



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

Telling the Story of Your Water/What's it Worth and Who Needs to Know: Jane Hurley (Central Arkansas Water) Arkansas Water and Wastewater Managers Association Presentation

12/03/2021

Ms. Jane Hurley undertook a presentation at the November 4th Arkansas Water and Wastewater Managers Association Fall Workshop titled:

Telling the Story of Your Water/What's it Worth and Who Needs to Know? ("Presentation")

Ms. Hurley serves as the H2O Outreach Specialist for Central Arkansas Water ("CAW").

Ms. Hurley's *Presentation* undertook an explanation of CAW's effort to explain the importance of water supply noting themes such as:

- Imagine a Day Without Water
- Water is Life

Highlighting the importance of water and its preservation:

- Protect Public Health
- Enhance the quality of life
- Protect the environment
- Support the economy
- Serve as responsible stewards of a valuable resource

In putting forth these concepts key words Ms. Hurley noted include:

- Essential
- Reliable
- Infrastructure
- Economy
- Safety

Potential places Ms. Hurley listed to undertake this conversation include:

- Community events
- 5Ks and Festivals
- Library programs

- Trivia/game nights
- Partner organizations
- 4-H
- Game and Fish events
- Chambers of Commerce
- Museums, State Parks

Further noted under the topic of “Our Voice – talk about”:

- Your history
- Your people
- Your community
- Yourself
- Hard things

The slide *Presentation* provided photographic illustrations that illustrate the infrastructure necessary to collect and transport potable water. Examples include the miles of pipelines and storage infrastructure.

Further photographic illustrations noted activities to protect water such as:

- Can the grease
- Don’t clog your pipes
- Shut the lid on wipes

The CAW employees involved in various water supply activities were identified, such as:

- Inspector
- Environmental Assessment Division Assistant
- Utility Worker
- Storekeeper
- Crew Leader

The *Presentation* noted engagement activities such as a program to “build ambassadors.” The purpose was stated to:

- Immerse local residents in the day-to-day
- Class size of about 15 (which has now doubled and become popular)
- Full day. Forest to Faucet.

Ms. Hurley identified the importance of “telling your story” to gain trust for the water company. In other words, attempt to ensure the public recognizes that a water employee is:

. . . part of a team that ensures safe, affordable, high-quality water is available whenever you need it. . .

She noted it important that the public recognize that the water company makes:

. . . sure your drinking water is treated above industry standards and ensure water towers stay full so when you turn on the faucet, water is there for your morning shower and coffee. . .

Further, the story would include ensuring that the public recognizes that the water company works:

. . . to make sure we are innovative with financing options so we keep water rates affordable for the community we serve. . .

CAW received what is described as the:

. . . First Ever Certified Green Bond for Protection of Forest Lands as Water Infrastructure (October 2020).

The bond attributes are stated to have included:

- \$10 million for watershed protection

- \$21.8 million for gray infrastructure upgrades that support water delivery system efficiencies
- Three years to draw on funding (interest free period)

The advantages of such a bond are stated to have included:

- Positive Media Attention
- More bids than traditional competitive bond offering
- Immediate matching funds
- Opened private bridge loan opportunity at less than 2% interest

Further, CAW is stated to have become the first water utility in the world to obtain Sustainable Forestry Initiative certification.

A copy of the slides from the *Presentation* can be downloaded [here](#).