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News

Caribbean Water Operators to Examine Pillars of Recovery and Resistance

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THE Caribbean Water and Sewage Association (CAWASA) is preparing to gather regional Water Operators in Barbados this month-end, to examine present and future challenges and to examine construction of pillars for recovery and resistance for the Caribbean's water sector operations.

CAWASA's Water Operators' Conference (WOC) is designed as a platform for water operators to discuss real issues and practical solutions, as well as cultivate innovations and inspire synergies to address present and future challenges in the Caribbean's Water and Sewerage sectors.

In this regard, the 7th Water Operators Conference will be held in Barbados from June 28–30, 2023 in collaboration with the host utility, the Barbados Water Authority (BWA).

The theme for this year's conference is "Operators: Pillars of Recovery and Resilience" and the event will bring together engineers, water and wastewater operators; water and wastewater laboratory analysts, stakeholders and other water industry personnel.

The 7th Caribbean Water Operators' Conference will be held at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre (LESC) in St. Michael, where CAWASA's Executive Director Ignatius Jean will call the conference to order on the Opening Day and participants will be welcomed by CAWASA President Christopher Husbands and the BWA President.

The Keynote Speaker will be Heidi Skerriitt, Training Officer & Development Officer at the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA), with remarks by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport, Works and Water Resources Santia J. O. Bradshaw.

The conference allows operators to showcase best practices and experiences at their respective utilities through technical presentations and a unique feature is always the Water Operators Competition, organized for operators to test their competence in areas directly-related to their functions.

This practical aspect of the conference is intended to allow participants to display their skills and add much-needed excitement to the conference.

But apart from the competitive spirit and familiarity tours, CAWASA says the conference's objectives also include "updating the knowledge and skills of water and wastewater operators through interaction with fellow operators; as well as providing another opportunity to access, view and share the latest ideas in technical equipment, technology, products, and services with suppliers."

Other objectives include: "Providing operators with the opportunity to share their experiences in preparing for the Operators Certification Examinations; another opportunity to showcase their presentation skills through professional presentations and competitive activities; and to showcase their technical skills through the Operators Competition."

On Day One the theme will be 'Crises, recovery and Resilience' and participants will examine 'The Critical Role of Water & Wastewater Operators in Emergency Response and Recovery' with a presentation by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Authority (CDEMA); 'WaSH Preparedness for Operators' by Jainil Didaraly of UNICEF and 'Key Water Safety Measures During Emergency Response' by Bradshaw Isaac of the Caribbean Public Health Authority (CARPHA).

'Key Preparedness Actions for Hurricanes, Floods, Earthquake, Volcanic Eruption, Pandemic based on Lessons from Past Responses' will also be the subject of a Panel Discussion featuring

participants from water agencies.

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On Day Two, the conference will discuss 'Capacity Building and Development with Professional Operator: Taking Water Sector Operators to the Next Level', to be led Paul Bishop, President and CEO, WP.

Another panel discussion will also be held on 'Operator Certification in the Digital Age — Operator Experiences' featuring Nicole Austin (BWA), Bowen Anderson PO (BWA), Ezikel Francis (DOWASCO); and another session on 'Membrane Plant Operator Training & Certification' led by CaribDA,

Another topic will be 'Planted Filters for Wastewater Treatment' with presentations by CARIBSAN, ODE, WASCO and DOWASCO.

Discussion on 'The Caribbean Water Sector in a Post Pandemic Climate' will be led by Candice Santana, Vice President, CWWA and 'BWA Going Green — Overview of BWA GCF Projects' will be presented by the Project Leader, while 'New and Emerging Technologies' will be presented by a Sundry Supplier.

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The Water Operators Competition will take place at the Golden Ridge Station and it will include sections on Pipe-laying and Joining, Servicing Connections and Installation of Valves, to be followed by a prize-giving ceremony.

The final day will include site visits to various installations and projects in Barbados.

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