FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Florida Water Environment Association | SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

1ST SEMESTER - 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Melody Gonzalez, Black & Veatch

Over the past year, the FWEA South Florida Chapter has continued to grow, connect, and make an impact across our professional community, and I could not be more proud of what we have accomplished together.

Since stepping into the role of Chair in May 2025, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the dedication, passion, and collaboration that define our chapter. This was a year filled with personal change and challenges. However, regardless of my personal situation, my team has rising to new highest and supported me and our members each day. This year has been filled with meaningful technical programs, networking opportunities, student engagement initiatives, community outreach efforts, and leadership development activities that strengthened both our organization and our industry connections.

Throughout the year, our chapter hosted a variety of successful events, including technical seminars, networking socials, workshops, leadership meetings, and collaborative industry events that brought together professionals from utilities, consulting firms, government agencies, academia, and partner organizations such as Engineers without Border Florida Professional Chapter, an organization that is very near and dear to my heart. These events not only provided valuable technical and professional development opportunities, but also reinforced the importance of collaboration as we continue addressing the evolving challenges facing the water industry.

If you know anything about me, you know I am a firm believer in supporting the next generation of engineers. One of the areas I am especially proud of has been our continued engagement with students and universities throughout South Florida. Our chapter remained committed to supporting the next generation of water professionals through our involvement with both the University of Miami and Florida International University. Through student outreach, financial support, participation in university activities, and ongoing collaboration with student organizations, we continue working to create pathways for future leaders entering our industry. Investing in students and young professionals remains one of the most important responsibilities we have as an organization. The enthusiasm, talent, and fresh perspectives we see from these students give us great confidence in the future of the water sector.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible support of our members, volunteers, steering committee, speakers, sponsors, and industry partners. Every event, initiative, and success this year was driven by individuals who generously gave their time, expertise, and energy to support our chapter and our mission. I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our annual sponsors and event sponsors. Your continued partnership allows us to provide high-quality programming, student engagement opportunities, leadership development, and meaningful networking experiences for our members throughout the year. Your support truly makes a difference. To our members: thank you for your continued involvement, participation, and trust in our chapter leadership. The strength of the South Florida Chapter comes directly from the engagement and passion of our community. As we look ahead, I am excited for the future of our chapter and confident that we will continue building on this momentum together. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as Chair and to work alongside such an outstanding group of professionals dedicated to advancing the water industry and serving our communities.

Together, we are building not only stronger utilities, but also a stronger professional community for future generations.

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FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

TECHNICAL ARTICLE

TRACING MICROPLASTIC PATHWAYS IN FLORIDA AND METHODOLOGICAL NEEDS FOR WATERSHED MONITORING

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State-level evaluations indicate that ~7,200 metric tons of macro- and microplastics enter Florida's surrounding marine environments annually (National Academies of Sciences, 2022). Episodic climate stressors redistribute microplastics across Florida's terrestrial, aquatic, and atmospheric domains. Transport occurs across three distinct temporal scales, from rapid pulses to multi-century sequestration:

- Immediate Transfers (Hours to Weeks): Driven by intense rainfall and hurricanes, these events flush urban particles, such as tire wear, into drainage networks and aerosolize plastics into the maritime boundary layer.
- Delayed Transfers (Months to Years): Estuaries like Biscayne Bay and the Indian River Lagoon serve as transient storage zones where tidal pumping and salinity changes cause particles to settle into benthic sediments. Approximately 77% of floating coastal plastics remain trapped in nearshore circulation or mangrove roots. These processes are further influenced by continuous resuspension during tidal cycles.
- Extremely Delayed Transfers (Decades to Centuries): Particles escaping the coast undergo biofouling, increasing their density and causing them to sink into deep-ocean depositional environments, such as the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic basins. This vertical redistribution is often facilitated by the biological carbon pump.

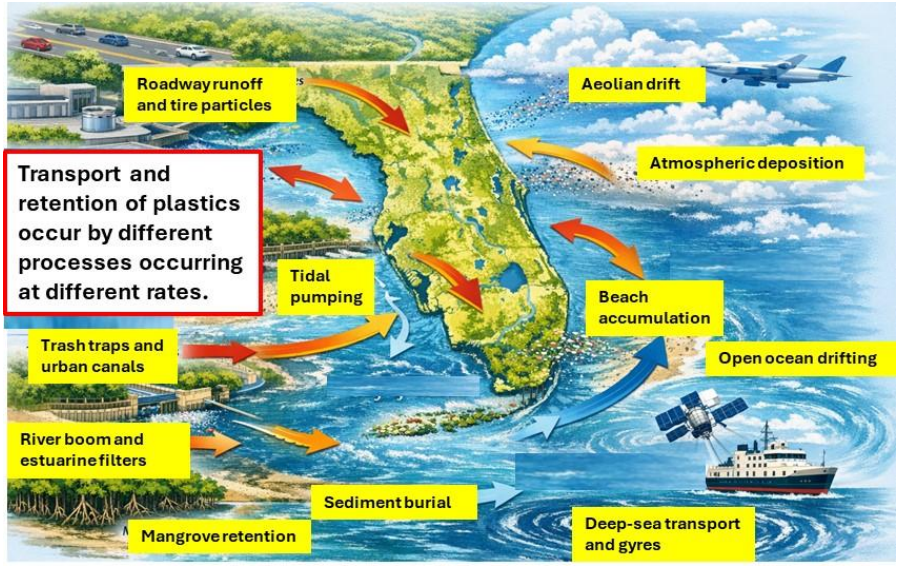

Figure 1: Plastic mobilization and retention processes in Florida.

Quantitative Scaling: The "Missing Plastic" Problem

A major challenge in mass budgeting is the bias of net surveys toward particle counts rather than true mass. Because particle mass scales with the cube of diameter, even small assumptions about size produce orders-of-magnitude differences in calculated flux. The empirical field data from two of Florida's marine ecosystems, Tampa Bay (USF baseline inventory) and the Indian River Lagoon (UCF atmospheric deposition baseline), were converted into a mass-balance basis (McEachern et al., 2029; Walters et al., 2022).

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Table 1. Scenario sensitivity of Florida microplastic inventories.

Florida Ecosystem	Reported empirical abundance (Particles)	Fine fragments & fibers (d≈100 μm, ρ≈0.95 g/cm³)	Coarse denser fragments (d≈1 mm, ρ≈1.3 g/cm³)	Mass variance and Policy significance
Tampa Bay Estuarine System	4.0 x 10^9	2.0 kg	2.72 metric tons	Shows how mesh-clipping obscures baseline mass.
Indian River Lagoon (IRL)	1.4 x10^{12}	700.0 kg	952.0 metric tons	Illustrates accumulation from atmospheric deposition.

Riverine and Canal Flux Estimates

Florida's hydrologic network does not behave like the high-energy continental river basins such as the Amazon or Mississippi. Florida's waterways are flat, micro-tidal, highly channelized, and subjected to floodgate operations. Therefore, densely populated areas and urban point sources have a stronger association with plastic quantities entering water bodies than simple volume throughput.

Table 2. Estimated microplastic mass flux and retention quantities for selected waterways.

Waterway System	Average Hydrologic Discharge (m^3/s)	Basin Population Exposure (Millions)	Scenario Low Flux (t/yr)	Scenario High Flux (t/yr)	Estuarine Retention Bottleneck Strategy
St. Johns River (Mouth at Jacksonville)	~195.0	~5.5	4.8	6,500	High Estuarine Trapping: Low-gradient flow and tidal pumping retain denser polymers in sediments before offshore export.
Miami River & Canal System	~1.4 to 15.0 (Highly gated)	~2.7	12.5	17,000	Direct Pulse Export: Urban, high-velocity channels bypass filters and deliver runoff to Biscayne Bay during storms.
Caloosahatchee River (S-79 Structure Pool)	~11.0 to 28.0 (Base flow vs. Lake releases)	~0.8	1.1	1,500	Episodic Climate Shocks: Lake Okeechobee releases flush agricultural plastics in short, intense pulses.
Tampa Bay Tributaries (Hillsborough, Alafia, Bypass)	~45.0 (Combined)	~3.2	3.5	4,800	Seasonal Urban Wash-off: Summer storms mobilize road dust and tire particles into coastal waters.
Everglades Sheet flow (Shark River Slough inputs)	Managed sheet flow	< 0.1 (Protected areas)	< 0.01	4.5	Nature-Based Attenuation: Sawgrass systems efficiently trap microplastics within peat.

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Figure 2: Florida mangroves

Figure 3: Florida coastal areas

Mangroves are one of the most critical natural control points in Florida's microplastic transport system, functioning as both filters and long-term sinks within coastal pathways.

Urban canals in Florida act as high-velocity transport corridors that bypass natural filtration, rapidly conveying microplastics to coastal waters, especially during storm-driven runoff events.

Mitigation and Watershed Management

Mitigating climate-driven microplastic transport requires multi-scale strategies across three distinct intervention tiers. Upstream source control (to reduce near-term pulses) would involve targeted street sweeping practices along high-density transit corridors (e.g., I-95, I-4, US-1) during dry spells to remove elastomeric tire wear particles before heavy rain events wash them into aquatic networks. Green infrastructure systems, such as bioretention swales and rain gardens near major highway stormwater discharge nodes, settle out fragments near the source. Interface interception to disrupt compartment coupling (e.g., land-sea, sea-land) requires structural capture elements. Installing high-capacity trash traps, flexible river booms, and floating bio-barriers at the tidal limits of major urban creeks and gate-controlled canals to catch floating fragments before they breach bay boundaries. Upgrading wastewater treatment plants to remove fine textile microfibers from final effluents would reduce leakage of microplastics to the sea (via effluent discharge) and to land (via biosolids). Long-term sequestration to attenuate legacy fluxes would involve nature-based solutions and protection of coastal mangrove systems, seagrass beds, and salt marshes. These low-energy vegetative matrices serve as permanent catchments that securely lock up delayed legacy plastic stocks, preventing their remobilization back into the active marine food web.

Future reporting of plastics in water systems must shift from particle counts (particles/m3) to quantifying absolute mass-flux estimates (t/yr). Coupling particle counts with real-time hydrological flow data is critical for identifying hidden high-flux systems and optimizing engineering interventions across the state.

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FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

TECHNICAL ARTICLE

How to Win and Manage Water Infrastructure Funds: Navigate the Full Funding Journey, From Pre-Application Planning and Positioning to Post-Award Compliance, With Lessons From Water Infrastructure Projects

Authors: Nicole Brown, PE (GFT Water Growth Lead, Philadelphia, Pa.), Rachel Lengle Govelovich, PE (GFT Sr. Project Manager, Mechanicsburg, Pa.), Jack Murphy (GFT Grant and Funding Coordinator, Fairfax, Va.), Breana Sumners (GFT Project Manager, Marlton, N.J)

Unpacking the Current Challenges Facing Utilities

Securing funding for water infrastructure projects has never been more complex. Between shifting federal funding priorities, new compliance regulations such as the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act, and evolving technologies, utilities face increasing pressure to deliver projects that are not only shovel-ready but strategically aligned.

The American Water Works Association's 2025 State of the Water Industry Report made it clear: aging infrastructure and capital financing remain top challenges for utilities of all sizes. With over 60% of surveyed utilities reporting, they "rarely or never" access grant funding or a state revolving fund (SRF), it's clear that an untapped opportunity exists.

At the same time, emerging contaminants like PFAS chemicals, impacts of increasingly severe weather events, and a retiring workforce make the landscape even more unpredictable. Navigating this terrain requires a blend of foresight, flexibility, and funding fluency.

What Makes a Project Fundable in 2026?

The most successful applicants aren't just responding to notices of funding opportunities (NOFO), they're anticipating them. These utilities embed funding considerations directly into their long-term capital planning. That means identifying potential projects early, mapping them to known funding sources, and preparing required documentation and partnerships in advance.

They also think creatively. An applicant's project may offer benefits such as resilience or water quality improvements that closely align with funding agency goals, even if, at first glance, the project scope may not perfectly match a NOFO. Slight project tweaks like phased construction or added community engagement can tip the scales from eligible to competitive.

Compliance is Not Optional: Know Your Terms

Once you've secured funding, the compliance phase begins, and it's just as critical as the application itself. For federally funded projects, that means understanding BABA requirements. The applicant, contractor, and owner's representative must be clear that all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials must be produced in the U.S., with few exceptions.

Figure 1: Funding Strategies and Best Practices

For manufactured goods, at least 55% of component costs must originate domestically. Projects can meet compliance in three ways: qualifying as U.S.-produced, falling under an approved general waiver, or being included on a de minimis list that totals less than 5% of total project costs.

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Real Example: PFAS Infrastructure Project and the De Minimis Rule

Take a real-world example: a $9.4 million PFAS contamination treatment project that received $7.52 million in grants and $1.88 million in low-interest loans from an SRF. Early in planning, the team identified items that couldn't meet BABA requirements, such as control panels and instrumentation totaling $440,000. By applying the de minimis rule (5% of total project cost = $470,000), they remained compliant without submitting a waiver.

Early documentation, centralized tracking, and coordination across contractors were keys to success. Waiting until the end of design or construction would have jeopardized eligibility.

Tips for Managing Post-Award Obligations

The funding journey doesn't end at award. Utilities must be prepared to:

- Submit detailed documentation for drawdowns or reimbursements.
- Navigate evolving procurement rules and wage requirements.
- Communicate project changes early to key stakeholders.
- Manage BABA compliance, environmental reviews, and audits.

From engineers and contractors to regulators and community members, everyone needs to be aligned with funding conditions and timelines. Document everything, from procurement rationale to shop drawing certifications, to avoid post-award surprises.

Figure 2: BABA Waivers Process

Conclusion

Successful navigation of water infrastructure funding requires integration of planning, compliance awareness, and execution discipline. By aligning capital planning with funding opportunities and maintaining strong post-award compliance practices, utilities can improve their ability to secure and effectively manage critical infrastructure investments.

As the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, sunsets in 2026 and federal priorities continue to shift, proactive and informed action is your best defense against uncertainty. Funding is available, but only for those prepared to pursue it with strategy, creativity, and consistency.

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American Water Works Association (AWWA), 2025 State of the Water Industry Report

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

TECHNICAL ARTICLE

Hydrocyclones For Microplastic Separation From Water: A Real-World Solution Guided by Computational Fluid Dynamics

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The Fundamental Question

How do we separate microplastics from water efficiently, sustainably, and at scale? This question is no longer academic. It is operational. Municipal treatment plants, industrial recirculation systems, and global environmental protocols now demand a technological answer that actually works.

This document presents an analysis of a solution that has existed for decades but has never been rigorously applied to the microplastics problem: hydrocyclones. Through computational fluid dynamics (CFD) simulation, we demonstrate that these devices can achieve separation efficiencies exceeding 98% under optimized conditions. More importantly, we show how CFD allows us to understand exactly why they work and how to adapt them to each specific real-world problem.

The Context: Microplastics Everywhere

Microplastics—plastic particles smaller than 5 mm—stopped being a scientific curiosity years ago. Today they are documented in oceans, rivers, drinking water, food, and even human blood. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), these fragments affect filter-feeding marine organisms such as oysters and mussels, and represent a cumulative risk across the entire food chain.

What makes this problem urgent is not simply its existence, but its persistence. Unlike many contaminants, microplastics do not biodegrade. They remain. And every year, new sources—synthetic clothing washed, tire wear, plastic bottle decomposition—add more particles to the system. In a climate change scenario where extreme events intensify contaminant transport, the need for capture and separation becomes critical.

The Real Challenges of Separation

This is where most solutions fail. The challenge is not simply separating microplastics from water. The challenge is doing so in a way that:

- Works at industrial scale without consuming disproportionate amounts of energy
- Is economically viable for treatment plants with limited budgets
- Handles real variability (different types of plastic, varying sizes, water with different composition)
- Does not create a secondary problem (for example, concentrated sludges difficult to dispose of)

The Technology: Hydrocyclones Without Mystique

A hydrocyclone is deceptively simple: a hollow cone with a tangential inlet at the top. Contaminated water enters with velocity, swirls, and microplastics—being denser than water—are pushed toward the outer wall by centrifugal forces. Those captured exit through the bottom. Those that escape exit through the top.

Why does this matter? Because it works without moving parts. No internal pumps, no filters that blind, no membranes that rupture. Just fluid physics. It is a device that can operate 24/7 in a municipal treatment plant with minimal maintenance.

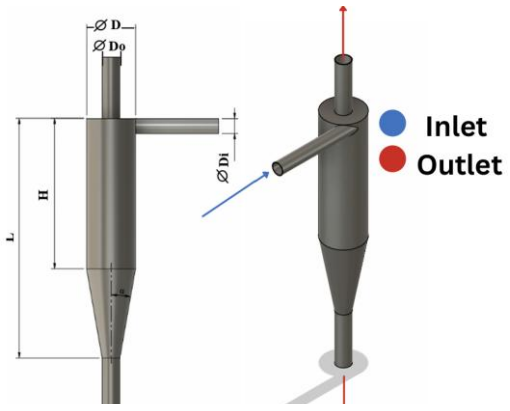

Figure 1. Hydrocyclone schematic diagram showing showing (A) tangential inlet, (B) cylindrical section, (C) conical section, (D) vortex finder (overflow outlet), and (E) underflow outlet (spigot). The device separates particles through centrifugal force generated by swirling flow.

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CFD: Seeing the Invisible

A hydrocyclone is elegant in theory, but in practice it is a black box. How does the velocity field vary inside the device and where are the strongest centrifugal accelerations? What is the actual residence time of a 40-micron particle? How does efficiency change if we increase velocity by 10%? These questions are impossible to answer in physical laboratory in a systematic and economical way.

Parameter	Typical Range	Units
Cylindrical diameter	100 — 400	mm
Inlet velocity range	0.9 — 3.0	m/s
Particle size (d_{50})	40 — 120	µm
Typical plastic density	1030 — 1500	kg/m³

Table 1. Key Design Parameters

This is where computational fluid dynamics (CFD) comes in. It is the tool that allows us to solve the Navier-Stokes equations within the hydrocyclone with precision, installing virtual sensors at every point in space. It is not an academic model. It is a numerical replica of the real device that allows us to experiment with infinite variations without building physical prototypes.

Method: Euler-Lagrange Approach

The simulation presented here uses an Euler-Lagrange approach in ANSYS Fluent. In practical terms, this means:

- We calculate water flow (the continuous phase) by solving complete fluid dynamics equations
- We track thousands of individual particles within that flow, calculating where they go based on real forces (drag, gravity, turbulence effects)
- We verify with grid independence studies to ensure our numerical results converge to the actual physical solution

Results: Real Efficiencies

The simulations reveal something critical: separation efficiency is not a single number. It is a function of three independent variables acting simultaneously: inlet velocity, particle size, and geometry.

Inlet Velocity (m/s)	40 µm Particles (%)	80 µm Particles (%)
0.9	32	49
1.5	48	59
3.0	92	98

Table 2. Separation Efficiency (%) as a Function of Inlet Velocity

What these numbers reveal is the key finding: at 3.0 m/s inlet velocity, larger particles (80 µm) achieve 98% efficiency. This is not theory. It is what physics predicts when we correctly simulate centrifugal forces, residence times, and particle trajectories.

But what does this mean in real operation? An average residence time of only 1.5 seconds for 80 µm particles. That is, in just one and a half seconds, most relevant microplastics are captured and separated. For a municipal treatment plant processing thousands of liters per hour, this is viable. It is operationally realistic.

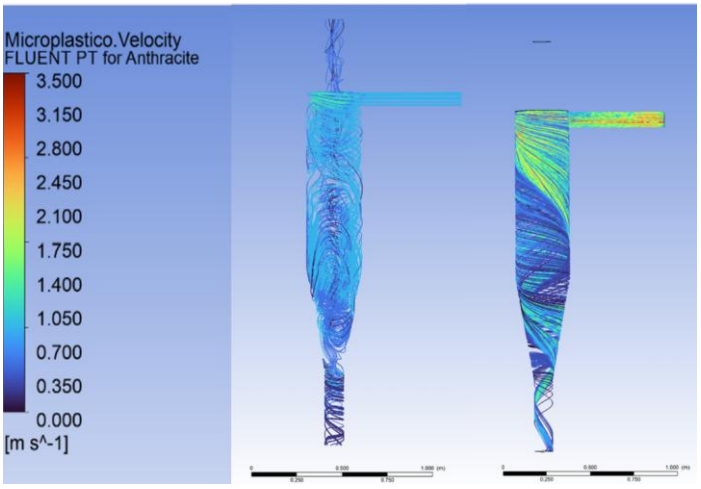

Figure 2. CFD velocity streamline visualization showing the swirling flow pattern inside the hydrocyclone. Color gradient represents velocity magnitude from low (blue) to high (red). Include labels for inlet, vortex core, and outlet zones. (Source: Suarez, M., Del Valle et al., 2026).

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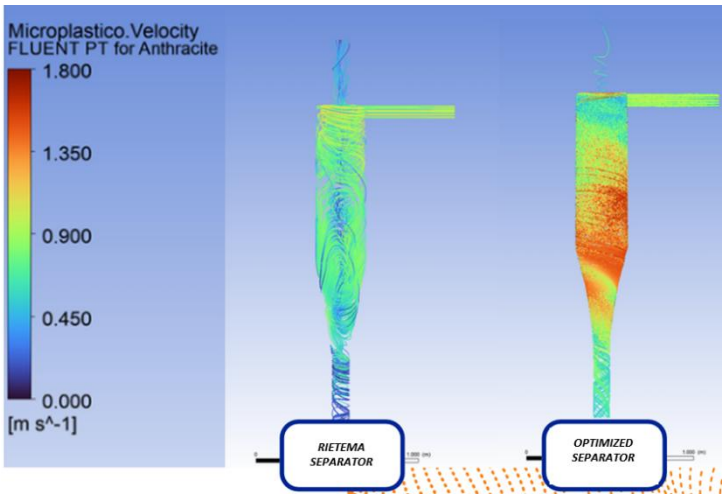

Figure 3. Particle trajectory visualization inside the hydrocyclone, colored by residence time or particle size. Show microplastic particles spiraling downward along the outer wall toward the underflow outlet. Include residence time scale and annotations

Operational Impact: From Simulation to Reality

Why would CFD change how we operate a hydrocyclone in practice? Because it allows us to answer specific questions for each problem:

- If my wastewater has 60% of particles smaller than 50 μm, what inlet velocity minimizes energy consumption while maintaining >85% efficiency?
- How does behavior change if I add two hydrocyclones in series versus one larger diameter unit?
- What geometric configuration optimizes separation of fine particles (20-40 μm) without increasing pressure drop?
- How does performance degrade if variability in water (changes in salinity, temperature, composition) affects viscosity?

These answers are not academic. They are engineering decisions that determine whether a hydrocyclone gets installed in a plant, how it is operated, and what its true total cost of ownership is.

Real Advantages Compared to Other Technologies

Versus filter membranes: The hydrocyclone does not clog. Membranes require frequent backwashing (extra water and energy consumption). A hydrocyclone operates indefinitely while there is flow.

Versus gravitational settling: Gravity takes hours. Cyclonic centrifugation takes seconds. If you need to capture microplastics in an effluent discharge before it enters the river, seconds matter.

Versus dissolved air flotation: Fewer chemicals. Less complex equipment. Less maintenance. Just physics.

Next Steps: From CFD to Pilot Plant

Where we are now is the end of the beginning. The simulations confirm conceptual viability. But real engineering requires experimental validation: build a physical prototype, confirm that CFD predicts actual behavior, adjust parameters, scale up. The next milestones are:

- Laboratory-scale prototype (100-200 L/h) with real municipal water source, to validate CFD predictions against reality
- Geometric optimization through iterative CFD: vary diameter, cone angle, inlet, to find optimal energy-efficiency point
- Multi-stage configuration to capture small particles (less dense, harder to separate) without energy penalty
- Pilots at real treatment plants (1000+ L/h) to evaluate integration with existing infrastructure

Conclusion: A Solution Awaiting Application

Microplastics will not disappear from water because we wish them to. They will remain an operational reality for treatment plants, industrial recirculation systems, and environmental remediation protocols. The question is not whether we need to capture them. The question is with what technology we do it well.

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Hydrocyclones, guided by rigorous CFD simulation, offer an answer: passive, robust, scalable, efficient, and operationally realistic. This document is not a theoretical argument. It is an invitation to experimental validation in real contexts, where simulation numbers meet the constraints and opportunities of practical engineering.

The technology exists. The physics is validated. What follows is the question that matters: where and how do we apply it first?

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FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

TECHNICAL ARTICLE

Generation of Iron(VII) in Aqueous Solution: A New Oxidant in Treatment of Recalcitrant Contaminants in Water and Wastewater

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Water and wastewater utilities are increasingly challenged by contaminants that are resistant to conventional treatment technologies. Pharmaceutical residues, antibiotic-resistant microorganisms, PFAS, and industrial pollutants require advanced oxidation and disinfection solutions that are both effective and sustainable. Iron-based oxidants have attracted significant attention because iron is abundant, environmentally compatible, and capable of existing in multiple highly reactive oxidation states to carry out depollution and disinfection.

Experimental Highlights

The experiments were performed using pulse radiolysis at the Notre Dame Radiation Laboratory. Kinetic studies demonstrated rapid formation of iron(VII), occurring within microseconds, with second-order reaction rate constants near 8.0×10^9 $M^{-1}s^{-1}$. Spectroscopic analysis showed characteristic absorbance changes consistent with progressive oxidation from ferrate(VI) to iron(VII).

Research Breakthrough

This study demonstrates, for the first time, the formation of iron(VII) in aqueous solution at room temperature. The species was generated through one-electron oxidation of ferrate(VI) using hydroxyl radicals under mild alkaline conditions (pH 9.0). Using pulse radiolysis techniques, researchers detected a unique transient absorption spectrum with a maximum wavelength at 680 nm, confirming the generation of iron(VII) (Figure 1).

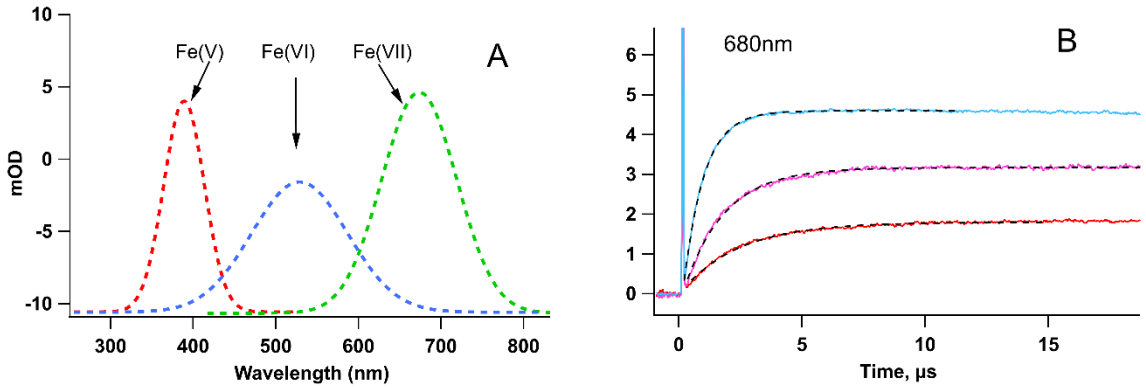

Figure 1. (A) Transient absorption spectra of different ferrates, which were obtained by pulse radiolysis experiments, which were seen 10-20 microseconds after fifteen-nanosecond pulse radiolysis (43 Gy) in N2O-saturated solutions having ferrate(VI) (pH = 9.0, room temperature). (mOD = milli optical density of the absorption spectra). (B) Kinetics of iron(VII) (680 nm) at three different ferrate(VI) concentrations (experimental conditions were similar to (A)).

Iron(VII) in Water Utilities

Ferrate(VI) has already demonstrated value as a green oxidant for water treatment applications due to its multi-modal actions as an oxidant, disinfectant, and coagulant. The newly discovered iron(VII) species may offer even greater oxidation and disinfection capability. Density functional theory calculations estimated the reduction potential of iron(VII) to be approximately 1.7 V versus the standard hydrogen electrode, significantly higher than ferrate(VI). This enhanced oxidation strength suggests iron(VII) could rapidly degrade difficult contaminants and chlorine-resistant microorganisms and improve treatment performance.

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Potential Applications

The transient but highly reactive nature of iron(VII) creates opportunities for next-generation advanced oxidation processes. Potential applications include removal of pharmaceuticals, PFAS, endocrine-disrupting compounds, microplastics, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, and waterborne pathogens. Microplastics and nanoplastics can be converted into valuable consumer products. Bacteria and virus may be inactivated by 6-log reduction in less than a minute. Basically, the chemistry of high-valent chemistry may support future treatment strategies to have paradigm shift for potable reuse, industrial wastewater treatment, and decentralized water and wastewater purification systems. Furthermore, the new oxidant may facilitate essential metal recovery from industrial effluents. A water splitting as an energy source may be carried out efficiently using iron(VII).

Implications for Sustainable Water Treatment

Utilities worldwide are under increasing pressure to adopt treatment technologies that are efficient, scalable, and environmentally sustainable. Because iron-based oxidants produce environmentally benign end products, iron(III) hydroxides, which possess highly efficient coagulation properties to remove toxic metals. The chemistry of iron(VII) chemistry may provide a future pathway for reducing chemical footprints while enhancing contaminant removal performance.

Conclusion

This work introduces iron(VII) as a newly identified aqueous oxidant with strong potential for advanced water treatment applications. The findings directly support the article's main focus on innovative oxidation chemistry and demonstrate how utilities may benefit from next-generation treatment approaches capable of addressing emerging contaminants, bacteria, virus, andtoxic metals more efficiently and sustainably. As research advances, iron(VII)-based systems may contribute to safer drinking water, improved wastewater reuse, and enhanced environmental protection.

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FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

PREVIOUS EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2025

Rising Above the Tide: Miami Beach's Integrated Coastal Management and Multi-Level Partnerships for Resilience

Future-Ready Utility: Resilient Strategies for Tomorrow's Challenges

The FWEA South Florida Chapter kicked off the fall season with an engaging series of technical presentations from both the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (WASD) and City of Miami Beach. The event was hosted at the 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant and highlighted key local efforts and strategies focused on coastal protection, infrastructure resilience, and risk mitigation. Debbie Griner and Sussette Irizarry opened the event presenting on WASD's 5-year WAVE strategic plan and emphasized the importance of integrating resilience and sustainability practices that protect critical infrastructure and support maintaining uninterrupted essential water and wastewater services for the community.

Spotlight topics included completion of a Risk and Resilience Assessment for water assets, ongoing LEED and Envision projects that enhance emergency response, and integrating innovation through pilot studies and partnerships. Lindsey Precht presented key coastal projects for the City of Miami Beach focused on beach renourishment and dune restoration. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and City of Miami-Beach are working on multiple beach renourishment projects to mitigate erosion, protect against storm surge, and maintain Miami Beach's shoreline. The evening combined professional learning with meaningful conversations on community building, highlighting the Chapter's commitment to supporting environmental stewardship and promoting a clean water environment.

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

PREVIOUS EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2025

EWB-FL & FWEA South Chapter Fundraising Event

On November 18, 2025, the FWEA South Florida Chapter partnered with Engineers Without Borders Florida Professional Chapter (EWB-FL) to host a successful fundraising event featuring a series of presentations focused on innovation, sustainability, and community impact of hydrogeology work in Miami-Dade County. The program featured presentations from leaders at the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (WASD), Black & Veatch, and CDM Smith.

Christina Garcia-Alario, P.G. (WASD) and Felipe Franco, P.G. (Black & Veatch) presented on WASD's role in on water management and deep injection innovation. Virginia Walsh, P.G., Ph.D., and Angela Montoya, M.S., P.E. (WASD) shared insights on advancing saltwater intrusion modeling in Miami-Dade County. The program concluded with John Danielle (WASD) and Jorge L. Valdes, P.G. (CDM Smith), who presented on the design, operation, and maintenance of surficial aquifer production wells. After the presentations, the evening ended with a lively networking happy hour sponsored by Youngquist Brothers. Attendees gained valuable insight into groundwater management strategies while connecting with professionals from across South Florida.

A total of $2,113.56 was raised through this event to support EWB-FL's mission and advance our international projects in Guatemala and Nepal. EWB-FL used those funds to finalize construction on our Phase 1 work in Khabari, , Nepal, which included a water supply well and a tapping station where the community can directly access clean water! This was a huge milestone and we are very grateful to everyone who contributed and helped us reach our fundraising goals. The pictures attached were taken in Khabari and show the direct impact of this work. We are now starting Phase 2 in Nepal, which includes a distribution system to bring the water directly to the homes in the village. If anyone is interested in learning more about our project or donating, please refer to our website: https://www.ewb-fl.org/

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

PREVIOUS EVENTS

DECEMBER 2025

Reflecting on the Success of the Joint Miami Engineering Holiday Dinner

The Florida Water Environment Association (FWEA) South Chapter had the pleasure of co-hosting the Joint Miami Engineering Holiday Dinner alongside esteemed organizations such as ASCE, FES, CAACE, and WTS. Held on December 10th at the lively Xixón Spanish Restaurant, this annual event once again brought together the engineering community in a spirit of celebration and collaboration.

Over the years, the Joint Miami Engineering Holiday Dinner has become a cherished tradition, reflecting the collective commitment of our engineering organizations to foster connections, share accomplishments, and promote professional collaboration. This year's gathering was a resounding success, drawing engineers, students, and professionals from various sectors eager to engage with one another and share insights.

One of the highlights of the evening was our collective effort to support the Toys for Tots program. Attendees generously donated unwrapped toys, which will be distributed to families in need by the US Marines Corps Reserves. This initiative underscores our shared commitment not only to our profession but also to giving back to the community we serve.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who attended. Your enthusiasm and generosity made this event memorable and impactful. Together, we not only celebrated our field but also contributed to a meaningful cause that touches the lives of families across Miami.

As we look to the future, we are excited to continue this tradition and strengthen our ties within the engineering community. Thank you once again for your support, and we look forward to seeing you at future events!

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

PREVIOUS EVENTS

April 2026

SOUTH CHAPTER HOLDS A SOLD-OUT TECHNICAL SEMINAR ON BUILDING RESILIENT UTILITIES

Ignacio Lizama, PE (Kimley Horn) and Melody Gonzalez, (BV)

The South Chapter continued its momentum in 2026 with a sold-out technical seminar held April 9, 2026. The event, ***"Building Resilient Utilities: Innovative Sustainability in Action",*** drew 120 attendees for a full day of technical presentations focused on resilience and sustainability in the water and wastewater industry.

Throughout the day, attendees heard diverse perspectives from utilities, consultants, and technology providers reinforcing that resilience and sustainability are built through collaboration, shared experience, and networking. The sessions underscored that resilience must be addressed across the full utility lifecycle, including planning, design, operations, funding, and long-term adaptation.

Presentations included practical case studies on climate resilience, water reuse, digital tools, resource recovery, and response and recovery following extreme events. The program also reinforced the importance of innovation from data-driven decision-making and smart water technologies to forward-thinking funding and policy strategies to help utilities meet today's demands and navigate future uncertainties.

In opening and closing remarks, the Chapter thanked attendees, speakers, moderators, volunteers, and sponsors for making the seminar possible. Participants were encouraged to stay engaged to continue the conversations started during the seminar, connect with peers, and remain active with FWEA as we work together to strengthen the resilience and sustainability of our water and wastewater industry.

A heartfelt thank you to the participating utilities and event sponsors whose generous support helped make this seminar a success. Your continued commitment to the Chapter's mission and the water environment profession is truly appreciated.

The Chapter Leadership Team planned the event over five months, receiving 29 abstracts and selecting 19. The final program featured 18 sessions delivered by 31 speakers and was supported by 20 event sponsors, four participating utilities, and 14 consultants and suppliers.

Photo 1: Conference room during the morning session.

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

PREVIOUS EVENTS

Continued from previous page

Thank you to all attendees, speakers, and volunteers for supporting the South Florida FWEA Chapter. Special thanks to Abnery Picon for exceptional leadership and organizational skills that kept our team on track during event planning and ensuring a seamless event.

Stay tuned for more events in 2026 and we look forward to your continued involvement with the South Florida FWEA Chapter.

Photo 2: South Florida Chapter Board responsible for organizing the seminar.

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

PREVIOUS EVENTS

May 2026
MEMBERS APPRECIATION AND STUDENT NETWORKING EVENT
Melody Gonzalez, (BV)

The Members Appreciation and Student Networking Event, held on May 20, 2026, at Doral Yard, marked the successful conclusion of the FY 2025-2026 chapter fiscal year. The event brought together chapter members, university students, young professionals, and water and wastewater industry leaders for an evening dedicated to recognition, networking, and professional development. Set in a welcoming outdoor venue, the gathering provided an excellent opportunity for attendees to celebrate the chapter's accomplishments while fostering meaningful connections among current and future industry professionals.

A highlight of the evening was the recognition of the many members and volunteers whose dedication, leadership, and service contributed to the chapter's success throughout the year. During remarks from chapter leadership, attendees were thanked for their commitment to advancing the chapter's mission through active participation in technical programs, educational events, community outreach initiatives, and student engagement activities. The recognition served as a reminder that the chapter's achievements are made possible through the collective efforts of its members and volunteers.

Photo 1: Members of the 2025 – 2026 steering committee

The event also emphasized the chapter's continued commitment to supporting the next generation of water professionals. Students from local universities were encouraged to engage with experienced professionals representing a variety of disciplines within the water and wastewater sector, including engineering, operations, consulting, utilities, and regulatory services. These conversations provided students with valuable exposure to the diverse career opportunities available within the industry and helped bridge the gap between academic studies and professional practice.

Throughout the evening, attendees exchanged experiences and insights on topics ranging from career development and emerging industry challenges to

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

PREVIOUS EVENTS

Continued from previous page

leadership opportunities within professional organizations. Professionals shared personal career journeys, offered guidance on professional growth, and discussed the importance of mentorship, continuing education, and active involvement in industry associations. For many students and young professionals, these interactions provided practical advice and valuable perspectives that will help guide their future careers.

In addition to fostering professional development, the event strengthened relationships among chapter members and provided an opportunity to reconnect with colleagues in a relaxed and collaborative environment. The informal setting encouraged conversations across generations of professionals, promoting knowledge sharing and reinforcing the sense of community that has become a hallmark of the chapter's activities.

As the final chapter event of the FY 2025-2026 program year, the gathering served as both a celebration of the year's accomplishments and a reflection on the strong partnerships that continue to support the water profession. The chapter's successful programs, volunteer initiatives, and student outreach efforts throughout the year were made possible through the dedication of its members and supporters, whose contributions continue to make a lasting impact on the industry and local community.

The chapter extends its sincere appreciation to all attendees, volunteers, sponsors, and supporters who helped make the event a memorable and successful conclusion to the fiscal year. The enthusiasm and engagement demonstrated throughout the evening underscore the strength of the chapter and provide a solid foundation for another productive year of professional development, collaboration, and service to the water community.

Photo 2: Members Appreciation and student Networking Event

Photo 3: Welcome Remarks

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

NEXT GENERATION CORNER

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (FIU) STUDENT CHAPTER MESSAGE

This fiscal year, Florida Water Environment Association (FWEA) – South Florida Chapter had the privilege of visiting Florida International University (FIU) in Miami, to meet with environmental engineering students and share FWEA's mission, programs, and opportunities for involvement. Students learned about chapter initiatives, technical committees, WEFTEC, and pathways to engage through volunteering, networking, accessing career and mentorship opportunities.

A key outcome of the visit was the initiative by FWEA South Florida Chapter committee members to reestablish the FWEA student chapter at FIU. As part of this effort, registration of 20 students was done with plans to formally launch the chapter. We extend our appreciation to Dr. Hooman Vatankhah (Assistant Professor, FIU) for his collaborative approach and strong commitment to advancing industry–academic collaboration. This marks an important step toward strengthening student engagement and fostering early professional involvement in the water and wastewater industry.

In the upcoming fiscal year, as the Student and Young Professionals Liaison, I am excited to work with the FIU Student Chapter and other local universities to expand student engagement opportunities. Looking ahead, we plan to host a variety of collaborative activities—including technical workshops, plant tours, networking events, and volunteer initiatives—aimed at strengthening professional pathways and elevating participation in the South Chapter. Together, we look forward to building a more connected, informed, and empowered generation of future water professionals.

Florida International University

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI GRADUATE STUDENT MIA BRUNO AWARDED 2026 JAMES ENGLEHARDT EXCELLENCE FELLOWSHIP

The University of Miami is proud to announce that graduate student Mia Bruno has been named the recipient of the 2026 James Englehardt Excellence Fellowship in Environmental Engineering. This prestigious award is sponsored this year by the Florida Water Environment Association (FWEA) South Chapter, continuing their generous support as they did last year for our university, and James Englehardt Excellence Fellowship Fund.

Ms. Bruno, who will begin her PhD studies in Chemical, Environmental, and Materials Engineering at the University of Miami in Fall 2026, earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology with a minor in Environmental Science from the University of the Virgin Islands, graduating summa cum laude with a remarkable GPA of 3.96.

Throughout her academic career, Mia has demonstrated exceptional scholarly achievement, leadership, and a deep commitment to environmental stewardship. Her multidisciplinary research background spans microbial biotechnology, environmental genetics, and coastal ecosystem analysis, all of which contribute to addressing critical environmental challenges.

Her past research includes engineering microbial pathways for sustainable bioplastic production and investigating the genetic diversity of mangrove ecosystems in the U.S. Virgin Islands. These projects highlight her dedication to advancing ecosystem resilience and sustainable environmental solutions.

Mia's professional focus lies in sustainable water treatment, water reuse, and environmental protection, particularly within climate-vulnerable regions. Growing up in Dominica and witnessing the impacts of Hurricane Maria has deeply inspired her passion for climate-resilient innovations.

The University of Miami applauds Mia Bruno for this well-deserved recognition and thanks the FWEA South Chapter and James Englehardt Excellence Fellowship fund for their continued support in sponsoring this important fellowship. We look forward to seeing her contributions to environmental engineering and sustainability as she embarks on her doctoral studies.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
COLLEGE of ENGINEERING

Mia Bruno, University of Miami

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (FIU) SCHOLARSHIP DONATION

Thank you for the continued partnership and support from the Florida Water Environment Association (FWEA). We are truly grateful for your longstanding commitment to the FIU College of Engineering & Computing—particularly your investment in scholarships that directly support our Civil Engineering students. Your generosity not only helps alleviate financial barriers, but also empowers the next generation of water and wastewater professionals to pursue impactful careers in this critical field.

At FIU, our faculty and students are actively engaged in advancing innovative solutions for water and wastewater systems. For example, Dr. Arturo Leon's research focuses on developing real-time, field-validated tools that enable utilities to shift from reactive to predictive management. His work integrates sensor networks, hydraulic modeling, and machine learning to forecast and control combined sewer overflows, while also leveraging AI-enhanced solvers to improve system performance under stress. Complementing this, Dr. Navid Tahvildari's research addresses coastal resilience, with a focus on storm surge, compound flooding, and nature-based solutions such as living shorelines. His team develops advanced hydrodynamic and AI-driven models to support forecasting, infrastructure planning, and hazard mitigation in coastal communities. In parallel, Dr. Berrin Tansel is a nationally recognized leader in water quality, water and wastewater treatment, and water conservation, with a career spanning municipal infrastructure, applied research, and regulatory impact. Her research has informed wastewater treatment process optimization, contaminant fate and transport in water systems, landfill leachate and PFAS interactions, and water reuse and conservation strategies; work that has directly supported utilities and water agencies, including long standing collaborations with Miami Dade Water and Sewer Department.

These efforts reflect FIU's broader mission to translate cutting-edge research into practical, deployable solutions that address real-world challenges. We value the strong connection between academia and industry, and we welcome continued collaboration with FWEA members—whether through research partnerships, student engagement, or knowledge exchange. Together, we can continue to strengthen the pipeline of talent and innovation needed to advance the water sector.

Thank you again for your partnership and support.

Florida International University

FIU | Engineering & Computing

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

BREAKING BARRIERS: FWEA South Chapter Helps Engineering Students Take the Next Step

Dhruv Anand (HDR)

The FWEA South Chapter continues to strengthen its commitment to supporting the next generation of water professionals through valuable student engagement initiatives. During the 2025–26 fiscal year, we expanded opportunities for student support from Florida International University (FIU) and the University of Miami (UM) through our FE Exam Student Sponsorship and sponsored student participation at the Florida Water Resources Conference (FWRC).

Recognizing the importance of early professional licensure, the South Chapter took the initiative to sponsor FE exam registrations to encourage students to take this critical first step toward becoming licensed Professional Engineers. Through this initiative, 14 students were selected from Environmental and Civil engineering departments to receive sponsorships that covered FE exam registration fees. Supporting students at this stage helps accelerate their professional development and prepares them for meaningful contributions to the industry.

In addition, the South Chapter supported student registration and encouraged participation at FWRC, sponsoring two students each from UM and FIU. Yasmin and Chimuanya availed this opportunity and had valuable exposure to Young Professional events, technical sessions, and networking with industry leaders across Florida. The South Chapter remains dedicated to expanding student outreach, increasing participation, and providing resources that empower students as they transition into young professionals and appreciates the continued support of volunteers, sponsors, and members who make these initiatives possible.

FWEA FE EXAM REGISTRATION SPONSORSHIP

STUDENT NAME	*MAJOR*	*FE FEE ($)*
Marcha Riche	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Nikita Singhi	Civil And Environmental Engineering	$225.00
Edgar Gutierrez	Environmental Engineering	$225.00
Chloe Mcguire	Environmental Engineering	$225.00
Wattana Laosinwattana	Civil And Environmental Engineering	$225.00
Debabrata Paul	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Mostafa Sameer	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Diego Bonifacio Llaury	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Alan Louissaint	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Odilo Mdimi	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Ethan Charles	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Olgamaria Estrada	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Alexi Flores Sandoval	Civil Engineering	$225.00
Dennis Bwire	Civil Engineering	$225.00

FWEA FWRC STUDENT REGISTRATION SUPPORT

Chimuanya Onoh	Civil Engineering	$22.00
Yasmin Mercado	Civil Engineering	$25.00
GRAND TOTAL		$3,197.00

"Thank you FWEA for this opportunity and the support from the FWEA South Chapter. I am truly grateful for the sponsorship, which makes taking the FE Exam and progressing toward licensure more attainable. It allows me to focus on preparation and build confidence as I begin my professional engineering journey."

Chloe McGuire
Environmental Engineering

"As a recent environmental engineering graduate, I plan to further my education in water treatment, reuse, and sustainability. I am sincerely grateful to the Florida Water Environment Association South Florida Chapter for providing opportunities that help students like me advance our careers."

Edgar Gutierrez
Environmental Engineering

"I am grateful to the FWEA South Chapter for their sponsorship; I am able to continue progressing toward engineering licensure and advancing my professional growth. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the individual who initiated this program, as it provides meaningful support to many students."

Nikita Singhi
Civil and Environmental Engineering

"I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be sponsored for such a pivotal step in my professional journey. Taking the FE exam will help advance my career as an aspiring civil engineer."

Marcha Riche

Civil Engineering

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

A VIEW FROM THE PAST

Building Community Where It Matters: The Story of the FWEA South Chapter

Juan R. Oquendo, PE, Carollo Engineers
FWEA South Chapter Founder and President 2017-2019

My journey with the Florida Water Environment Association (FWEA) South Chapter really began when I moved to Miami in the summer of 2015. I relocated to help grow a new water business operation, but I also brought with me something that had always been part of my professional life—active involvement in our industry's professional organizations.

Before Miami, I had the privilege of serving as Chair of the FWEA West Coast Chapter and participating in leadership initiatives across the state. So naturally, when I arrived in South Florida, I got involved with what was then the FWEA Southeast Chapter—a strong and well-led chapter that covered a large geographic area from Monroe County up to Palm Beach County.

A few months after settling in, I was asked by FWEA state leadership to share my perspective on how to improve member participation and engagement in the Southeast Chapter. Leadership was not the issue—the challenge was geography.

Anyone who lives in South Florida understands the reality: traffic. Attending an event could easily mean a one- to two-hour drive each way. That kind of time commitment made it difficult for many members to consistently participate. My observation was simple—the chapter was too large geographically to effectively serve its members.

I recommended that FWEA consider a more localized approach, similar to what other organizations had successfully implemented. The idea was to bring the organization closer to its members.

To their credit, FWEA leadership took that feedback seriously. Soon after, they made the decision to split the Southeast Chapter and establish a new South Chapter to serve Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. They then asked me to serve as its first Chair—an opportunity I was honored to accept.

In May 2017, we held our first steering committee meeting and began building the chapter from the ground up. From day one, collaboration was key. We worked closely with the Southeast Chapter to coordinate programming and avoid conflicts, ensuring both chapters could thrive.

We also focused on accessibility. By hosting events at the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department's Douglas Building—a centrally located venue with available training space—we created convenient opportunities for members to engage. This approach not only increased participation but also allowed us to build financial reserves and reinvest in meaningful activities for our members and the broader community.

The result? The chapter flourished.

Serving as Chair—both on the West Coast and later in the South Chapter—has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. And I'll share something that may surprise people: being Chair is not the hardest role—it's actually one of the easiest.

As Chair, your role is to listen, to bring people together, and to guide the organization with the support of a strong steering committee. Success is never about one person—it's about the team. When you have engaged members who are passionate and willing to contribute, everything else falls into place.

One of the most valuable aspects of this experience has been the opportunity to connect with professionals across the industry and participate in FWEA's Leadership Development Workshops. Those experiences not only strengthen leadership skills but also build relationships that last throughout your career.

For anyone considering volunteering, my advice is simple: just do it.

If the thought has crossed your mind, it means you already have the desire to give back—and that's where it starts. Don't worry about having all the answers. You won't be alone. FWEA is built on a network of mentors, colleagues, and leaders who are ready to support you.

Volunteering is not just about service—it's about growth, connection, and purpose. It will challenge you, expand your perspective, and reward you in ways you don't expect.

And if you ever need guidance, I'm always here to help—just like many others in this organization who once started exactly where you are today.

So take that step. Get involved. You won't regret it.

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

A VIEW FROM THE PAST

DAVID HERNANDEZ (HAZEN AND SAWYER)

FWEA South Chapter Chair 2019-2020; Current FWEA President at State Level

Advancing FWEA's vision of a clean and sustainable water environment and helping carry out its mission has been an incredibly rewarding experience. Serving as Chair of the FWEA South Florida Chapter from 2019 to 2020 was one of the most professionally meaningful experiences of my career and a key step in my continued involvement with the organization, which has since led me to my current position as President-Elect of FWEA. As Chapter Chair, the role strengthened my leadership, communication, strategic planning, and consensus-building skills. Leading a diverse group of volunteers, coordinating professional development events, and working directly with utilities, consultants, contractors, academics, manufacturers, students/young professionals, and so much more significantly expanded my professional network and visibility within the South Florida water and wastewater community. Just as importantly, it gave me a deeper understanding of the challenges facing our industry and all the great work we are doing to overcome these challenges.

For anyone considering volunteering with FWEA, my advice is simple: there is truly a place for everyone to get involved. As Past President Tim Harley has often reminded FWEA members, "someone always has to bring the ice." Whether it's helping with a small task, supporting an event, or stepping into a major leadership role, each opportunity allows volunteers to build confidence, develop new skills, expand their professional network, and gain exposure to different facets of the industry. FWEA offers opportunities that align with all experience levels, interests, and time commitments, making involvement both accessible and personally rewarding.

A MESSAGE FROM ARTURO BURBANO (CAROLLO)

FWEA South Chapter Chair 2022-2024

I had the distinct honor of serving as South Chapter Chair during the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 terms. This period marked an important transition as our organization emerged from the challenging years following the 2020 pandemic, when most professional interactions had been limited to virtual engagement. With renewed energy and enthusiasm from our membership, the Chapter successfully reestablished in-person forums that fostered meaningful dialogue on the most critical issues impacting our industry, bringing together utilities, consultants, manufacturers, and regulators.

During this time, the Chapter's Dinner Presentations became a cornerstone of our programming, consistently drawing strong attendance as a result of the high caliber of speakers and the relevance of the topics presented. A key contributor to this success was the continued and active collaboration with the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (WASD), which delivered several highly attended presentations. These included sessions by Amanda Kinnick, Chief of Staff, and Catalina Lopez-Velandia, formerly Strategy Officer and now Assistant Director of Wastewater System Operations, highlighting initiatives under WASD's five-year strategic plan; Billie Jo McCarley, Deputy Director of Operations, who presented on the Department's $7.9 billion Capital Improvement Plan for wastewater facilities; and Nelson Perez-Jacome, former Director of Engineering and Construction, who discussed the Water Reset Program—an initiative focused on comprehensive improvements to WASD's water system to address operational and regulatory challenges. In addition, reinforcing the critical importance of infrastructure resilience in our region, Steve Williamson, Manager of the Village of Key Biscayne, delivered a compelling presentation on the Village's Resilience Infrastructure & Adaptation Program, recognized as the first holistic approach to infrastructure resilience in South Florida.

These accomplishments were made possible through the unwavering support of our annual and event sponsors, whose involvement grew significantly during this period. Notably, the number of annual sponsors doubled from 12 to 24 over the two-year term. This growth enhanced overall member participation and enabled the Chapter to maintain accessible registration fees. Sponsor support was instrumental not only in sustaining the Dinner Presentations, but also in expanding additional offerings for our members, including Member Appreciation and Networking Events, as well as the joint Holiday Event with FSAWWA and FES.

Finally, I extend my sincere gratitude to each member of the Chapter Board. Their dedication, collaboration, and collective leadership were essential to the Chapter's success during this period. None of these achievements would have been possible without their commitment and contributions.

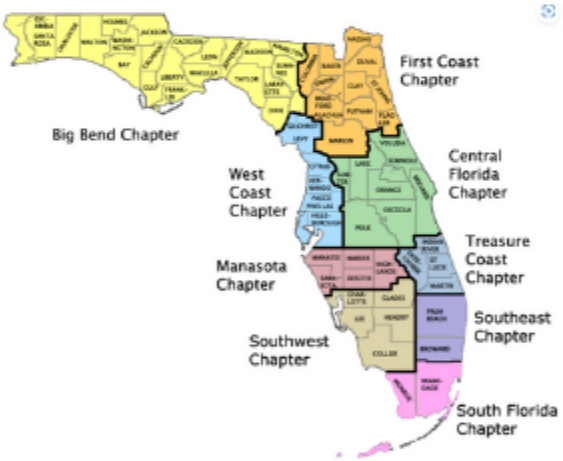
Florida Water Environment Association | SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

HOW TO BECOME A FWEA MEMBER?

PRIVATE EMPLOYEES (WEF and FWEA Membership)

SCAN ME

1) Visit link: https://www.wef.org/membership--community/membership-center/membership/
2) Create an account
3) Choose a membership category
   a) Professional Membership
   b) Student Membership
   c) Young Professional Membership (<35 years old)
   d) Academic Membership
   e) Executive Membership
   f) Professional Operator Membership
4) As an "Additional Item" select the Florida Water Environment Association (FWEA) from the Member Association Lists.
5) Complete payment



GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES (FWEA Membership Only)

SCAN ME

1) Visit link: https://mms.fwea.org/members/newmem/registration.php?orgcode=FWEA&
2) Fill form
3) Complete payment

FWEA Chapter will be assigned based on the address used in your registration. If you use an address from Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties you will be assigned to the South Florida Chapter. For questions regarding the FWEA Membership, please contact Melody Gonzalez (GonzalezM@bv.com) or Juan Aceituno (Juan.Aceituno@stantec.com)

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

CURRENT MEMBERS

Juan Aceituno
Abdul Malik Waleed Al Shandodi
Dhruv Anand
Carolina Arenas
Adam Baptiste
James Barlow
Mario Barroso
Julia Beliz
Anna Bernardo-Bricker
Deshaun Brandford
Arturo Burbano
Marie Burbano
Adrian Castaneda
Carlos Castro
Orlando Castro
Roy Coley
William Cunningham
Rebecca Dahdah
Elijah Danielson
Don Daxon
Yioset De La Cruz
Aaron De Lisle
Francisco Delgado
Ryan Dempsey
Bill Eleazer
Robert Fergen
James Flaherty
Oscar Galindo
Jose Garcia
Casey Garner
Manel Garrido
Emily Gers
Genesis Gilles
Ailyn Gonzalez
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David Haywood
Brandon Hensyl
David Hernandez
Jesus Hernandez
Sandra Hernandez
Paul Hunter
Sussette Irizarry
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Updated as of May 2026

FWEA SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

2025-2026 SPONSORS

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