

# American Water Works Association

**American Water Works Association (AWWA)** is an international [non-profit](#), scientific and educational association founded to improve water quality and supply. Established in 1881, it has a membership (as of 2012) of around 50,000 members worldwide.<sup>[1]</sup>

In reviewing the success of the [Safe Drinking Water Act](#) after 1974, senior EPA officials cite the vital role that AWWA played as kind of a non-threatening meeting ground, particularly at the local level.<sup>[2]</sup>

AWWA members include: water utilities, treatment plant operators and managers, [scientists](#), [environmentalists](#), [manufacturers](#), [academics](#), [regulators](#), and others with an interest in water supply and [public health](#).<sup>[3][4]</sup> AWWA works through advocacy, communications, conferences, education and training, science and technology, and local action among 43 AWWA Sections throughout [North America](#).

AWWA launched AWWAIndia, its first international community, in 2015. AWWAIndia's headquarters office is located in Mumbai, India.<sup>[5]</sup>



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## Publications and conferences

To broaden distribution of information on water and related subjects, AWWA publishes the periodicals *Journal AWWA* and *Opflow*. AWWA also publishes a variety of books, training manuals, standards, reports and videos for use by water professionals and others.<sup>[6][7][8]</sup> The Association also hosts an annual [conference](#) and exposition for the entire organization each summer in North America. Section conferences are also held in all parts of North America. Specialty conferences are held throughout the year on topics including water quality, distribution

systems and utility management.<sup>[9]</sup> Proceedings of the annual and specialty conferences are published by AWWA.

## Water industry resources

Through the Partnership for Safe Water AWWA also works with the [United States Environmental Protection Agency](#) and other water organizations to help water providers optimize system performance beyond existing regulatory levels.<sup>[10]</sup>

AWWA offers opportunities for people to meet, learn, and network at the international, national, and section levels. In addition to publications and conferences for water professionals, AWWA hosts a variety of workshops, symposia, teleconferences, and programs focused on specific aspects of water stewardship. In cooperation with other professional associations, AWWA is a resource for water professionals' continuing education and development.<sup>[11][12]</sup>

## Awards

AWWA presents a number of awards every year to individuals who provide notable service to the drinking water community. Among the major awards given are the [Abel Wolman](#) Award of Excellence, the [George Warren Fuller](#) Award, and the [Dr. John L. Leal](#) Award.

## Water standards development

In 1908, AWWA began developing industry standards for products, processes and best practices. The AWWA Standards Program is recognized internationally as a source for scientific and management reference resources for the water community. Currently, there are over 150 AWWA Standards covering [filtration](#) materials, treatment chemicals, [disinfection](#) practices, meters, [valves](#), utility management practices, [storage tanks](#), pumps, and [ductile iron](#), [steel](#), [concrete](#), asbestos-cement, and [plastic pipe](#) and fittings.<sup>[13]</sup> Standing committees periodically review and update the standards as required.

In May 1985, the [United States Environmental Protection Agency](#) entered into a cooperative agreement with a consortium led by [NSF International](#) to develop voluntary third-party consensus standards and a certification program for all direct and indirect drinking water additives. Other members of the consortium include AWWA. The consortium is responsible for the cooperative effort of manufacturers, regulators, product users and other interested parties that develop and maintain the NSF standards.<sup>[14]</sup>

## Water for People

In February 1991, AWWA founded [Water For People](#), a non-profit international development organization that helps people in [developing countries](#) improve their quality of life by supporting the development of locally sustainable drinking water resources, sanitation facilities, and health and hygiene education programs.

## Drinking Water Week

For more than 35 years, AWWA has set aside a week in the spring to recognize the importance of safe drinking water throughout North America. In 1988, AWWA brought the event to the attention of the US government and formed a coalition along with the League of Women Voters, the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators and the US Environmental Protection Agency. Subsequently, AWWA worked with Representative [Robert Roe](#) and Senator [Dennis DeConcini](#) to sponsor a resolution naming the first week of May as "Drinking Water Week."<sup>[15]</sup> In 1988, a joint congressional resolution declaration was passed and signed by President Ronald Reagan.<sup>[15][16]</sup>

## Sections

AWWA is an umbrella organization for 43 sections, each of whom represents a specific geographic region. There are 37 AWWA sections in the United States, 5 Canadian sections, and one each in Mexico and Puerto Rico.<sup>[17]</sup>