



ABOUT US

The Fox Valley Operators Association has been bringing together wastewater operators from the Fox Valley and surrounding areas for over 50 years. The Association's focus is the operators but is comprised of a variety of occupations in the wastewater industry. The Fox Valley Operators Association is dedicated to educating our members. Information sharing is one of the most valuable tools we operators have. Members meet monthly at various treatment plants throughout the Fox Valley and beyond.

SPECIAL THANK YOU

All Presenters
All Moderators
Sue Ruta, Jacobs
Felice Grandinetti, Village of Carpentersville
Cathy Piazza, Peterson & Matz.
Mike Johnson, Hach



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**18th Annual Fox Valley
Operators Association
Conference**

August 20th, 2026

Medinah Shriners Center
550 Shriners Drive
Addison, IL 60101



foxvalleyoperators.org

SCHEDULE

6:00 – 7:00 am	Guest Registration & Exhibitor Set-Up
7:00 – 8:00 am	Conference Welcome
8:00 – 8:45 am	Technical Sessions #1
8:45 – 9:30 am	Break with Vendors
9:30 – 10:15 am	Technical Sessions #2
10:15 – 10:45 am	Break with Vendors
10:45 – 11:30 am	Technical Sessions #3
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch/Vendor Demos
1:00 – 1:30 pm	Raffle / Awards
2:00 pm	End of Conference



TECHNICAL SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Session #1 (8:00 – 8:45 am)

Scimitar Room: Developing Skills in Wastewater Operations: Leadership, Culture, and Practical Approaches to Learning

Ken Hellberg | Watura

Joe Lapastora | NMWRD

This presentation explores how the NMWRD has developed a structured, leadership-driven approach to workforce development. Practical, adaptable insights for utilities seeking to strengthen workforce development, with a focus on leadership, organization, and the conditions that make training effective will be discussed.

Crescent Room: Reducing Polymer Use & Sludge Handling Costs with Nanobubble-Conditioned Makedown Water

Sarah Ben-Yoseph | Moleaer, Inc.

This project evaluates nanobubble-conditioned makedown water as a scalable approach to improving polymer efficiency, with primary emphasis on full-scale centrifuge dewatering at the Rock Creek Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF). Supporting field observations from additional utilities indicate transferability across sludge types and dewatering technologies.

Room B: Case Studies of the Successful Land Application of Biosolids and the Impact of Different Technologies

Rick Treleven | BCR Environmental

Jim Mangu | Village of Wonder Lake

This presentation will detail the long-term operational data, including cost savings, comparing nutrient retention of dewatered biosolids across multiple technologies, and testimonials and case studies from ranchers utilizing BCR treated municipal biosolids for fertilization.

Session #2 (9:30 – 10:15 am)

Scimitar Room: Aligning Design and Operations: Practical Coordination Techniques that Boost Project Outcomes

Brett Schnur | Arcadis

This presentation explores practical techniques for aligning stakeholders across the project lifecycle, focusing on how early and sustained operator involvement during design phases can enhance project outcomes.

Crescent Room: From Assets to Action: Leveraging CMMS to Optimize Maintenance and Staffing in Wastewater Systems

Adam Radi | Baxter & Woodman

Monica Rasch | City of Elmhurst

This session will explore how a multi-system Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) has been implemented and used by the City of Elmhurst to manage assets and maintenance across its water and wastewater operations.

Room B: From Corrosion to Containment: The Art of Chemical Room Design

Elisa Bonkowski | Fehr Graham

This presentation provides an overview of how to design chemical rooms with operator safety as the main goal. The focus is on regulatory requirements and best practices to improve safety, containment, and proper handling of hazardous chemicals.

Session #3 (10:45 – 11:30 am)

Scimitar Room: Operators “Bull” Session

Garett Guthrie, Brandon Scurto, and Cesar Pineda (Facilitators)

A roundtable discussion of everyday operator issues.

Crescent Room: Electro-Biochemical Reactor (EBR) Demonstrates Successful Nitrate Removal

Elise Hotz | WesTech Engineering, LLC.

The EBR approach to biological denitrification will be explored at two groundwater sites in California and Utah.

Room B: An Excess of Excess Flow Challenges: A 10-Year Journey to Compliance

Christopher Walton, P.E. | Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI)

Sarah Cowley, E.I.T. | EEI

This presentation will provide an overview of the previous Excess Flow Treatment Facility at the Village of Bartlett, challenges with operating the old facility, investigation of alternatives, and design and construction of the new excess flow LS and interceptor/force main.