



## Staying Focused on Solutions Will Assure Our Success

By Sal Gattone, PMI Board of Directors President, LIXIL



Sal Gattone

Recognizing our natural inclination to view the world's challenges through the lens of the information we consume is crucial. It's not uncommon for various sources to emphasize narratives of conflict and negativity, which inevitably shapes our outlook on a range of subjects, including those concerning water and climate.

In the realm of information, negativity and controversy often dominate, casting a shadow over the situation. But a more objective assessment is important, enabling us to consider solutions. A balanced approach paves the way forward.

Continuing this discourse, it becomes increasingly evident that a growing sense of fatigue is a natural response to the divisions from such narratives. However, an alternative perspective arises – one that revolves around “solutions journalism” ([tinyurl.com/m3mx6m5n](https://tinyurl.com/m3mx6m5n)). Rooted in narratives highlighting problem-solving, this approach steps away from dwelling exclusively on negative aftermaths. It offers a refreshing perspective amidst the prevalent caution surrounding climate change and a pervasive sense of anxiousness.

As a case in point, **George McGraw's** story, featured in Rotary Magazine ([tinyurl.com/bdfje557](https://tinyurl.com/bdfje557)), exemplifies this shift in focus. During his tenure as a philosophy major at Chicago's Loyola University, McGraw encountered the sobering reality of global water scarcity. In 2011, merely two years after his graduation, he established DigDeep, an organization dedicated to action rather than despair.

Today, DigDeep serves more than 2.2 million people in the United States who don't have the sinks, bathtubs or toilets the rest of us take for granted. Several PMI members have partnered with DigDeep on water projects, which are currently located in Navajo Nation, Appalachia, and El Paso County, Texas. These projects, driven by community initia-

tives, materialized due to McGraw's commitment to positivity and solution-seeking.

Another interesting example of how to find a water-related solution was covered by the Christian Science Monitor (<https://tinyurl.com/4z5bhcpj>). This story focuses on **David Hertz** and his wife, **Laura Doss-Hertz**, who supply their Malibu house and pool with water harvested from the air through a process called atmospheric water generation. Based on the laws of condensation – warm air meeting a cool surface and forming water droplets – their water-generating product, called WeDew, won a \$1.5 million Water Abundance Xprize by being the only one of 100 entries to meet all the criteria: produce at least 528 gallons of water a day, at a cost of less than two cents per liter while running entirely on renewable energy.

Numerous organizations have embraced the challenge of scaling up and making water-from-air technology accessible and affordable in regions with acute water shortages. In the Christian Science Monitor article, **Heather Cooley**, director of research at the Pacific Institute and a former speaker at the PMI Manufacturing Success Conference, acknowledges the potential of atmospheric water generation. Nonetheless, she also highlights other more widely available strategies – such as enhanced water efficiency, water reuse, and storm water capture – to alleviate water scarcities.

Finally, in an article originally published on Devex.com (<https://tinyurl.com/4yfymj39>), **Catherine Cheney** writes

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# Let's Help Maui Recover from a Summer of Disaster

By Kerry Stackpole, FASAE, CAE, PMI CEO/Executive Director



Kerry Stackpole

The rustle of the falling leaves. The changing colors of the trees. The growl of school buses surging to life. The excitement of children heading off for a new school

year. The grunts and groans of football and soccer players on practice fields as they move toward the glow of Friday night lights. The departure of summer heat coupled with the onset chill of fall mornings. It's no wonder we revel in the coming change of seasons.

This year, the transition from summer to fall will be shaded by the memory of the deadliest wildfire in more than 100 years. The searing images provide a stark contrast between what communities affected by these fires have experienced compared to the pleasant surroundings most of us live in. Hawaiian communities and families lost more than 1,800 structures burnt to the ground by an unforgiving inferno. Thousands of our fellow citizens are now being housed in temporary shelters.

The historic community of Lahaina, Hawaii, and the island of Maui are in desperate need of our support. It is hard to imagine the need. Personal possessions have been vaporized. So too have the supplies essential to everyday life. The basics are in high demand – bottled water, fresh food, baby wipes, soap, fuel, blankets, bedding, towels, and tents for shelter. Meeting the enormous need for emergency supplies is made more difficult by the idyllic island setting where everything arrives by sea or air.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has deployed more than 190 search and rescue team members and 420 FEMA personnel are on the ground in the wildfire disaster area. There are

more than 30 team members from the Small Business Administration, 98 Disaster Survivor Assistance staff, and 270 Red Cross team members distributing more than 25,000 meals and snacks to survivors. The Red Cross is also working to help locate missing family members. The scale and scope of the recovery effort is enormous, with more than \$2.3 million distributed in the days following the wildfire for temporary housing, rental assistance, and critical assistance needs.

The risks and vulnerability of our water systems are part of a familiar story by now. The Lahaina wildfire destroyed much of the Lahaina water system, causing some areas to lose water pressure. As a result, harmful contaminants, including benzene and other volatile organic chemicals, may have found their way into the water system. As a precaution, the Hawaii Department of Health and the County of Maui Department of Water Supply are advising residents of the affected areas to not use tap water for drinking or cooking. As they point out, there is no way to treat the water – boiling, freezing, filtering, adding chlorine, or letting the water stand will not make the water safe.

Wildfires in California including the Camp, Tubb and Paradise infernos created more than \$9.7 billion in economic losses and destroyed underground

water pipes, water meters, seals, and other components. As the water system lost pressure, researchers say airborne chemicals may have been sucked into the water system network. Following the Paradise fires, California Water Boards issued cautionary warnings about the presence of benzene in water samples and in the biofilms that line water pipes. Conflicting advice about what water was safe to use and what water was not safe added to the crisis and fueled the confusion.

Clearing out debris, rebuilding the water system, and testing water conditions on Maui and in Lahaina are going to be a long-term effort. These communities will benefit from the expertise of our industry and our allies in the years to come. How can you help, today?

The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency ([tinyurl.com/mw6nyzww](https://tinyurl.com/mw6nyzww)) is encouraging financial donations rather than in-kind donations at this stage of the crisis. The local Red Cross ([tinyurl.com/3bxtrzn7](https://tinyurl.com/3bxtrzn7)) and the Hawaii Community Foundation Maui Strong Fund ([tinyurl.com/mr2f8p38](https://tinyurl.com/mr2f8p38)) are on the ground and actively engaged in disaster relief efforts. They are desperately in need of financial contributions to support those efforts. Now is the right time to give if you can. He nui ka mahalo.



# PMI Team Builds Deeper Connections Via Member Visits

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

“Seek first to understand and then to be understood,” explained businessman and leadership expert **Stephen Covey** in his book “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.”

The Plumbing Manufacturers International team applies that philosophy to all PMI member visits, including the most recent stops at Reliance Worldwide Corporation (RWC), Water Pik, and Viega, said PMI CEO/Executive Director **Kerry Stackpole**. PMI’s Director of Programs and Administration **Jodi Stuhrberg**, Education Program Coordinator **Leslie Smith** and Technical Director **Kyle Thompson** also participated in some or all of the visits.

“I always learn something new. It feels joyful to see our members so excited about their work,” Stackpole said. “When we visit members, our primary goal is to better understand the issues they’re facing in their environment.”

Members bring up issues and challenges – such as extended producer responsibility laws and plastic packaging – and their continuing work to be innovative in producing high-performing, efficient products. The PMI team shares how the association connects members to resources and support.

For example, PMI members brought up contraband and counterfeit products as a major concern during the recent visits. Stackpole explained how PMI has been engaging with legislators for years to pass the INFORM Consumers Act that went into effect on June 27. The law will help deter criminals from selling stolen, counterfeit and unsafe plumbing fixtures and other products through online marketplaces.

## Getting invaluable hands-on training and seeing innovation in action

The PMI team values the visits for providing a broader picture and deeper un-

derstanding of the important products, training and services PMI members deliver every day.

Stackpole described how the PMI team toured Viega’s training facility and took lessons in installing the company’s ProPress fittings. “You can’t beat that kind of hands-on experience. It’s a real tribute to their tenacity and insistence to innovate,” he said.

At Water Pik, PMI team members met with about 20 people to discuss how PMI provides support on issues specific to showerheads sold on online marketplaces that don’t meet mandated specifications, Stuhrberg said. A tour of the manufacturing plant and lab showed the care Water Pik employees take to develop product prototypes, including using 3D printing, to quickly and effectively bring products to market, she added.

The PMI team was impressed with RWC’s vast product lines that serve a diverse marketplace, Stackpole said. “We enjoyed seeing their open-concept facility that proudly displays their brands and meeting with their codes and standards and sales teams, giving us the opportunity to share the benefits of PMI membership,” Stuhrberg added.

After his visit with the PMI team, Viega President and CEO **Markus Brettschneider** said, “I find it always very rewarding to spend time with our partners and my colleagues. This week we had the pleasure to welcome Kerry Stackpole and his PMI team at our training center in Colorado. Excellent discussions took place to further strengthen our strategic partnership.” He also thanked Viega team members **Paige Riddle**, co-chair of the PMI Advocacy/Government Affairs Committee, and **Martin Knieps**, immediate past president of the PMI Board of Directors, for leading the engagement in the Viega and PMI partnership.



From RWC, l-r: J. Daniel Pierce, Clayton Boardman, Rich Houle and Derres Catalano. From PMI: Kerry Stackpole and Jodi Stuhrberg.



l-r: PMI’s Kyle Thompson; Water Pik’s Preston Peterson, Kelly Mix and Bart Prins; Stackpole; Water Pik’s Brian Woodard; Stuhrberg; Water Pik’s Craig Rogers; and PMI’s Ann Geier and Leslie Smith.



Front, l-r: Viega’s Paige Riddle, PMI’s Smith, Stackpole, Geier, Stuhrberg and Thompson; and Viega’s Martin Knieps. Back, l-r: Viega’s Christian Geisthoff and Markus Brettschneider.

# PMI23 Schedule Brings Top Industry Issues Into Focus

Expert presenters will deliver crucial insights during an extraordinary PMI23 Manufacturing Success Conference program designed to fuel professional development. Topics to be addressed during the Oct. 23-26 meeting in Seattle: artificial intelligence, extended producer responsibility, green building, international perspectives, legislative and regulatory developments, the manufacturing economy, market outlook, PFAS, the skilled labor gap, sustainability, trade, water management, WaterSense and more.

The latest additions to the PMI23 schedule include **McKenna Morrigan**, Seattle Public Utilities strategic advisor, waste prevention and product stewardship, who will participate in

presentations about extended producer responsibility and sustainable packaging; and **Whitney McCollum**, partner, K&L Gates, who will present on the legal, policy and ethical considerations relating to artificial intelligence.

A panel discussion on how to close the skilled labor gap will feature **Ryan Davis**, executive director, Seattle Jobs Initiative; **Shana Peschek**, executive director, Machinists Institute; **Kairie Pierce**, lead workforce development director at the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO; and **Heather Winfrey**, Seattle Area Pipe Trades Apprenticeship assistant training coordinator.

**Luke Hendricks**, associate plumbing engineer at PAE Living Building, will

join **Dylan Herndon**, water treatment specialist at Northwest Engineers, to provide an overview of the Bullitt Center's various water management systems and how they operate. Called the "greenest office building in the world," the Bullitt Center generates its own electricity and water, which is collected from rain off the roof.

See an overview of the entire schedule and register at [safeplumbing.org/pmi23](https://safeplumbing.org/pmi23)

## pmi23 MANUFACTURING SUCCESS



*Ryan Davis*



*Luke Hendricks*



*Dylan Herndon*



*Whitney McCollum*



*McKenna Morrigan*



*Shana Peschek*



*Kairie Pierce*



*Heather Winfrey*

# PMI Women's Breakfast Reflects Industry's DE&I Momentum

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

The inaugural PMI Women's Breakfast will take place at the PMI23 Manufacturing Success Conference in Seattle on Oct. 25. **Andrea Quinn**, a certified life and business coach and international best-selling author, will share her "Essential Empowerment Curriculum for Women," including advice on how to achieve respect and career success while remaining true to personal values.

Quinn decided to profoundly change her life after being taken out of work on a stretcher. Brought to the brink by overworking and trying to meet unrealistic expectations, she became a life coach to help women achieve an empowering work/life balance. After the breakfast, Quinn will deliver a PMI23 keynote address on "Tools to Reinvent Yourself in the New World of Business."



Andrea Quinn

"We're delighted to introduce this new event meant to honor and celebrate women in the plumbing manufacturing industry," said Plumbing Manufacturers International Director of Programs and Administration **Jodi Stuhrberg**. All women working at PMI member companies, as well as female presenters at PMI23, are invited to attend the breakfast, she added. Stuhrberg, PMI Board of Directors Secretary-Treasurer **Belinda Wise** of Kerox, Ltd., and **Denise Dougherty**, global regulatory manager for PMI member Sloan, put together the event.

"I am excited about the PMI Women's Breakfast because I think a more informed group makes for a more powerful and successful group. By bringing women in the plumbing industry together, I hope our message is heard that we need more women to be involved to get the work done – from the hands that complete installations to those that write the codes and standards," Dougherty said.

## Helping women advance with scholarships, leadership development and more

PMI, the American Society of Plumbing Engineers, the National Association of Manufacturers, and other long-standing industry organizations continue to build momentum behind efforts supporting and celebrating women – with a goal to achieve meaningful gains in diversity, equity and inclusion.

In addition, groups focused specifically on women members – such as the Women in Plumbing and Piping, the Women of ASPE, and the National Association of Women in Construction – are helping women in plumbing and manufacturing achieve their personal and professional goals.

These industry organizations help women advance in their careers by providing scholarships, holding networking events, offering educational and leadership courses, and more. They're also recognizing the many accomplishments of women plumbers, engineers, designers, leaders, and others in plumbing, plumbing manufacturing, and related fields.

For example, Women in Plumbing and Piping was established in 2022 by women who wanted to create a community of connection and empowerment for women in the plumbing and piping industries, according to the WiPP website. Built on four pillars of mentorship, education, networking, and recognition, the organization seeks to support workforce development by recruiting

more women into the plumbing and piping industries and ensuring a path to their success.

The Women of ASPE was formed to engage, retain and advance women in the plumbing design industry through education, leadership development, and networking opportunities, states the ASPE website. To support those efforts, WOA hosts webinars, workshops, national forums, and other networking/professional development opportunities for ASPE members. The group also has created a scholarship for one female ASPE member to attend ASPE's 2023 Tech Symposium in Bellevue, Washington. The scholarship aims to promote the importance of fostering the growth and professional development of women in the engineering field.

The National Association of Manufacturers' social impact arm, the Manufacturing Institute, jumpstarts new approaches to developing manufacturing talent. The institute created the "STEP Ahead" program to advance women's achievements in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and production. As part of the program, the annual STEP Ahead Awards honor "some of the most impressive and inspiring women in the manufacturing industry," the institute's website states.

With more than 115 chapters across the United States, the National Association of Women in Construction advances its members' careers in construction, builds their technical skills, and promotes leadership by providing education, support and networking opportunities.

The PMI Women's Breakfast is included in PMI23 registration. Register at [safeplumbing.org/pmi23](https://safeplumbing.org/pmi23)

# Adjust Your Communication Style to Influence Others

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

Adjust your communication style and learn what motivates your audience – by focusing on what’s in it for them. In this way, you can convince people to embrace and accept your ideas at work and in life. Attendees of a recent Plumbing Manufacturers International Inspiring Leaders Workshop gained these and other valuable tips and tools to persuade, influence and communicate with greater confidence and control.

Workshop leader **Hope Timberlake** shared strategies with PMI members seeking to better communicate with and provide more value to leaders, stakeholders and team members at every level of their organizations.



*Hope Timberlake*

Everyone has a script playing in the back of their minds asking, “What’s in it for me, or WIIFM?,” she stated. “When discussing an issue where we need to persuade someone to decide something or act, we need to identify their WIIFM. It tells you what people value and how they communicate,” she added. For example, Timberlake said she values efficiency. “If you say to me, ‘This project won’t take long to finish,’ that would appeal to me because that speaks to efficiency,” she said.

## Tailor messages using the four main communication styles

To help participants better tailor their messages to any audience, Timberlake discussed the four main communication styles people typically operate under: analytical, driver, amiable and expressive. Although most people identify strongly with one style, learning to adjust to other styles will provide better results – whether you’re pitching an idea or selling a product or service, she stated.

“These personality styles aren’t right or wrong. It’s helpful to know where you and your listeners fit so you can adapt. These styles can be situational, so people may turn on their amiable side or another side to please the audience they’re addressing,” said Timberlake, author of the book “Speak Up, Dammit! How to Quiet Your Fears, Polish Your Presence, and Share Your Voice.”

Someone with an analytical style typically pays attention to details, looks for options and evidence, is methodical and risk-averse, and values accuracy. Timberlake explained how she works with many tech engineers who fit into this style.

“Drivers seek results and outcomes, prefer yes or no answers, are generally impatient and plain-spoken, and don’t mind conflict. You need to be brief and direct with these people,” she said.

Amiable personalities value relationships, seek harmony and consensus, avoid conflict, and get energized by working closely with people. She described expressive team members as high-energy creative thinkers and big-picture visionaries who are competitive, ambitious and enjoy brainstorming.

## Apply the value framework to produce favorable messages

To communicate ideas so they’re well-received, Timberlake suggested analyzing your audience, adapting to their style, and “crisply communicating” your message. She shared her value framework tool to produce focused communications.

First start with your “what,” or recommendation, she suggested. Phrases such as, “We should standardize the process ...” or “It’s important to ...” succinctly



tell your audience what you want to accomplish.

Next, answer the question, “So what?” to create relevance for your listeners. For example, saying, “This will streamline decision-making...” quickly explains why your recommendation is important, Timberlake said. Ending by answering the question, “Now what?” allows you to convey next steps clearly. For example, “The next step is to schedule a meeting with both teams,” she added.

She also presented tips on creating a more impactful presence, which requires both strength and warmth. Convey strength with symmetrical body language – squared shoulders and strong eye contact. Timberlake suggested using assertive language and avoiding apologizing and using filler words, such as “um” and “uh.” Express warmth by leaning forward, smiling, holding eye contact, and explaining how your ideas will benefit your audience.

PMI Inspiring Leaders Workshops are designed for all leaders at all levels of PMI member companies, from entry-level to executive. These events are held throughout the year to help participants build important leadership, creativity and problem-solving skills. These learning opportunities will culminate with the PMI Inspiring Leaders Program at the PMI23 Manufacturing Success Conference in Seattle, Oct. 23-26. Take advantage of a special bundle rate to register for both the conference and the program, which will take place at the Museum of Flight: [safeplumbing.org/pmi23](https://safeplumbing.org/pmi23)

# How PMI is Monitoring Water Reuse Safety in California

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

California recently took a step closer to implementing regulations for direct potable water reuse to offset the effects of long-term drought in the state. The regulations, as proposed by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), would allow the state to channel extensively purified sewage water directly into drinking water supplies.

Plumbing Manufacturers International has been monitoring water use safety in California and considers the regulations sound. “PMI’s concerns with water reuse systems are to ensure that the water quality is compatible with our members’ products. In this case, the reuse water is required to be of potable quality; therefore, it should not conflict with any of our members’ products,” said PMI Technical Director **Kyle Thompson**.

A panel of health and water experts organized by the state agree that the regulations propose water purification criteria that would be safe for public health. The treated water will be “the cleanest drinking water around,” stated **Darrin Polhemus**, deputy director of the state’s Division of Drinking Water (DDW), in a recent Cal Matters article.

## State may implement new regulations by year’s end

The California Water Code requires the SWRCB to adopt uniform water recycling criteria for direct potable reuse on or before Dec. 31, 2023 – if an expert panel finds that the proposed regulations will adequately protect public health.

On July 21, the SWRCB published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Direct Potable Reuse and is accepting public comments until Sept. 8. PMI members and others can submit comments via email at [commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov).

California’s DDW has been investigating the feasibility of developing uniform water recycling criteria for direct potable

reuse for many years. The state water board completed an investigation in December 2016 and submitted a report to the legislature titled “Investigation on the Feasibility of Developing Uniform Water Recycling Criteria for Direct Potable Reuse” ([tinyurl.com/yhch5aes](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/dpr/Investigation_on_the_Feasibility_of_Developing_Uniform_Water_Recycling_Criteria_for_Direct_Potable_Reuse.pdf)) with its findings and recommendations.

In 2016, PMI shared information with PMI members about California’s interest in studying the feasibility of developing criteria for direct potable water reuse. “PMI has closely monitored and tracked these proposed regulations for many years to ensure that the water used won’t damage plumbing products,” said **Jerry Desmond**, PMI’s California government affairs consultant.

In 2017, the DDW – with the help of an expert review panel – began developing uniform water recycling criteria for direct potable reuse that would protect public health.

## Getting over the ‘ick’ factor

While the state has been using recycled water for more than 60 years to supplement water supplies, current regulations require the water to first be placed in a reservoir or an aquifer before heading to residents’ taps, stated a Cal Matters

article. The new rules mandate extensive steps to remove chemicals and pathogens that remain in sewer water after it has endured traditional and other treatments. Then, the treated wastewater can be sent to taps or circulated with raw water upstream of a drinking water treatment plant, the article explained.

Residents have accepted the idea of drinking direct potable reuse water to a point; however, the state may still face some resistance, Desmond said. “They still may need to get around the ick factor,” he added. The state water board will conduct a public hearing on Sept. 7, which could shed more light on the public’s acceptance, Desmond said.

Other drought-challenged states are either considering or have already implemented similar regulations. In January 2023, Colorado adopted updated drinking water reuse rules that require water providers to meet high standards for treatment, testing and community engagement, according to the Colorado Department of Health & Environment.

View a copy of California’s proposed regulations here: [tinyurl.com/y2btcdcn](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/dpr/Investigation_on_the_Feasibility_of_Developing_Uniform_Water_Recycling_Criteria_for_Direct_Potable_Reuse.pdf).



