



## CHARTING IMPACT

### **1. What are we aiming to accomplish**

Our message is simple and clear - all water is connected, all water use is connected, water is water~ not waste! Our intended purpose is to provide clear, consistent information that emphasizes this fact.

Wastewater Education 501(C)3 is a public education, outreach and consulting non profit organization.

We are dedicated advocates for the protection of water as a vital human and ecological asset through the implementation and management of affordable, appropriate wastewater systems.

We are independent and impartial, assisting individuals and communities, at little to no cost, to discover the financial and environmental advantages of implementing sustainable, integrated water infrastructures.

Within the next 3-5 years, the reality of changing weather patterns will be forcing hard decisions upon countries, states, communities and individuals about how to sustain water and wastewater infrastructure.

We believe that access to relevant information to deal with this certain future should be impartial and freely available by the most accessible and cost effective means possible.

At the 2014 Board Retreat, Directors were asked to consider: "If we were starting up our organization today brand new, what would it look like? Would we recreate what we have now, or create something that looks different?" The consensus was that we would look the same. The format of a tight knit, Director based non profit, with a dedicated innovative staff and a wide network of varied volunteer expertise, that was nimble and able to create time relevant education opportunities free of outside influence - has served us and the people we serve extremely well.

We can be both proactive and reactive in the minimal amount of time.

We have no ego. It doesn't matter who takes the lead. If we can put together a team to address an issue, we don't have to be in charge. In the end, it's simply about providing sound, triple bottom line options for long term water resource resiliency. Water is water ~ not waste.

## **2. What are our strategies for making this happen**

The Board identified activities to be prioritized in the next 3-5 years.

- Craft meaningful, online, on-demand, interactive, Continuing Education onsite wastewater classes for Michigan and other states
- Expand Social Media activity - specifically LinkedIn, Twitter, Google + as the most effective means to reach both the public, community leaders and practitioners
- Expand Facebook as the most likely avenue to reach the General Public
- Expand existing, or build new, partnerships with other professional environmental health entities to coordinate and improve access to distance learning classes.
- Expand Google Hangouts On Air and live streaming to YouTube: guest events, Tuesday@Two, Regulators Round Table, Flushed With Success public education series
- Make full use of the underwritten Adobe Connect Distance Learning classroom/meeting facility
- Fully fund the H2Outstanding Circle of Friends as a permanent base for operating funds
- Expand writing and publishing, both in professional journals and in our online magazine WasteWaterEducation.info

### **Ours is a virtual organization.**

With a Board of Directors distributed throughout the US, and the probability of adding international members in the near future - relying on a physical place of business is both impractical and an unconscionable waste of resources. It would be the height of hypocrisy to espouse sustainability and require the consumption of precious resources to take part in our business or programs.

This principle is also key to our long term strategy. Creating education opportunity should not be contingent on access - or be confined to only BEING accessible at a moment in time at a specific location. If history is written by those who do the writing - then knowledge about the most pressing current and future issue facing humanity, access to clean water and adequate sanitation, should not be restricted to those who have bulging travel budgets.

## **3. What are our capabilities for doing this**

Our internal structure is our greatest strength. WasteWater Education is a truly independent, impartial entity. Our network of contacts grows each day - witness the explosion of activity on our web site and social media accounts listed in the most recent 2013-14 Annual Report. The internet, and mobile access via tablets and smart phones, is how people look for and find information. The downfall is knowing if the information found is either relevant or accurate. In the din of competing nonsense we can sift the wheat from the chaff. No spin, just case studies.

What contributes to our success is the support of professional colleagues, respect from specific vendors, gratitude from the individuals and organizations we have been able to assist.

We have built a community of informed consent which we are consistently taking steps to grow and expand. Our philosophy is gaining acceptance - that we are all stronger together - that 50% of something is better than 0% of nothing.

The future of WasteWater Education lies in preparing for the transition of executive leadership. In 3-5 years we will be hiring a new Executive Director and will be looking to fill that position with someone as multi talented as our current leader. We have created an organization culture of generosity - both of thought and action. We continue to entertain and educate at the same time for without joy there can be no learning. We continue to offer solutions and creative thinking - 'the sky is falling' will never be our mantra.

#### **4. How will we know we are making progress**

Progress will be charted by monitoring identified priorities for three primary reasons:

- the importance of the service offered
- the potential to expand the reach of our organization
- the potential to generate revenue so that we can become a stable solvent organization.

Having established clear priorities for the future, the Board has identified a lead person for each priority area.

Turning to the question: what resources are needed to accomplish our goals in these areas, and how do we go about obtaining these resources?

It's no secret that we need increased revenue to better provide our services and to position ourselves for a future after our Executive Director's retirement.

We intend to achieve this through the H2Outstanding Circle of Friends, increased participation in online continuing education classes, successful operating support funding applications and proposals to host online services for partner organizations. We have a 5 year track record of developing and honing online delivery of professional and public education.

Utilizing our expertise has a twofold benefit. It enables professional delivery at minimal cost and the income generated goes right back into public education and outreach.

Our motives are in keeping with our not for profit purpose - our agenda is simple and transparent. We operate for the public good, not to sell a product.

We believe our organization will benefit over the next year from a narrower focus on the priority issues established during the 2014 Annual Board Retreat. Increased, but focused, activity will translate into greater opportunities to both reach new audiences and improve our financial stability.

In closing, the Board continually reviews and assesses organization impact and performance. The Executive Director provides a comprehensive report at each monthly Board Meeting. Performance metrics are routinely gathered from our Google For NonProfits applications - Google Grants and Analytics.

#### **5. What have we or haven't we accomplished thus far**

Shared outcomes of recent work -

- Google For NonProfits Partner
  - Hangouts On Air unlimited streaming of live events to be recorded in real time to our YouTube Channel. See <https://www.youtube.com/user/WasteWaterEducation>
  - Google+ Pages Social Community
  - Google Map Engine grant recipient
- Tuesday@Two Online Public Education outreach facilitated using both Google YouTube streaming and 100 Site Adobe Connect Distance Learning License. Both live and recorded events such as:
  - World Environmental Health Day: 6 session online seminar on affordable sanitation options
  - Wonderful Women of WasteWater; a 2 hour round table introduction to STEM role models for High School and Freshmen College girls.

- Regulator Round Table: An online distance learning/conferencing service to provide environmental health regulatory staff with the ability to hear about cutting edge technology or management projects at no cost.
- CollaborativeWaterSolutions.org: WasteWater Education hosts the Team web site and acts as project coordinator for this distance learning based small community mentoring service. This service is available both to North America as well as International communities.
- Water And WasteWater Help Forum: WasteWater Education hosts the Team web site and acts as project coordinator for this distance learning based operator assistance forum. This service is available both to North America as well as International communities.
- EPA WaterSense Partner: Publish resource features and digital Public service Announcements both in English and Spanish.
  - Fix A Leak Week: conducted a national Twitter based competition with direct reach of 270,000+ featuring The Golden Plunger Relay Race.
- Septic Service provider and Onsite Wastewater installer training: Increased access to and certification of live, interactive distance learning opportunities to take continuing education classes.
- Launched an online magazine, Wastewatereducation.info to enable publication of guest feature articles and white papers. First discussion series dealt with how to create a basic Statewide Onsite Wastewater Code for Michigan.
- Wastewater Education has vastly increased its Social Media presence: Twitter Followers increased to 1262. LinkedIn Connections to 1287.
- Usage of our primary WasteWatereducation.org web site has increased significantly. In 2012 we had 9,539 visitors. In 2013, 34,294. So far in 2014, 75,574.

## **OBSTACLES**

### Funding:

We serve small rural communities who are traditionally underfunded, under represented and often over sold on expensive, unsustainable options. We struggle to convince funders that this is both an environmental and a social issue. The industry itself is often reluctant to support outreach as they are focused on selling product. Is it true that people only value something with a cost attached to it? What if charging a fee puts our services out of the reach of those who are most in need? If we are to continue, on a largely pro-bono basis, we still need to pay the bills and staff. We believe in our purpose - now we need to convince funders, vendors and marketing executives.

### Combating Misconceptions:

"Wastewater is a pollutant!"

"All wastewater technologies contribute to water resource degradation!"

We talk about something no one wants to talk about! That effective sanitation and water processing technologies have vastly contributed to public and environmental health, doubling the average life expectancy, enabling civilized living in cities and urban areas is a message that gets obscured. Quite simply good news doesn't play well on TV.

### Ignorance and prejudice:

We begin from the belief that even the poorest of communities fervently wish to preserve their environment. Poverty is an economic condition not genetic and not a choice.

Conservation purism often seems to prefer ignoring the needs of human beings when reality dictates that enabling a decent standard of living will result in environmental conservation and improvement of ecosystems.

Politics and Reality:

The nation's infrastructure is based on 19th Century thinking. To change it will require a) a huge financial investment for which there is little political support and b) a 'sea change' in rethinking how to re-plumb, re-power and reuse our water resources. This where we are focused. The future looks as radically different today as it did standing on the brink of the 20th Century. Regardless of the cause, the planet's weather patterns will be radically different in the next 10-20 years. We need to get ready now.

No one has said it better than Bob Dylan.

Come gather 'round people  
Wherever you roam  
And admit that the waters  
Around you have grown  
And accept it that soon  
You'll be drenched to the bone  
If your time to you  
Is worth savin'  
Then you better start swimmin'  
Or you'll sink like a stone  
For the times they are a-changin'.

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Come senators, congressmen  
Please heed the call  
Don't stand in the doorway  
Don't block up the hall  
For he that gets hurt  
Will be he who has stalled  
There's a battle outside  
And it is ragin'  
It'll soon shake your windows  
And rattle your walls  
For the times they are a-changin'.

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**WasteWaterEducation.org 501(c)3**  
**Water IS Water --- Not Waste**  
**WaterSense PARTNER**  
Mission: To increase awareness that water quality is directly linked to the use of appropriate wastewater systems and their management.

The banner features a blue background with a globe on the left, a WaterSense logo in the center, and a swimmer underwater on the right. The text is white and yellow.