

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **of the Illinois Section American Water Works Association**

**Revision Date April 24, 2008**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Strategic Plan provides a guide for the Illinois Section of the American Water Works Association (ISAWWA) to meet the challenges facing the water supply community in the coming years. The plan takes a broad view of the Section's activities, and is intended to work in concert with the Strategic Plan of the international American Water Works Association (AWWA). The Strategic Plan does not provide a detailed listing of all Section activities and programs.

### **II. VISION**

ISAWWA will be the authoritative resource in the State dedicated to safe water.

### **III. CORE VALUES**

Recognizing that water is the basic element of life, our values are:

- **Safe and Sufficient Water for All People.** ISAWWA is committed to safeguarding public health by adhering to the principle that the public has an absolute right to safe water in sufficient quantity to meet community needs.
- **Consumer Confidence and Satisfaction.** ISAWWA is committed to achieving consumer confidence and satisfaction with tap water.
- **Honesty and Integrity.** ISAWWA is committed to honesty and integrity in all actions of our staff and members.
- **Total Water Stewardship.** ISAWWA is dedicated to assuring water is managed for the greatest good of people and the environment.
- **Commitment to Excellence.** ISAWWA is committed to the highest standards of service, products, operations, and education.
- **Diversity.** ISAWWA is dedicated to remaining inclusive, and expanding the diversity of our staff, membership, and leadership.
- **Trust and Teamwork.** ISAWWA members will openly share information and solve problems in a spirit of cooperation.

### **IV. CORE PURPOSE/MISSION**

ISAWWA is dedicated to the promotion of public health and welfare in the provision of drinking water in sufficient quality and quantity. ISAWWA is proactive in advancing the technology, science, management, conservation, and government policies relative to the stewardship of water.

## **V. GOALS**

### **A. Increase and diversify ISAWWA membership.**

1. Encourage and sustain membership growth. (Membership Committee)
2. Provide avenues and encouragement for the involvement of young people in the section. (Young Professionals Committee)
3. Develop programs to assist members to recruit and retain other members. (Membership Committee)
4. Develop and encourage student chapters. (Student Activities Committee)
5. Encourage membership from all facets of the water community work force (Membership Committee)

### **B. Ensure ISAWWA achieves its mission through effective leadership.**

1. Require greater involvement in Section work by Trustees. (Section Chair)
2. Improve communication with AWWA and improve coordination of AWWA and ISAWWA activities. (Executive Director)
3. Generate appropriate revenue to support member programs and services. (Section Board)
4. Ensure value for member dues through strategic planning and prioritization. (Section Board)
5. Encourage coordination between the Board, committees, and staff. (Executive Director)
6. Recognize and reward the efforts of volunteers. (Awards Committee)
7. Ensure committee chairs are effective. (Section Chair)
8. Provide leadership training for committee members. (Education Committee)
9. Encourage committee chairs to recruit and train committee vice chairs. (Section Chair)

### **C. Increase ISAWWA's participation in Water For People**

1. Create new and enhance existing WFP fund raising opportunities. (Water For People)

### **D. Position ISAWWA as the authoritative resource in the water community.**

1. Develop and enhance cooperation with other water community organizations. (Executive Director)
2. Use technology to improve communication within the water community and with our customers. (Executive Director)
3. Enhance ISAWWA's role as the authoritative resource for water professionals and governmental officials throughout the state. (Water Utility Council)
4. Market ISAWWA continuously to the public to increase name recognition. (Public Information Committee)

### **E. Improve general membership services.**

1. Improve the quantity and quality of communications with existing members. (Executive Director)

### **F. Increase existing members' involvement in the Section.**

1. Encourage active participation by members who in the past have not been active. (Section Past Chair)
2. Add a Young Professional to each committee. (Section Chair)

**G. Achieve safe water through knowledge.**

1. Compile and transfer technological and managerial information to the water community. (Education Committee)
2. Provide the education and technology needed to allow members to share information effectively to and from remote locations. (Executive Director)
3. Provide statewide access to ISAWWA programs and opportunities. (Executive Director)

**H. Promote an effective legislative and regulatory environment for the drinking water community.**

1. Support legislation, regulation, and policies at all levels that will benefit consumers, the environment, and the water community. (Water Utility Council)
2. Participate in development of legislation and regulations. (Water Utility Council)
3. Determine what additional resources are needed. (Water Utility Council)
4. Promote the funding of statewide water resources studies. (Water Utility Council)

**I. Promote consumer confidence and satisfaction with tap water through assistance to utilities.**

1. Assist water suppliers with their communications with the public. (Public Information Committee)
2. Promote utility participation in delivering training and educational programs to the community. (Section Chair)
3. Educate the consumer on the value of water, the need to fund the necessary infrastructure, and the need to conserve water. (Public Information Committee)

## **ISAWWA STRATEGIC PLAN ANNEX**

The following ideas and suggestions are provided as a supplement to the ISAWWA Strategic Plan for use by section committees. The suggestions are sorted by broad topic or committee. This sorting is for convenience and is not intended to prevent any committee from adopting and implementing ideas that they wish to pursue. The Strategic Planning Committee is available to meet with individual committees to discuss their goals or to review proposed committee business plans.

### **Board**

- Ask Trustees to attend water related meetings in their districts.
- Conduct survey of members and non-members to learn what services they want from the section.
- Maintain strong spirit of volunteerism in the section.

### **Executive Director**

- Improve the portal website
  - Combine the two existing websites.
  - Increase electronic marketing.
- Build more and stronger relationships with other organizations.
- Form ad hoc committee to study partnering opportunities.

### **Committees**

- Require committees to have more structure and to prepare business plans.
- Consider limiting committee members to two, three year terms.
- Consider limiting committee chairs to one two year term with provisions for renewal on a case by case basis.
- Encourage more committee activity.
- Should there be other awards?
- Provide lists of specific short term tasks that give members a chance to participate.
- Consider combining the IJAS, student activities, and youth education committees.
- Consider establishing a Past ISAWWA Chairs committee to retain experience and involvement of members in section. It would be analogous to Texas Lone Star committee of past chairs.
- Consider elimination of the Bylaws and Standard Practices Committees.

### **Conferences and Meetings**

- Celebrate ISAWWA 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a special event at the annual conference.
- Sell booth space for the following year during the final hour of each show.
- Develop a new, separate website for the conference.
- Double the participation in top ops; offer regional competitions.
- Improve the speakers program; require abstracts; increase variety.

## **Education**

- Provide programming for use with Ipods and Webinars. Have this programming eligible for professional development hours or CEUs.
- Coordinate with and enhance AWWA programming.
- Conduct hands-on training in water treatment plants.
- Provide operator certification courses.
- Offer regional conferences with the operators associations. Offer training programs and lunch.
- Upgrade the online registration process.
- Educate the membership to train them within 2 years to not want a paper certificate.
- Make the onsite experience for the attendees more formal – nametags, membership information, other seminar information
- Lower the cost of educational materials. Subsidize the cost.
- Provide breakfasts with training in every district.
- Chemical handling classes.
- Teach the operator certification classes.
- Classes on chemical handling, motor maintenance, cross connections, backflow, water conservation.
- Offer wastewater topics at all seminars and conferences. Provide cross-over training.

## **Marketing/Communications**

- Prepare public service announcements with positive messages for distribution to the media.
- Be visible to the public with events such as the water trailer.
- Send out more press releases.
- Publicize ILWARN to communities.
- Provide water classes for kids. Cooperate with ACEC with their Students Engaged in Engineering programs.
- Promote the Safe Drinking Water Partnership program.

## **Membership**

- Have district meetings on a periodic basis in conjunction with local operator groups. Provide lunch.
- Develop and distribute a new member packet. Some possible items to put in the packet include:
  - Pin/ Hat
  - Letter from chair
  - List of committees
  - Volunteer opportunities (discrete, limited tasks)
- Distribute the new member packet by both paper and email.
- Use electronic media for marketing the association – UTUBE, facebook, etc.
- Develop and distribute a power point presentation outlining the benefits of membership.

- Communicate the benefits of membership to both non-members and existing members.
- Provide a better defined description of what are the benefits of membership; for example, a canned set of documents that anyone can use – trustee, membership committee
- Become the 5<sup>th</sup> largest section with 2500 members by this time next year.
- Provide training for recruiters. Especially for persons recruiting utilities.

### **Splash**

- Market opportunities to write articles in Splash.
- Provide a better diversity of articles and information.
- Publish Splash electronically and distribute by email.