' mentality, inadequate reward systems for risk taking, and long payback periods prevent us from embracing technologies that can better protect and preserve our water environment."

The event began with a discussion on "Framing the Needs and Challenges," with panelists WWEMA Chairman Deb Lavelle; Rich Anderson, senior advisor for the U.S. Conference of Mayors; and Robert Steidel, director of Public Utilities for the City of Richmond (Virginia).

The next panel spoke on "Leveraging Existing and Exploring New Opportunities" and included Nancy Stoner, acting assistant administrator for the EPA Office of Water; Suzanne van Drunick and Sally Gutierrez, both from the EPA Office of Research and Development; Alex Dunn, executive director and general counsel for the Association of Clean Water Administrators; and Jim Taft, executive director of the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators.

It concluded with a facilitated discussion among all participants, led by Brent Fewell, Vice President, Environmental Compliance, United Water, and Chairman of the U.S. Water Alliance's Business Advisory Council.