



TAP INTO RESILIENCE

March 27-28, 2019 | AUSTIN, TX

REPORT BACK

Dear Colleagues,

We are very pleased to share with you the highlights of WaterNow Alliance's 4th Annual Summit, Tap Into Resilience, which took place this year in Austin, TX. We were joined by almost 200 local decision makers, innovators and thought leaders. This Report Back is intended to provide you with key insights from the presentations, discussions and engagement that took place.

Special thanks our conference sponsors, Raftelis, Rachio, the Public Finance Authority, Brownstein Hyatt Farer Schreck, Hazen and Sawyer, Flume and Buoy, as well as to the University of Texas, Austin for hosting us on their beautiful campus. We're grateful as well for the participation of our inspiring keynote speakers, Austin Councilmember Kathie Tovo and AWWA's President-Elect, Melissa Elliott, and of course, all who attended.

WNA is a connecting organization. We work to provide new ideas, innovations and opportunities to our members. Since we launched our first Summit in Tempe just three years ago, WaterNow's membership has grown to over 425 water leaders in 32 states. As we reflect on the incredible energy and commitment that the speakers and attendees brought to the room, it is clear that there is a building excitement around sustainable water strategies, their potential to address local needs, and the power of this Alliance to bring leaders together to create change.

Supporting positive change at home is what WaterNow is all about. You are the "secret sauce" that facilitates new opportunities and ensures future success. If you're a WaterNow Member, please check out the [Member Portal](#) to access more detailed information on the presentations. And if you're not already a member, [please join today!](#)

As always, please feel free to be in touch directly if you have questions, comments or recommendations about how we can continue to support your work as a water leader.

Thanks for all you do,



Cynthia Koehler, Executive Director
WaterNow Alliance



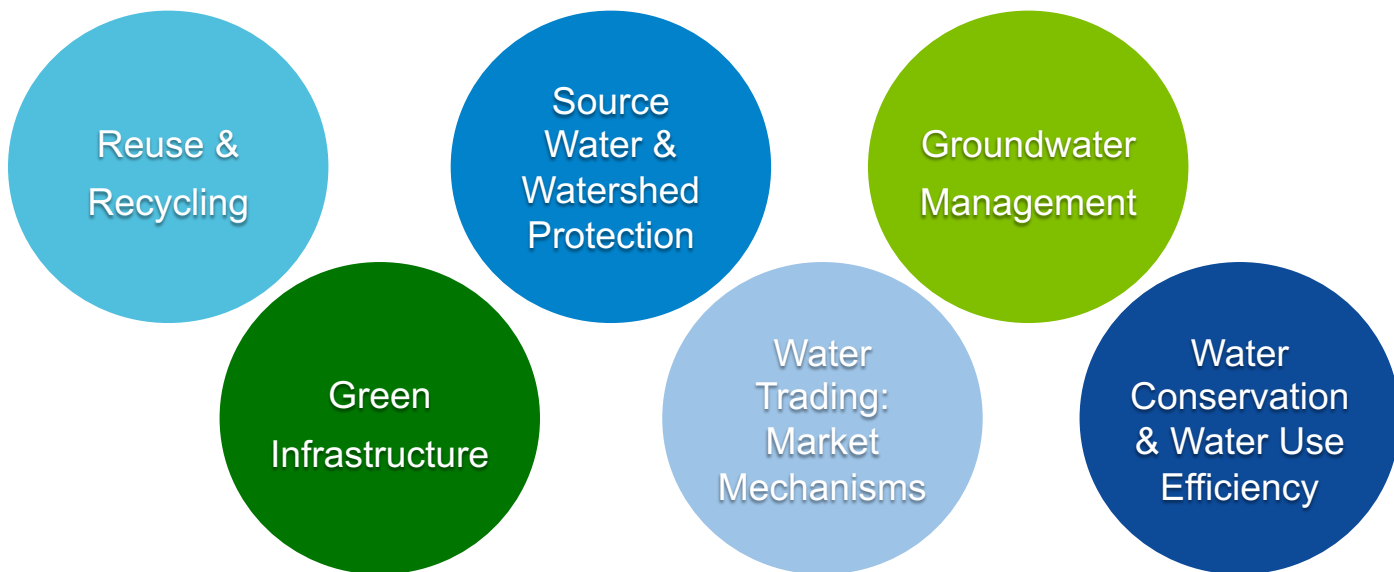
WATERNOW ALLIANCE

Our Mission:

WaterNow Alliance is a network and forum for local water leaders supporting sustainable, affordable and climate resilient water strategies.

What do we mean by sustainable?

Providing safe, healthy, and affordable water services for people while preserving the integrity of water resources and the environment for future generations.



How do we do this?

WNA advances sustainable, affordable, climate resilient water strategies through:

Policy advocacy – creating pathways for sustainable and affordable strategies.

Technical assistance – for communities implementing projects on the ground.

Forum for engagement – connecting water leaders to ideas, resources, opportunities, innovators and one another.

TAP INTO RESILIENCE AUSTIN 2019

BY THE NUMBERS

Who's in the room?

19 States represented nationwide

78%

Of participants concerned about reliability of future water supplies

68%

Attendees who are elected/appointed officials serving as governing boards for their local utilities

60%

Said financing is a **limiting factor** for efficiency programs

70%

Are exploring sustainable water projects locally

70%

Want new information about sustainable water opportunities

55%

Exploring how to incorporate climate change into water planning

WaterNow Alliance includes

430

forward-thinking public officials committed to sustainable water solutions

Nationally

95%

of water spending occurs at the local level



Congratulations to Our Winners!

IMPACT AWARD WINNER



Josina Morita

**Commissioner, Metropolitan Water Reclamation
District of Greater Chicago
Cook County, Illinois**

Commissioner Morita is quickly proving to be one of the nation's most energetic and effective advocates for sustainable water policy. She has built public awareness around the value of water by organizing the "Big Jump", an annual event in which local officials attest to improved water quality by jumping into the Chicago River. She has skillfully brokered support for non-potable reuse legislation by bringing together differing stakeholders and finding areas of common ground while navigating around roadblocks. Through innovation and collaboration, she is supporting a more resilient and equitable water future in the Chicago region.

IMPACT AWARD WINNER



Kishia Powell

**Commissioner, Dept. of Watershed Management
Atlanta, Georgia**

Commissioner Powell has demonstrated exemplary leadership in envisioning and implementing the first-ever publicly issued outcomes-based public financing deal. Her vision enabled project partners to work through a myriad of complex engineering, financing and procurement obstacles in order to successfully finance large-scale green infrastructure solutions, while minimizing risk to Atlanta's rate payers. Her commitment to innovation and pursuit of high-value, impactful services to vulnerable communities was invaluable in bringing this project together.



Congratulations to Our Winners!

IMPACT AWARD WINNER



Board of Commissioners **City of Hays, Kansas**

The Commissioners' commitment to sustainable, innovative water solutions has led the Hays to become the leader in water conservation with the lowest per capita water use in the state of Kansas. Their leadership in sustainably managing their local aquifer will ensure the protection of this water source for future generations.

LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER



Carole Baker **President and CEO** **Texas Water Foundation**

This year, WaterNow was very pleased to honor Carole Baker for her tireless commitment to protecting Texas's water resources, advocating for water use efficiency, and educating the public and decision-makers about the value of water and the critical need to steward this vital resource.

Carole has served as a model for water leaders to come, not only in Texas but nationwide. Carole Baker has advanced a vision of water management based on rational policy-making and building a widely shared understanding about the important role of water.

EYE-OPENING KEYNOTES

Austin Councilmember Kathie Tovo

Councilmember Tovo opened the Summit with an overview of the water challenges facing communities across the country. But her message was one of opportunity, highlighting ways in which local leaders and utilities can adapt to the changing climates and water management challenges by preparing for them in ways that work with the community and protects the natural environment.



Melissa Elliott, Raftelis, President-Elect AWWA



Melissa Elliot riveted the audience with her entertaining take on the Top 10 Concerns facing utility leaders today, and what utilities need to consider as they provide essential services to their customers. While utilities are motivated to do the right thing, Melissa's insight is that they must find new ways to engage with their customers about what it takes to provide safe, clean water for everyone all the time.

Key Take-Aways:

- Trust takes years to build, but a second to break and forever to repair.
- What the public wants from its water provider:
 - Be consistent
 - Make interactions simple
 - Get the basics right
 - Be a community and environmental steward
 - Understand and adapt to customer preferences
- Be responsive!
- Ask your community members what they want - they will tell you a lot!

"Next to doing the right thing, the most important thing is telling people you are doing the right thing."

- J.D. Rockefeller

ENGAGING PRESENTERS

Patrick Dube, Water Environment Federation

The Pure Water Brewing Alliance is a collaboration of utilities, brewers, engineering firms, and technology companies that are making beer from recycled water. Patrick Dube presented information on this exciting project and explored the value of engaging with business, consumers and the public about potable water reuse nationwide. Best of all, WEF treated us to some tasty recycled water with a Pure Brew Beer tasting!



Stephanie Zavala and Arianne Shipley, The H2Duo: 30 Ideas in 30 Minutes

Texas water icons and creators of the communications podcast, Water in Real Life, Stephanie and Arianne shook things up with their high energy tips for local leaders. Pulling from successes both inside and outside the water industry, their "30 ideas in 30 minutes" started with "Be Purposeful with your Presentation" and ended with "Smile."



Key Take-Aways:

- The key to communication is **consistency** – your customers don't live and breathe water like you do. Use words and information they will understand.
- **Don't pander to naysayers** - only 8% of population hates you, but they are loud and they will show up.
- **Create a crisis communications plan now** – you'll need it eventually.
- Communication is not a project – it is a relationship – it takes time and **Comms work is never over.**

WHAT IS “TAP INTO RESILIENCE”?

Tap into Resilience is WaterNow’s newest initiative to support local water leaders accelerate and upscale decentralized water strategies across the One Water spectrum. This year’s Summit was all about these onsite, distributed consumer-side meter technologies from green storm water management to onsite reuse to efficiency and other decentralized solutions, distributed over many properties, that serving the same functions as centralized infrastructure.

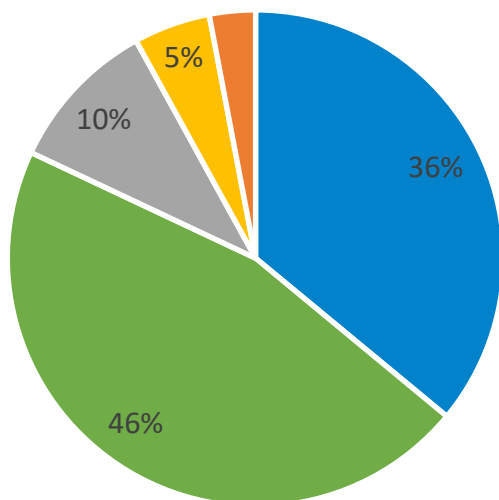
Key elements of the TIR initiative include:

- Ask the Expert Panel
- Distributed Infrastructure Toolkit
- Successful Case Studies
- “Explainers” and Videos
- The Resource Library

To learn more, please visit:

tapin.waternow.org

WE ASKED: Are you interested in exploring onsite water strategies to address local water challenges?



- Very Interested
- Somewhat Interested
- Low Interest
- Not interested
- Don't know



The Future of Water Infrastructure

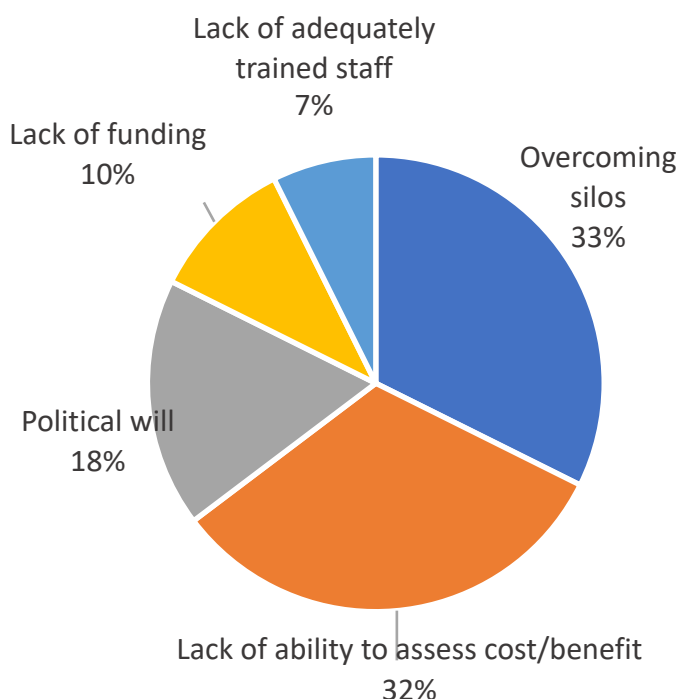
This diverse panel started from the premise that a transformation to a One Water, more decentralized water paradigm is under way, and that to an unprecedented degree. Myriad experiments are happening at the local level -- but there are challenges.

Key Take-Aways:

- The fabric of cities must change to adapt to new ways of interacting with water.
- Huge opportunities to work on private properties are largely overlooked.
- We have a lot of water infrastructure – but don't always have the tax base to cover costs.
- One Water is the right goal, but utilities are often not incentivized in this direction in light of silos.
- We need networks like WaterNow to share knowledge, stories, move change in a constructive intentional direction.
- The challenge is moving people outside of their traditional comfort zones.



WE ASKED: *What is the biggest thing holding you back from prioritizing on-site water management options?*



Speakers:

Moderator: Felicia Marcus, California State Water Resources Control Board
 Cooper Martin, National League of Cities
 Ann Bartuska, Resources for the Future
 Ted Heniflin, Hampton Roads Sanitation District
 Kirsten Evans, The Nature Conservancy

PUBLIC UTILITIES: LEADING THE INFRASTRUCTURE TRANSFORMATION

Different communities face unique water challenges, but success stories can reveal common themes and “lessons learned” that resonate nationwide. This session spotlighted **6 communities engaging in transformational change**.

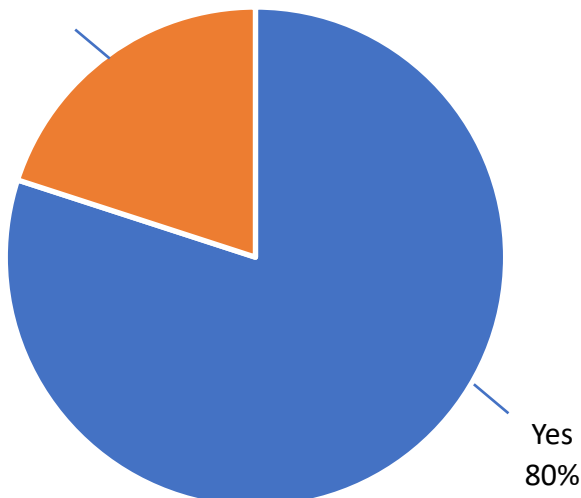
Key Take-Aways:

- Distributed strategies are successfully addressing drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater challenges in diverse communities, and can be an important way for cities and utilities to their customers.
- Partnering with other city departments, neighboring utilities, and local community groups to cut across silos is critical.
- Strategic use of innovative data-gathering technologies helps water managers build clear goals and reliable performance metrics.



WE ASKED: Do you consider localized water supply solutions, such as efficiency and reuse to be "infrastructure"?

No, but these are an important part of water management...



Speakers:

- Moderator: Mary Kelly, Culp & Kelly
- Caroline Koch, WaterNow Alliance
- Karen Guz, San Antonio Water
- Kevin Shafer, Milwaukee Metro Sewer
- Jaimie Galayda, Tucson Water
- Andrew Erdmann, City of Santa Fe
- Jeff Odefey, American Rivers

GOING BIG ON RESILIENCE IN TEXAS

We loved being in Texas and not just for the BBQ. Texas faces extraordinary water challenges and is responding with innovation and creativity. This session explored recent developments in the Lone Star State, with a special focus on the City of Austin's new Austin Forward Plan, a 100-year resilience roadmap.

Key Take-Aways:

The panelists were instrumental in developing Austin's new Water 100-year Water Plan, which prioritizes resiliency by focusing on:

- Local solutions like onsite reuse and efficiency
- The necessity of stakeholder and community engagement
- The need for long-range planning, and financial investment



Speakers:

Sarah Rountree Schlessinger, Texas Water Foundation
Sharlene Leurig, Texas Water Trade
Jennifer Walker, National Wildlife Fed.
Prof. Robert Mace, Texas State Univ.
Kevin Critendon, Austin Water



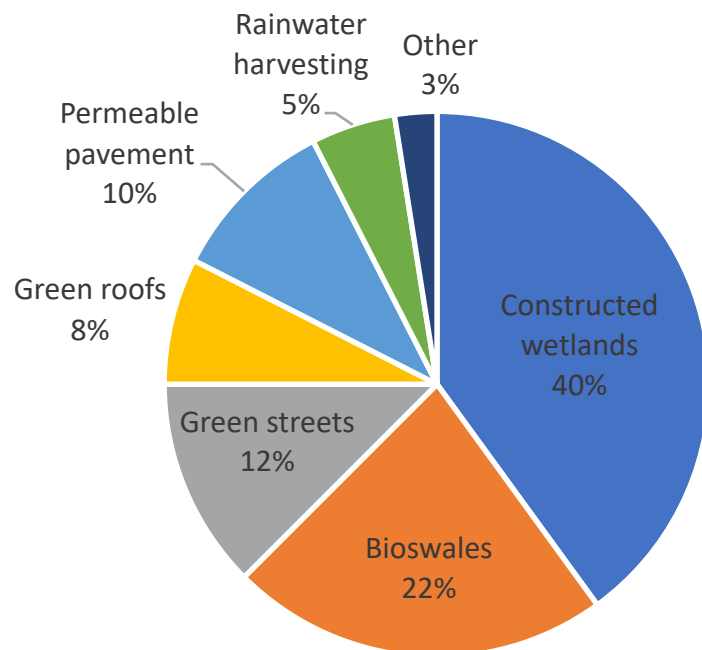
A CHANGING TIDE: PUTTING STORMWATER TO WORK FOR YOU

Managing flood risks and stormwater runoff is a growing challenge in American communities. This session highlighted green infrastructure success stories and innovations in stormwater management technology.

Key Take-Aways:

- Finding new ways to manage and redirect stormwater at the building level can significantly augment supply.
- Stormwater can be a major source of community stress. Green Infrastructure creates pathways for utilities to work with constituents to work together to address these challenges and provides multiple local benefits.
- Data documenting the financial and communal benefits of Green Infrastructure is growing, making it easier for new communities to adopt these programs at scale.

WE ASKED: *What type of green infrastructure is of greatest interest to you and your community?*



Speakers:

Colin Wellenkamp, Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative
 Paula Connolly, Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange
 Nicole Beck, 2nd Nature
 Seth Brown, Storm and Stream Solutions

LAND USE AND WATER: BREAKING THROUGH THE SILOS

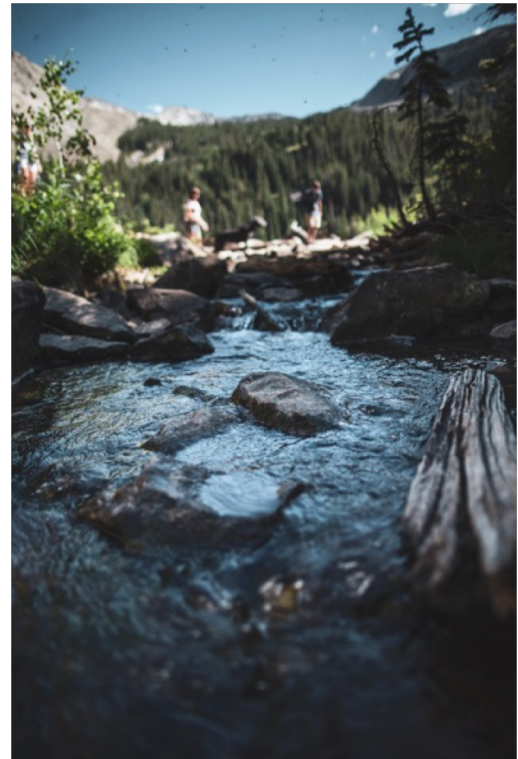
Water and land use planning are often siloed, creating roadblocks for local leaders trying to address resource challenges. This session showcased efforts to work across departments and agencies to support local economic growth with sustainable, healthy, and reliable water strategies.

Key Take-Aways

- Advocate for water and land use integration in your community.
- Provide regular venues and opportunities for collaboration.
- Bring equity into the equation, and build political will for this in your communities.

WE ASKED: *What is the greatest barrier to water and land use integration in your community?*

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 41% | Too many jurisdictions / fragmentation of governance |
| 24% | Not a political priority |
| 21% | Mistrust between agencies/ departments limiting collaboration |
| 10% | Don't have time |
| 3% | Regulations restricting innovative land/water planning |



Speakers:

Anne Castle, Getches Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources
Chris Sturm, New Jersey Future
Danielle Dolan, Local Government Commission
John Berggren, Western Resource Advocates
Jennifer Walker, National Wildlife Federation, Texas

TECHSPLORATION: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN TECH AND WATER AGENCIES

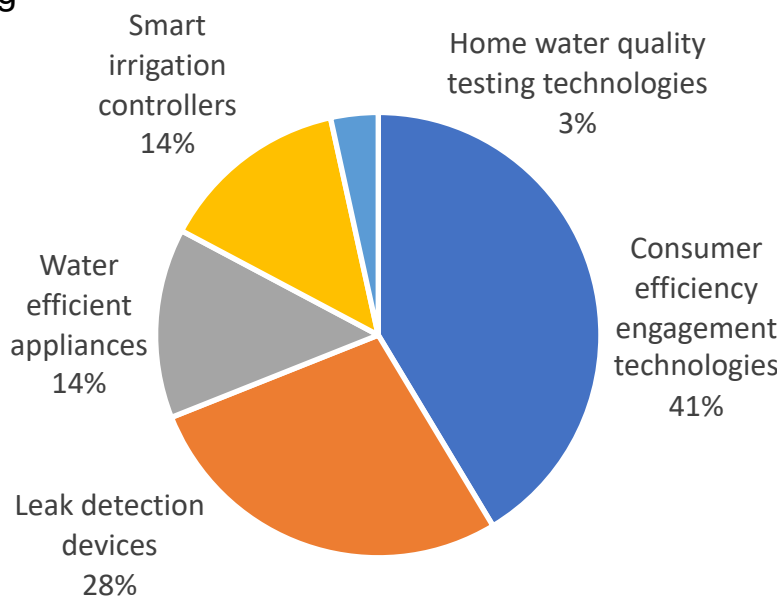
Water technology -- like smart irrigation systems, conservation software, leak detection devices, and cloud-based SCADA -- can play a significant role in water management. This session explored the role of emerging water tech.

Key Take-Aways:

- Technology solutions offer options for customers to engage with and better understand their water use.
- Lack of water usage data has been a key barrier for utilities in fully gauging their water challenges. Newer technologies can help to overcome this.
- Water technology will continue to improve and get cheaper, making scalability not only possible but inevitable.
- The time is NOW to start exploring water tech for your community.



WE ASKED: *What water technologies are of greatest interest to you and your community?*



Speakers:

Moderator: Will Sarni, The Water Foundry
 Chris Klein, Rachio
 Chris Thompson, Public Works Director, Spanish Fork, UT
 Erik Andersen, WaterSmart Software
 Eric Adler, Flume Technologies
 Michael Murphy, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center

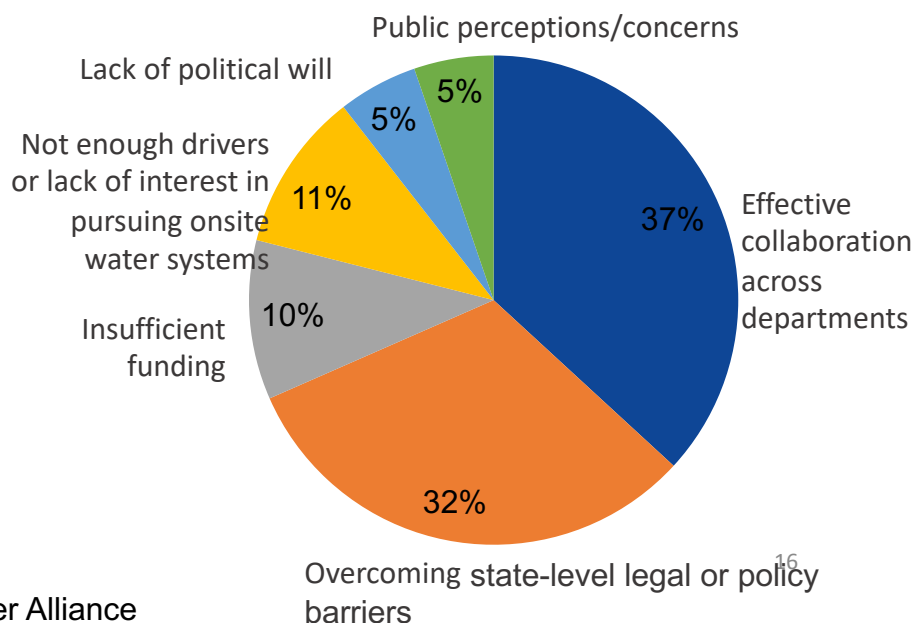
EXPANDING YOUR SUPPLY: THE ONSITE REUSE REVOLUTION IS HERE

Onsite non-potable water systems (ONWS) collect and treat water generated in and around buildings – i.e., gray and black wastewater, stormwater, rainwater runoff, and more – for reuse such as irrigation, toilet flushing, and cooling. This can slash potable water demand by radically reducing, or eliminating discharges to the wastewater system, delaying capacity improvements to water and wastewater systems, increase resiliency, and much more.

Key Take-Aways:

- Up to 90% of water used in commercial buildings is for non-potable purposes. This is low-hanging fruit in most communities.
- Recycled water isn't new. What is new is interest in using recycled water to supplement and even replace conventional new water supply options.
- Some states still ban onsite reuse systems, so it is important to get solid legal advice and work with key officials.

WE ASKED: *What do you anticipate would be the major challenges to implementing onsite reuse projects in your community?*



Speakers:

Moderator: Katy Lackey, US Water Alliance

Zach Gallagher, Natural Systems Utilities

Juan Ontiveros, UT Sustainability

Prof. Sybil Sharvelle, Colorado State University

Josina Morita, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Bringing it Home: Funding the Future of Water

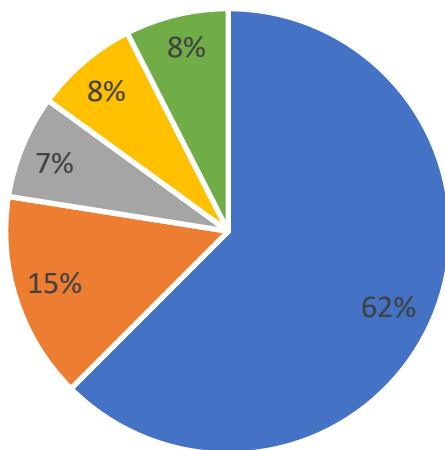
Grantmakers are becoming more focused on urban water systems and the relationships they can bring to bear between equity, environmental health and local water resilience in the face of climate change.

Key Take-Aways:

- Safe and affordable water supplies for urban communities is an area of rising priority in light of Flint, MI.
- Impact investing is also a growing area of interest
- Philanthropic dollars are limited, so the focus is often on opportunities to leverage modest, feasible changes capable of generating significant impacts.



WE ASKED: *What does "getting to scale" with the help of grantmakers mean to you?*



- Implementation of distributed strategies
- 20% or more of consumers adopt sustainable strategies
- Significantly reduced local GPCD
- Significantly reducing stormwater runoff
- Increasing spending on decentralized strategies increases by an average of 100%

Speakers:

Moderator: Cynthia Koehler, WaterNow Alliance

Joya Banerjee, SD Bechtel, Jr. Foundation

Margaret Bowman, Spring Point Partners LLC

Diane Schrauth, Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities

Emily Warren, Cynthia & George Mitchell Foundation

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THANKS FOR A GREAT SUMMIT!



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AND OUR INCREDIBLE PARTNERS:



We're grateful for our inspiring speakers, attendees and supporters
for their hard work and participation.

For additional information and resources, please visit
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