


Public Attitudes Project 2015

Roundtable Transcript

CWWA ACEPU
Canadian Water and Wastewater Association canadienne des eaux potables et usées

Roundtable Transcript

Haller: Good morning everyone, and thank you for coming. I'm Robert Haller, executive director with the Canadian Water and Wastewater Association, and I'll be chairing this discussion this morning. Before we get going, I'd like to do a quick introduction. We don't want to spend the whole day on everybody's intro, but a lot of you don't know each other, and I think it'll be important to know who you are; a brief background and a little bit about the organization you're with, or if there's a campaign you were brought in on. We'll try to keep it fairly brief, but why don't we start way down there. Heather?

Agnew: My name is Heather Agnew, I'm the Manager of Corporate Citizenship at RBC. I've worked very closely with Lynn Patterson, who you may have heard yesterday at the summit, on the RBC Blue Water Project. One of our key pieces that we work on is the Canadian Water Attitude Study.

Assi: My name is Rupinder Assi, I'm a recent employee of the Municipality of Brockton, where I was Water Industry Coordinator, working on economic development. I work closely with WaterTAP, the Ministry of Economic Development, as well as our Chamber of Commerce, working to bring clean tech opportunities to the water sector.

Chan: Allison Chan, I work with Black & Veatch, an engineering consulting firm. I also volunteer for the water environment association of Ontario which is a member association of CWWA.

Doyle: I'm Ramona Doyle, with the City of Charlottetown. I worked with the water utility projects there for the last few years, and just moved to the sustainability coordinator position.

Evans: Good morning everyone, I'm Drew Evans. I'm with a company called Real Tech. I'm Vice President of Operations, and I'm tasked with helping to take Real Tech global. Real Tech is a water quality analyzer: very accurate, very simple and affordable solutions that are more or less high technology for low cost, so our model doesn't change going from one country to the next. We're in 43 countries across the globe.

Freek: Kerry Freek, I'm the manager of marketing and communications at WaterTAP – the Water Technology Acceleration Project – which is Ontario's water sector champion. And I'm the founding editor of Water Canada.

Herstein: Hi, I'm Leslie Herstein, and I'm a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto. I've had my hands in a few things. My research looks at the complexity of state and provincial water sectors, and innovation in those state and provincial water sectors. I've been toying with some notions of how to get different stakeholders engaged in water.

Phan: I'm Rachel Phan, I'm the editor of Water Canada

Duff: My name is James Duff. I'm a marketing, communications, and PR consultant. While I am not in the water sector, I am here from an arm's length perspective, to listen to and observe the comments and ideas that come out of this panel, and help develop a communications plan designed to target one of many audiences, one of which I represent myself.

Kingsbury: I'm Clark Kingsbury and I'm the assistant editor of Water Canada.

Reid: I'm Nick Reid and I'm the executive director of strategic partnerships at the Ontario Clean Water Agency, and also the publications chair of the OWWA Pipeline magazine, and recently became the chair of an AWWA subcommittee looking at the low economic value of water.

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Sanford: My name is Bob Sanford. I don't work with EPCOR, but I'm the chair of the Canadian partnership initiative in support of the UN Water for Life Decade, and EPCOR is one of the major sponsors. I also work with a number of you, including the Canadian Water Attitudes Survey by RBC. Our work is to dispel the myth of limitless abundance of water in Canada. We also work to translate scientific research outcomes into language the average person can understand and that policy makers can use to craft timely and durable public policy, and we bring international examples to Canadian water issues. But really I'm here because I'm Kerry Freek's secret admirer.

Stadnycyj: Good morning everyone, I'm Mike Stadnyckyj. I've been kicking around the water industry for a lot of years – too many years I think. I've had the pleasure of being with companies throughout Ontario … for the membrane filtration being a lot of in the plant stuff and both the water wastewater side. Spend a lot of time with … looking globally at water issues, and looking with elliptics at a lot of public events and awareness campaigns around water, and then spent a lot of time on the water distribution as well, through various asset management companies. I also have the pleasure of being a WaterTAP alumni. Love water, happy to be part of this group this morning.

Tucci: Good morning, my name's David Tucci, and I'm a public health inspector for the City of Toronto. Primarily, I'm involved with recreational water, although I have some projects going in public education.

Wishart: My name's Warren Wishart, I'm manager of the Canadian Municipal Water Consortium at the Canadian Water Network. We're focused on getting researchers and users together, and identifying research that can really help our end users. In my case it's the municipal or area water services.

Wootton: I'm Brent Wootton, Director and Senior Scientist at the Centre for Alternative Wastewater Treatment. We do applied research and R and D, primarily with industry, but also with municipalities and governments. I'm also the Chair of WaterTAP and I also serve on the UN wastewater task force, among other things, but that will suffice.

Haller: I'm really excited about the group we've put together here. Personally, I've been with the CWWA for two years. I came to that after 20 years as a municipal manager, most of that as a CAO town manager. To a point, I know as much about water as I know about fire, police, recreation, and everything else. Some background in water, and I'm learning more all the time. We've got a diverse group here: some that are in the utilities, some that are in the private sector that are working in the water industry, some from government, some from the non-profit area. We've brought in the health, because water is so important to health and because you guys are also experts in communicating with the public. We've got people representing the research side and university thinking – just a great diversity. What RBC's doing, and bringing you on board and more connections for all of us. I think some great stuff is going to come out of here today. Where this all began – and any of you who've talked to me have already heard this story – we all know infrastructure, where we're coming at it from (I'm not saying it's where this has to go today), we all know the infrastructure issues in Canada. 50 to 100 year old infrastructure is coming to the end of its life-cycle. We're almost facing overwhelming numbers - report cards are coming out with billions of dollars that are barely conceivable. Big decisions need to be made by communities soon if we're going to maintain our water systems in our communities. Investments need to be made that will ensure the health and

the economic stability of our communities. So we've done a lot of work at the federal level trying to get financing, and federal grants, and appreciation of what's coming ahead. The federal government announces billions of dollars over the next ten years into infrastructure funding, but when they announce it they always talk about transit and roads and bridges. They never mention water. I think we've failed on that front. We did a lot of work hoping they'd identify water as a priority sector, that they'd take some of that infrastructure money and say it's only for water and wastewater, but they wouldn't do it. They're afraid of putting any strings attached. Even the FCM sat at a table just like this one demanding lots of money, no strings attached, saying municipalities know how to spend their money, they don't need any directions or rules, and they don't want any conditions. So we tried to place conditions saying don't give any money unless they're running their community well, unless they've got an asset management plan, unless they're pricing water correctly and doing maintenance. None of that came through, and they don't even mention water in any of their announcements as they talk about infrastructure at a federal level. So we have to take it to the next level: the provincial and local level. CWWA itself tries not to step into provincial politics, but together with our partners in each of the provincial associations and regional groups that are working with AWWA and WEF, we're trying to take information to that next level. So I'm working with AWWA and WEF, and we have a Canadian affairs committee for each of those groups here in Canada, and we're trying to create a tool kit, sets of tools that will support the utility leader in his community. Information about asset management: how to get to full cost pricing, how to set up long-term replacement plans, and so forth, how to convince your council that you need to do it. What is asset management? How do you explain it to your council? How do you get support for it, how do you set up that program?

We're also trying to work with provincial and federal governments to provide programs that will assist communities. So when we spoke to the federal government, we said "I hope that an infrastructure plan is more than a grant program." It's got to be more than just handing out grants. We have to set up rules around asset management, or create templates.

We just did a survey recently of all of our members across Canada, and we had hundreds of responses about how they feel about the state of infrastructure, and the state of infrastructure funding. How confident are they about where they're at, where they're going? I was surprised by how many small and medium sized communities answered. CWWA - to be critical of ourselves - has been known as a big city group. If you're a community leader, it's hard enough to stay trained, and you get involved in the AWWA or WEF to get your professional training, and then if, you've got time, you'll go up to the provincial level because that's where you're real legislation is. Only when you get larger and you've got time can you even think about federal issues. So a lot of time we only get those top big cities. So we're working on that.

Then I go to the next level and I talk to a lot of the community leaders - the decision makers, the elected officials at FCM - and a lot of them say "Robert, we get it. We know we've got huge decisions to make, but we're scared to make those decisions for fear of getting reelected. We're going to get crucified, we'll never get back in again. Billions of dollars are coming out. I would look great if I built another triple pad arena. I could create a

new cultural centre, I could do a new park, I could do new water pads; all sort of fun and sexy things."

Water – tearing up the ground, replacing old pipes, looking at new technologies, changing systems – we put $18 million into my little community of 5000, and as the papers said the only people that know the difference are the fish, and only for the first 10 feet. So it's really hard to get the community agreeing to an $18 million investment when everybody wanted an arena.

Where we're at today is how do we start changing the public's opinions or attitudes, their recognition of the water issues, the appreciation of the value of water? Some people say it's priceless, others say it's worthless. It has no value, it comes and goes, and people don't appreciate it. Down in the United States, a lot of you will have heard of the Value of Water Coalition. It's AWWA, WEF, and NAQUA, three huge organizations that normally don't work that well together are working very well together, and they've weathered a recent storm. They're getting some support from some large corporate partners as well. Those three groups are looking at this question of value of water, and the ad council in the US came on board, which is the group that makes all those wonderful PSAs about smoking and litter, and this is your brain on drugs, and all those iconic ads. They wanted to make them for water, and it's like a 10 to 1 deal – we bring up a million, they bring 10 million, and they're going to create a huge campaign in the US if we put up our 10%. So everybody's excited. We're about to launch a huge campaign in the US, everyone's getting excited about it for a year, and then the ad council comes back with a series of ads about turning off the tap when you brush your teeth, and low flow toilets and low flow shower heads, and stuff that's so 20 years old that it's not where we're going. The whole consumer efficiency thing has been out there for a while. There's still work to be done, but we've been doing it for a while. There was more that was done when we did appliance updates. We keep working on the home users brushing their teeth stuff, but there's about 3% that can be saved. We could look at 15-30% if we fix the pipes running down the streets.

There's so much more that can be done on an infrastructure level. We're looking at this crisis from replacement costs. The report card that came out from the FCM last year some of us felt was a worst case scenario, based on the FCM asking for a lot of money. The construction association was on side, and the consulting engineers on the other side, and they're all around the table, the three groups who get all the money, making a worst case scenario of tearing up every pipe and replacing them with all the same technology based on their cost estimates. Meanwhile out in the audience are the utility guys and the public works association who are saying "don't get scared, it's not that bad." We have asset management tools, we're setting priorities. There's ways of extending the life of pipes. We can reline pipes, and there's new technology coming in at half the price. We're looking at energy costs, and the more water we waste, the more energy we're using. If we cut the waste, we cut the energy, we cut the greenhouse gas emissions etc.. It's a big cycle.

So as we talk today, I want everyone to bring in contributions from their background. It's less about water than communications, so if you've got ideas about communicating with people, we'd love to hear them. It's good to have some younger people in here that can say "that's an old man's idea." You've got to think new about how we're doing communications, and what the messaging is we're trying to get out of here.

Some of you were involved in our initial survey, and a lot of it started to skew off onto personal issues. A lot of the surveys came back about a need for federal legislations, and the need for more rules and regulations, and a plan at a federal level. That discussion's going to come, but it's not today. This discussion's not about federal legislation or laws. This discussion's all about public attitudes. Maybe the laws will come to support the public attitudes, but without the public attitudes moving, it's really hard to bring the politicians along. So we've got to move the people, and the politicians will follow the people, and we'll change those attitudes. Our point that we're starting this from is from the utilities sector that's trying to figure out how to maintain sustainable systems. We can't put an ad out saying "vote yes for raising your water rate" or "let us tear up your street and shut down all your businesses for the summer." But somehow getting that sense that these are things that have to happen, and this is important to your community. It was last done 50 years ago and it's time.

I'm going to start with the first question that I shot out to a lot of you: what is the attitude we're trying to get to? Before we can figure out the target, or the message, or the method, where are we going? What is the mindset we're looking for in the public, and is it a realistic mindset that we can be moving toward?

Wishart: I'll jump in. One of the things that I can say from my own background is that you want to make sure – you'd like the public to understand the importance of water without being panicked about the water. There's a fine line there. People don't understand how water connects to everything in their community: their public health, their businesses, their recreation, the environment. That's part of it, and there's an educational process there, but you can also sensitize people so much that nothing you do will ever be enough. We have to be very cognizant that we want, as concerned water professionals, to spend and educate and do what it is enough. Too much is wasting money that can be used on other public issues. You can get to a point where no matter what you do, the water's bad. We don't want to get there. We want to get to the point where yes, we have good water in the community, we're invested in it, we're taking care of the situation, and we're making it better. Too much can be a really bad thing.

Haller: Heather, from the RBC side, maybe share some of your insight from your own surveying around public attitudes – an appreciation of the infrastructure, the methodology, support for water pricing.

Agnew: The interesting thing that we found was this really interesting parallel where people say "I'm concerned, my house floods, that's an issue that I'm concerned about, yet I'm doing absolutely nothing to mitigate it." So there's this really interesting gap that we're finding in the results, particularly this year over last year due to all the flooding issues in the last year. There's really not a full understanding of the issue and the problem if you will. To your point, Warren, yes educate them without panicking them, while still understanding their problem. I'm thinking about the parallel to energy usage, about the peak saver program in Ontario, where there was a little bit more of utilities working more directly with customers. Things like energy savings coupon books. But I wonder if there's something to learn from the energy sector and how they kind of built up the awareness around another finite resource.

Sanford: The Canadian Water Attitudes Survey has a lot of data that can be really mined and no one has ever really looked at the full seven years of data

and tracked it. I think, from a communications point of view, there's really valuable data there that could be really cultivated. What I found with the Canadian Water Attitudes Survey is that there are so many contradictions. People don't know where their water comes from, but they're sure that the infrastructure that supplies it is fine. There's an automatic response to not paying additional taxes. It has nothing to do with water infrastructure; they just don't want to pay any more taxes. One of the things I've seen is that engineering and municipalities have done a horrible job on one hand, and a great job on the other. The great job they've done is they've built these great reliable systems, but they don't tell anyone about how they work and what they cost. And so you have these tremendous infrastructure deficits, and nobody talks about it to the public because we'll just take care of it. Some way or another, we'll find a way to engineer ourselves out of this local crisis. But now as you say we're getting to the point where we won't be able to do that anymore if our infrastructure declines further. I think there is a crisis of awareness and understanding and I think we have the means, if we look carefully at the data, to get at the mindsets that need to be altered.

I wanted to make one comment on the energy thing: I think there are so many business circles in this thing, and one business circle that I see regularly has to do with energy. Water's heavy! Sometimes 60% of some municipalities' energy budget goes to moving water to where it's wasted. So you overbuild your infrastructure to accommodate peek use, which often times is highly wasteful, then you can't afford to maintain that, then you waste a lot of energy, which causes climate impacts, that ultimately beat the hell out of the infrastructure you can't afford to maintain and replace. There's simple breakthroughs here that we should be able to make clear. And I think your point about communications mechanisms that may have worked earlier – there are breakthroughs in social media not just in terms of social media itself – Microsoft just told us that only 20% of social media campaigns actually work, despite all the hype. There are new mechanisms for profiling before you move in to social media targeting that could be really effective. There are new emerging technological platforms and new social psychological profiling techniques that could be used on this. But we've waited a long time and a lot of these problems have really stacked up on us. So getting at the core one that will allow us to start changing people will be the challenge.

Haller: I just realized I hadn't really explained where we're going with this today. This started with BCWWA, which has a great interest in this. They really initiated this project, came up with the funding for it, but wanted it at a national level. They came to me, and I agreed to bankroll it. But BCWWA and their executive director would finance this thing, and we went to Actual Media - Water Canada - hired Kerry, and now Kerry's gone, their executive director gone, and now the project's here with me. And I'm like "Yeah, let's get this going." Rachel's on board, I've been working with Lee throughout, and he's brought on James and Clark. At the end of the day, what we're hoping we're going to get from these guys is a communications framework or strategy. We're not going to have the slogans or posters; it's going to talk about the big questions. If you're going to run a campaign, and we're going to show this to all our regional associations, maybe this is something that comes out of that water summit yesterday. We said a whole bunch of us were there, so what's coming out of it? We had all these wonderful Canadian associations together; maybe together we could start a campaign. Who knows where this is going

to go, but it's going to be the first step towards initiating some campaigns. Maybe RBC will use this in their next round. BC might launch their own. I'm trying to launch something with all the sections in Canada. This is going to feed in to that Value of Water Coalition. There are multiple uses for this guideline and framework we're creating for a communications strategy. Lee?

Lee: I'm just back here to prod you if you fall asleep.

Haller: He's our project leader on this. So that's where we're going.

Kerry: I didn't leave because I didn't like the project! I think one of the things that bothers me about water awareness programs is they're all doing great things but they're not woven together. I go back to learning about what people do when they volunteer, and why they do it. I learned about volunteerism and fundraising in university, and we learned people volunteer so they can be part of something, that they can become part of a community. It's for the warm fuzzy feeling of doing something for your community, but also about being part of a community. About getting insider information, about feeling like you're part of something that's moving towards something else. I think a lot of programs in Canada and around the world that are working on water issues do a great job of bringing people in. There's the shore line clean up, there's Ontario rivers clean up, there are all kind of different programs. The global medic that OCWA has, and the take back your pharmaceuticals program that just launched. But there's not a lot of these programs that are connecting people to the other issues in water, and I think that's where we might lose some people. They're interested in doing something but they don't know how it all fits together. There are the people who want to do something, who are concerned, but who are not actually doing anything. Concerned that the infrastructure is falling apart, but you don't know where the water's even coming from. There's a disconnect. So I think what you need is for people to pick up where other people leave off, so that there's a continuity of programming. I'm not sure how we do that, but there's plenty already on the ground, and if we can link some of those we'll be half way towards bringing people along for the ride.

Haller: It's a difficult question. I think it's where the ad council fell off. It's not a call for action that we're looking for, it's a call for inaction. Please keep your tar and feathers in the garage, and your pitchforks. That's a lot of the commentary from politicians. Just so that they appreciate and support, and I don't know how you gauge that until you make the first big decision and see if you get in trouble or not. But it's difficult to get a message out that's not a call for action, but rather one for appreciation and understanding.

Doyle: I think often times we refer to these old campaigns like turn off the taps, and they do have those tangible calls for action. Turn off the tap and you're saving water and contributing. A lot of people in my experience aren't all that interested in leaky infrastructure, which I find crazy because I find that interesting, but a lot of people don't, amazingly enough. They just want to know "hey, what do I need to do? I'm busy I have a lot of things on my plate, how can I contribute? Give me three things I can do." If we're just asking people to appreciate more, that's not going to get us anywhere. We have to say "Okay, expect a rate increase and be okay with it." And what's the end goal? Lobby the government? Whatever it is, we need to give people something they can do.

Agnew: I don't have an answer to this question, but I think that water is in such abundance here that we just don't even think about it. I know we've had interviews with people around the world, and it's interesting hearing the different points of view. But how do you communicate something that's not consistent? We want to tell the public "Hey, this is how your water system works, but if it's different across municipalities – one person is drawing on well water, you're on municipal water, you're stormwater system needs work." How do we educate when everything depends on where you live?

Stadnyckyj: I think it comes down to simplicity. I've heard it a couple times sitting around. We've got a bunch of experts from the water sector, we live it and breath it every day. The average person doesn't think about it at all as much as we do. To your point, Heather, I think you have to pick three or four things you actually want to accomplish. Two examples: from my period infrastructure pipeline, we'd be out inspecting pipelines, and there'd always be residents coming out and saying "What, there's a pipeline under here?" They had no idea, even if there's a hydrant in the front yard. They don't know what that's connected to. "Can we see in side of it?" "Sure!" It's that very fundamental – they don't know where the water comes from. And on that front, we did a lot of pre-inspection before cities came in and tore out the pipes and threw them away. What was amazing was that it was such a good teaching lesson at that point in time. The problem is the contractors come in, pull up the pipe, put it on a dump trunk, take it to wherever they take it for their scrap metal, and people can't see what the condition of the insides of those pipes is like, with the tuberculation, rust, whatever it may be. This would be a great opportunity to show why we are doing this, and the importance of it.

On the opposite side of things, sold advance membrane systems, really large membrane filtration plants, these are state of the art facilities and most people don't even know what they bought, from a councilor level, from a utility level. There were a couple folks who knew what was in there. So what we started doing in the plant was a kind of little museum display that had "Here's the membrane, here's how it works." Once people understood it, they could buy in because they've seen and touched it, and then they could tell those stories to other people because they were proud of it. It's kind of the whole buried, out of site out of mind. People don't know where it's from. Water's expected. And just going back on that water filtration plant, in the States a lot of the times we say "Why don't you open it up, have a grand opening, have tours?" There are limited tours, but the answer is always "Well, we don't want to open the doors because of terrorism." It's a big opportunity lost.

Haller: I remember one council meeting when my chief engineer walked in and dropped a big piece of pipe, a pipe cut, right on the table in front of the mayor. It had been corroded and there was build up in it, and he said "This is where your drinking water comes, through this pipe." And people went "What? Gross!" and we said "Exactly, we need to start changing these pipes." A picture went in the local paper, and people were worried about panicking, but we said "No, it's safe, we keep the chlorine levels. It's safe, but it's not ideal."

Evans: To tie in with that, the World Water Tech Summit last October, a great summit, and basically for each speaker they gave a few questions, a few concerns. One was for water processing, what is the biggest concern? It ended up that leak detection and water loss was the number one concern of the audience, water quality was number two, and

the quality of the pipes was number three. And the company that went up – I forget the name – his technology goes in and rehabilitates and cleans up pipes within a day, but by the end of that, going in with leak detection and water quality as the two main concerns of the audience, after hearing him speak, I think we probably all were in agreement that pipe inspection and physically seeing the pipe and state of the pipes –I think you need to have that kind of thing. It's very effective. Something saying "This is the reality of our infrastructure," but then put a positive spin on it saying this is what we're doing to fix it. Also, if we could start to quantify, maybe show a picture of a leaking tap with single individual drop, and if we can quantify what that's going to cost you in a year, and then pan to a leak within a pipe in the distribution system. The leaky tap is costing $100 a year when you can easily replace it, but then the pipe itself is costing hundreds of thousands of dollars. I think you physically need to visualize and, also from a pocket cost perspective – what does that mean from a tax dollar perspective? I think you need to put it in terms of what is going to pull on the individual heart strings.

Reid: I think that Heather was on to something with respect to the ability of all the systems, and water treatment options, and technologies, and source water qualities, and all those things, because they're all local. When we're talking about the price of water, in Ontario it's set by every individual municipality. So Moose Factory, up in James Bay, sets its price for water and it's not got any relevance to anyone else in the province. It's hard to get down to these messages on the price of water when just naturally the price of water should be different in pretty much every community. I think we have to be careful about going down that road because we have to focus more on the qualitative aspect of the value of water, but not so much on the financial. We'll never be able to get a common message if it goes down to how many cents a cubic meter is. The other thing I would say is that programs to date have fallen into two broad categories. There's the one about the stewardship – this is too good to waste sort of thing, like "only tap water delivers." And then the other is the more state of the industry and the report cards on water, the very big, macro stuff, and there's nothing that helps that individual local municipality make that sustainability connection between the price of their water locally, and what it's costing to make it. I think that's the big gap.

Haller: Anybody want to touch on what's going on currently, some of the programs they've seen, what is some of the water messaging out there? Nick mentioned "only tap water delivers," which is an AWWA project. WEF, the Water Environment Federation in the US, mostly wastewater, did projects called "Water's Worth It," really looking at how it's worth it to make that investment, and "Water for Jobs," really making an economic development connection that this investment in your water is creating so much investment in your community, jobs in your community, other jobs; the role that water plays in our economy and every industry that demands water. You look at Calgary, which is turning away industry because they're at water shortages most of the time, so big industry that wanted to come to Calgary cannot go there because they don't have the water to support it. We're turning business away from my little community, and we're at 50 per cent capacity, but we won't share our water with the community next door, and the boundaries and the community lines are driving us crazy. But there are campaigns about water's worth it and water for jobs. CWRA has the WET program, a water education project. RBC's doing some campaigns that make

you feel good about water – jumping in the lake and the importance of that quality of life aspect of water. There's a booklet one of my members, I think in Winnipeg, wrote called Where's it Come From. It's a great little story book and it shows back and back. They show them the tap, and they went down in the basement, and then out in the street, and then to the plant. It was a little complicated and long but it was a start. Some of the projects we argue – we'll talk about target later – but looking at what's going out for kids, which is long term, and what's going out there for changing attitudes now. Other thoughts, comments, or projects they've seen.

Freek: I really like anything that's been around with flushables this year. I think by accident it took off. I'm not sure if it was well planned, but I know there's been a group talking about what's flushable, what's not flushable and how expensive it is for infrastructure. There were some neat conversions of different groups that made that neat PR piece that really got people's attention. I think Thames Water that did the fat monster blob thing, that really played in to the social media side of things by using the zombie, monster, werewolf, whatever. Twilight. Playing on that pop culture kind of stuff, but linking it to the expense of flushing things that aren't supposed to be flushed, to the taxpayer, the cost to the taxpayer. So that was kind of cool to me, the different play on it. But also around World Toilet Day, I think there was a bunch of stuff. I was walking through our office and on the ticker on the news channel that's always on, there it was: World Toilet Day and people talking about flushables and what's not flushable. And I think they just picked a day to get it all out.

Reid: I think there's another interesting angle here as well that I find a little bit confusing, and that is: I was just talking about water pricing being very local, and so much of the discussion relates to what do we pay to our municipalities for water pricing. But what impact and how does that actually relate to the much broader stewardship – our watersheds, the flooding, climate change? Because what you're paying at your municipality for a cubic meter of water isn't the entire watershed, it's just the sustainability of the one small community. So I find that the discussion ends up being disconnected, because I think the money comes from entirely different sources when you talk about big picture, supply chain stuff, and agricultural use of water. It's entirely different than so much of the infrastructure deficit that we talk about, which is funded by those individual water users. I think we have to solve that.

Haller: Yeah, there are big arguments about the price of water – full cost recovery, and if it's really the way to go, 80% of it is a fixed cost. We shouldn't have any difficulty figuring out how we price stormwater. Is stormwater on a user basis? You can't! You have to figure out how that's working in, and people trying to put it into a water bill. Meanwhile, the more people save, the more we have to up the rate because we have a fixed product that you have to pay for. This is a conundrum for municipalities to try to figure out where that balance is coming from. And now that water is a right, is recognized as a right, and making it affordable, this can't be all on the backs of retirees on fixed incomes, and their water rates. So there will be a political debate to come from this as well. One of the things we have to look at is: are we being efficient and are we being fair in the way we bill?

Wishart: I live in London, and we have the highest water rates in the country, but they've tried to very aggressively, with a fixed charge, a variable charge, stormwater and wastewater. To their credit, it is very well communicated and the community

has absorbed probably an 8-9% increase over the last decade. Going forward, they figured that flattens out in 2017 or 2018. They figured at that point they'll be sustainable, and they did a pretty good communication strategy. But we're also very fortunate. We have two water supplies, it's generally a well run system, generally efficient. What's remarkable is that at least one of the communications directors was up there saying this: the increases are not like this forever. That's what scares people. That's inflation; it touches on so many different issues. But you can see that curve. Where does that curve bend over to wanting a sustainable water system? And suddenly you get the appetite for getting there. Most people will accept that you have to fix a leak or you have to fix a leaky pipe, most people will accept that you have to repair things regularly. Your car can't go without maintenance, and water systems are no different. There are a lot of parallels, and if people understood that their water system is no different on an operational basis than a car – you waste too much, you don't blow up your tires; you waste fuel, you don't tune up the car; it breaks down quicker. It's the exact same thing with a water system. So there are connections to be made through communication that are very tangible and real. It's hard to connect an underground pipe with maintenance. It's visually difficult unless you drop a section of it on the table. People are worried about it, but they don't know what to do. They say there's a $1-billion of infrastructure in my community, but no one knows what a billion dollars is. If you say the pipe in front of your house will break at some time in the next few years, and you'll be without water for three days – ah, okay. Everyone sees the consequence of having water main breaks. So those aren't all just maintenance based, but it's the kind of thing where you connect real life, tangible experiences with the water system and water world that you're asking people to be concerned about.

Duff: I think that's a really good point, and I know Drew also made a good point. When you're speaking to an audience and you're trying to sway an opinion, there always has to be some kind of an incentive to do that, aside from a catastrophic market event, such as what happened in Walkerton many years ago. The incentive to your message is really what will drive opinion, from purely a marketing and communications standpoint. Drew, you had mentioned a number of incidents such as a pipe dropped in front of you. Many people had never seen that before. But the incentive to them is the cost of doing nothing will far exceed any other cost that we can attach to this. That incentive is that I don't really want my water flowing through a pipe like that. Small baby steps are the way to really start swaying public opinion. Another thing I think we should do is start thinking about what the incentive is to these people.

Agnew: I think that's actually an interesting point. There are two things we picked up, one was from last year's Water Attitudes Study, and one was from this year. We asked our participants last year which would you fix within 24 hours? Number one thing was "I'd fix my internet before anything." But the pleasant surprise from that was that while water was lower, it wasn't at the bottom. I know that sounds like mixed news, but it wasn't as low as we thought it would be. The other thing we asked this year was "You have a leaky faucet, what do you do to fix it?" We had some people in our office say "I didn't really know what to do so I stuck a cloth in so I couldn't hear the dripping noise." So we asked that question with a number of different options and again, we either had a bunch of people who are fudging the truth, or a bunch of people who legitimately said "I

would fix this within 24 hours." I think it's that gap where people know it's a problem when it's right there in front of them, and they will do something about it. It's just that they don't even know. It's the baby steps that are important in getting them there.

Duff: Definitely. People don't know what a billion dollars is but they do know what the effect is if they're out of water for three or four days. That's an incentive! People can relate to that! So I think it's important to focus on what happens if that's taken away from you.

Evans: I think RBC has done a really good job with certain aspects of the commercials they've done. It resonates, the idea of the children saying "will I be able to swim in the lake?" "Will I be able to eat the fish that I catch?" They, by tying in children etc, they did some good things. However, there isn't a call to action. Besides, if you're enough of a volunteer maybe you'll want to get involved. I think there's a couple of takeaways from what you guys are doing that I think could potentially apply, but again there really needs to be some sort of strong incentive or validation of why they need to care.

Duff: And it doesn't need to be a scare tactic. It doesn't need to create panic. But it does need to create some sense of urgency, and people thinking "son of a gun I never thought of it that way before!"

Tucci: Just a couple points: one thing that I heard that was very interesting was talking about different municipalities having different needs. If you're going to address a problem and try to communicate with the public you can't just have a blanket message. One thought I had was maybe even the municipalities themselves could be the launching pad for a specific message tailored for each community. Speaking to what Warren said about having an incentive driven – or a 'this will come to an end.' I think that's a really good way to do it, but one of the biggest problems if you're going to take the municipality path is public trust. You can tell people that this will come to an end, you can tell people that there's a risk associated with doing nothing. But you have to have trust before you can get them to go along with you. I don't deal much with drinking water and infrastructure. I'm a health inspector, so I do a lot of regulatory enforcement; swimming pools, whirl pools, and so on. Yesterday I was at a media launch promoting beach openings at Woodbine Beach in Toronto. A number of people from the public walked by, and the one question I got asked most was "Is the water save to drink and are the beaches safe to swim in?" So you could sense that even though we were raising the blue flag and saying "Yes, it's safe to swim here," there's still a question, and there's still mistrust.

Reid: I would say too – was it Warren that's from London? – I think the fact that London has the highest water rates, I think they should be commended for that. There's a distinction, but there's a reason that London has high water rates. You're pumping water uphill for like 60 KMs, so there's a reason for it, and it would be a shame if just due to political pressures the rate was suppressed so they could make Labatt's happy or something. But to suppress it wouldn't be sustainable, and the water would go out, and a pipeline would rupture, or something bad would happen. So it shouldn't be a dubious distinction. There should be some kind of accolade for actually having sustainable water pricing in the community.

Wishart: Very much so, you're absolutely right. It is very much described and sold as putting us on sustainable footing. And going to your point about the trust, I think by and large, people trust us, or

at least we're getting there. We're not quite there yet, but we're almost there. You accept that and say "Great, they've done a very good job of developing incremental trust and saying we have a plan, and we're implementing it." One of the interesting tidbits – it allows for long term declining water consumption, per capita water consumption. So they're already planning into their system that people are efficient over a long term period of time.

Chen: I just wanted to comment more on what David was saying. I think there's a huge mistrust. A lot of my friends will come to me saying "Oh, you work in water," and ask questions like "Is the water safe to drink?" Just the other day I was at my yoga studio, and someone asked someone who worked at the studio, "Oh, can we drink the tap water?" Because we were in the change room, and I guess it's close to the toilets. I don't know. And I know I have friends who won't fill their cup out of their washroom, but they'll fill their cup out of their kitchen. Even people my age, who I consider educated, who maybe I went to the same programs with but they don't live in water , and they just don't understand that and don't know how to communicate it. I felt like even if I said something to this woman at the yoga studio, the mistrust will still be there. I'll reply to my close friends, yet they still have boxes and boxes of bottled water and I say "I just told you the other day, you can drink your tap water". But they ask, and then I tell them, and then they don't do anything about it.

Stadnyckyj: Just a quick question about the pricing for water: you said London has the highest, but is it 50 bucks, 100 bucks higher than average?

Wishart: It's probably about, on an annual basis, about 50% more than Toronto. But it's still really not that much.

Doyle: I think, touching on Alison's point, I think it's making it visible that we have to work on. It's something that, you know, last year, last February, having the main break, I said "Let's put out a press release, let's invite CBC down," and have people come out to see that it's the middle of February, there's water gushing all over a major street in Charlottetown, there's traffic being diverted, we're out in environmental protection gear, they're able to see down into, using a camera, there's camera crews there, and they can see how many clamps are on this very short section of pipe, and the amount of water being lost. There's also an issue that unites all municipalities. I can't think of any municipalities that I know of, besides maybe Halifax – but they're constantly working on it – that have really low water loss rates. That's something that we're consistently seeing across Canada. It's very visual, it draws attention to something, and we get tons of calls about it with people saying "is that what the pipe looks like? Is that where my water comes through? How much water is that? How much would that cost?" From the municipality standpoint, we hear about one tiny pothole in the street we get like 15 calls on it, but they don't know what's happening underneath the ground. When I started with the utility I had a social science background, and I didn't know anything about that sort of thing…

Sanford: I wanted to respond to the 'concern not panic thing,' and I also wanted to respond to your comments, James, on how you have to get people to move plausibly along, and also this whole notion we're talking about here of trust, and the cost of doing nothing in particular. I'm reminded always in our work; never fail to take advantage of a good disaster. According to the Canadian Water Attitudes survey this year, one out of every ten Canadians has had experience with what they define as an extreme

weather event, and seven million Canadians, some 20% of the population, also claim to know someone who's been personally affected by a weather related disaster in Canada. I'm kind of thinking and wondering how we can work our way through this. We need a hook, and maybe our hook could be that our hydrology is changing, and we need to protect ourselves. So that's our incentive. But the additional incentive is if we want to sustain our quality of life and ensure prosperity in the future, that's an incentive. We have to rethink our water infrastructure, we have to repair what we have, we have to redesign and rebuild vulnerable parts of the system, and we have to pay more to ensure reliable ongoing maintenance and replacement of these systems. This is how we adapt to change, and that's an additional incentive. I think many of us agree, working in the water community, that managing water resources better is probably the single foremost climate change adaptation. So I think there could be an implicit series of self reinforcing implicit elements in the program we're talking about.

Haller: Potential for each community to identify, or can we make case studies of some of these failures? I always use the example in Ottawa. In Ottawa, I think we've got a great case where we'd identified the maintenance need. It was a million dollar repair on a storm drain and we delayed and delayed, and then it collapsed and ate a car in the middle of the night. Now we have to fix it quick, and it's a $5-million job instead of a million. We thought we'd save a million, and now it's $5 million. And, undisclosed, but it's a few million dollars that went to the guy that went down the hole, and his car has never been found, and he got out just in time and then it ate his car. The east end of Ottawa was shut for two weeks, and the shopping mall couldn't – and they're suing the city. I don't know how many – I mean $10-million or more because we deferred a million dollar repair. Those are the things that we have to talk about that you can't even weigh the economic effect of, all the people who didn't come to work for two weeks or spent three hours on alternate routes to get home.

Sanford: The cost of doing nothing is just staggering.

Haller: And people have to see that. I always picture an image of a council meeting where they're rolling the dice like "Yay, we got by another year!"

Herstein: I think – I've been doing case studies for WaterTAP – really simple stuff: how much did you spend on this project, how much did you save? And they don't even know that! And I think for municipalities that are going to invest in any alternative technology or anything, they should know how much they're saving and what the alternatives are. So if you're going to do a tool kit for municipalities, tracking those investments and those savings, and giving those to the public in really simple measures, is sometimes really helpful. But not knowing any of that information, how are you supposed to defend further investments?

Sanford: A good example of that, I find, is when you look at what's just happened. We cut a million dollars worth of monitoring. The bill was ten billion. Every time there's a budget cut, we cut the simplest things, like water monitoring. In the case of what happened in Alberta, we're now back to the number of monitoring sites in the west that actually existed in 1915, because they just kept cutting this stuff over 20 years, so you don't have any money for monitoring. And then you have something like this happening, and you don't have any monitoring in the places where the storm happens. So for a

million dollar cost of not putting in that investment, you have a ten billion dollar flood.

Assi: I have a really close friend who's at med school, and he's been doing all these studies, and he has this really big issue with fluoride. Apparently through his studies, he's saying that there's a neurological disorder connected to fluoride. He says "I need to save my brain if I'm going to be a doctor, and I've got proof that Toronto has the highest fluoride," so he doesn't drink tap water. And I think, to me, even having that conversation to change that view and drive that action, is a challenge. But I think that the main point there is that hitting it home would help at the end of the day. Help quitting smoking is a great example. I worked at Sunnybrook hospital for almost seven years as a cleaner, and what boggled my mind was that after SARS hit they had to put in an infection prevention control project. What boggled my mind is I'd fill up this bucket of water, this highest quality of water, and every single shift I'd be putting chemicals in there to ensure that patients could come in and have a clean bed, a clean place. And I began to ask myself "here we are with global issues and problems with water shortages, and here we're pumping chemicals into clean water every day." But nobody comes in with questions. They're not asking "Who is putting chemicals in my water? How are things being cleaned? What kind of pipes are giving me my water?" The thought is not there, but I think that the kind of connection between health and the importance of water – and we're not even talking about the consumption of water, for your wellbeing, we're talking about sanitary purposes etc. There's a big disconnect. I was asking myself about the more and more chemicals being dumped into this very clean water. Can you connect that type of visual with water infrastructure? I think on the municipal side of things I've never seen a pipe dropped, but there's also a really strong siloed culture in municipalities. I know I've experienced that. Internally, organizationally, there's a strong disconnect between say your utility manager and let's say economic development. There's a strong disconnect. There's a strong internal disconnect. Externally, how many people are actually interested in politics and like to go to council meetings after a long day at work etc..? How many people have gone in the past year, on your own, not obligated? I don't go. That's another piece. Getting people out to council meetings!

Haller: This debate does get to the management table. As a CAO I have meetings like this with all my department heads, and we fight it out, and at budget times we're shouting over each other over who's getting what. The fights get real ugly. And then what we think we'll get through the council, and trying to balance that out between the managers.

Evans: Just going to say, for us who were affected by the big ice storm at Christmas time this year – I think it's the only time I've seen so many neighbours out and about in the winter time. Even in the summer time! So once you eliminate all our basic needs, you see so many people you see out and about. I met so many neighbours I'd never seen before. It's summertime now and I've never seen them again. So I think it kind of speaks to the internet maybe being one of the biggest, most important tools that people require in their lives now. But you go back 15 years and it wasn't even there.

I wonder if we could position it that water is basically the backbone of everything. So if you kind of work backwards and say if Rogers and Telus and these guys didn't have water and weren't able to do the process, then the internet doesn't exist. Same with oil. For extracting oil in the oil sands, I think it's

about 7 or 8 barrels of water for every barrel of oil. I know there's a few pieces out there that show you how to be able to create rice you need 3 or 4 times the amount of water than rice. Maybe it goes back to some basic education that shows, from a living standpoint, if you don't have water you're not going to live. So if you could put a clever spin on some of those things, you might be able to kind of jog that thought. "Oh hey, maybe we should be thinking a little bit more when we're doing something!"

The bottled water comment: an interesting thing to think about is that the majority of water that's bottled is tap water that's been put through a process. It's not spring water. I think there's a misconception that bottled water is far superior. We're a water quality company, so you can actually take one of our devices and measure bottled water or tap water and depending on where you are, they're probably, from an organic standpoint, very similar. Yes, maybe a little bit of chlorine has been removed, but ultimately the water's almost the same. But then you have to factor in the Indias, the Chinas, the middle-eastern countries, and even summer time for ourselves. That big transport truck that's full of water bottles in 30 or 40 degree weather – what effect is that having on the plastic. As much as there's the idea that bottled water is far superior, when you factor in all these factors, is it? We'd lose a marketing campaign against the Dasani's the Pepsis, though.

Haller: Those are big money makers for a lot of utilities. We sell lots of water to bottled water companies. We make lots of money off of that, and as long as they don't say they're better, we don't fight with them.

Reid: I find it interesting because all the discussion about the price of water – I mean there's no problem with what people are willing to pay for water when you see them pay three dollars for a bottle of water. I find it fascinating that when you take some coffee beans and drop them into water it goes from being 3 bucks a cubic meter to 6000 dollars per cubic meter. Just do the math. Those coffee beans added to the water…

Haller: There are people who won't drink tap water who are drinking Starbucks, which is using tap water. The people at the hospital – I always thought, you're going to get operated on at the hospital, and the doctor scrubs up, and the last thing they do is rinse under municipal tap water. It's the last thing that touches their hands before the hands go in you. It's that trusted.

Herstein: One thing I tend to explain to people who say "I pay for this water" is you're not actually paying for the water. You're paying for the service of bringing the water to you. Anyone can go up to Lake Ontario and collect their water and bring it back home. You pay for the service of bringing that water to your house, whether you drink it or not. Live for a day without water and see how easy it is to do everything that you do. Try bathing out of a bucket.

Freek: On that point, and on Drew's point earlier, at one point we were looking at a series of stories about water on reserves with boil water advisories. The idea we came up with for the series was called "Waking up to Water." We were going to start with the family that had no water delivered to their home, and see how their lives progressed for a day without any water available to them, and how much time it takes for them to go collect it from the decentralized stock place or mobile treatment source. Just to do things compared to a regular home where you wake up and the first thing you do is drink a glass of water, or get in a shower, and see how many times you actually go to reach to turn on a tap in a day and

have no water coming out of it. Make that real for people. Have them relive in commercial format the idea of having no power or no water for a day, and see what they think after that.

Anybody who's camped, you know exactly how much time you spend fetching water back and forth. It's an inordinately large part of your day. You don't have to be in a developing world or on a reserve with boil water advisory to know how hard it is to lug water back and forth.

Haller: I'm going to go down to Brent.

Wootton: In a talk I give, I talk a bit about innovation and creative thinking, and I've been listening to everybody talk, and I'm going to take a slightly contrarian opinion and see what you guys think. The first observation I make is that we're all talking about drinking water primarily. Haven't heard a lot about wastewater pollution, and I have some ideas about why that is. As I'm thinking about this I'm thinking "what are the assumptions that I'm hearing that I don't hear any justification for, and I can challenge?" One is the expectation we have that people should care. Why should people care? There's sort of a self righteous kind of value position that's going around here. We've all heard it many times before. It's an idea that "these silly people who don't understand what we know." But as I think about that, I think that part of the privilege of living in the western world is that we don't have to care about these things. I think that the social contract that exists with the average citizen is that they don't have to care. And that as stakeholders or people in the water sector, we just think that's not right. But is it a fair expectation to expect the average person to care about these things, and if they did, would that change what we want to change?

I'm trying to draw the links between those things. For example, the power line polls on my road were aging and decaying, and eventually the authority replaced them. I had no involvement in that. I want electricity but I just assume that it's in good hands and will be taken care of, and I really don't get engaged. Does that make me a bad citizen? I really don't care, and I'm not going to get involved. Similarly with roads: if you were saying "We need to increase taxes, so I'm going to show you pictures of potholes, and you really need to understand road construction, and you need to understand how asphalt is made, and the engineering that goes behind road construction, etc." No. I don't care. I don't want to know. But I expect it to be done. I expect good roads. I hate the – it's only when there's scarcity that people really care. The congestion around Toronto, for example; people care about that. Where I commute out of Toronto, roads are good and I take them for granted, quite frankly.

The next assumption that I'm challenging would be in environments or jurisdictions where we think they are doing a great job, and I don't know where those would be, and what would the criteria be? Would they make good investments in infrastructure? Their local politicians are making good decisions? What is the objective here? Do we want the survey on water values in Canada - do we want those opinions to change, because we value that? Do we simply want mayors and CAOs and councils to be making better decisions? And so in jurisdictions where they are making good decisions, or money is going where it needs to, or infrastructure is the way we think it should be, is that because the general public has the right values? Are those correlated? Or do we just – your opening remarks were the politicians will evolve if the public cares. Actually, I don't know if that's true. I think we can have a very engaged

public and the politicians will make decisions that are completely not connected.

I'm trying to think why are we here? What is this about? Your intro mentioning the BC group and the BCWWA wanting to address this; I'm thinking about where we can draw other lessons from this. We seem to all agree that there's no call to action, there's any behavior modification we're trying to address. When people are trying to do water education stuff, they tend to gravitate towards that stuff. I see my kids start talking about "turn your tap off when you're brushing your teeth." It gets bogged down in these kind of crude concepts. And that's good, but water is a very complex sector. It's incredibly complex. And I don't think we can expect people to understand it. That's the privilege of living in the developed world. I don't understand how hospitals are built or medical systems work, but I still benefit from them. Same with transportation, same with the power grid. What is the goal here? Is it asset investment? Is it water pricing? What is the outcome we're trying to achieve, and what's the shortest route to that? I'm thinking about smoking bans in public and the campaigns against drunk driving. Things like emission reductions. The things that have been successful – how do they achieve that? The thing about those is that there are behavior modifications or there are tangible levels they can measure. Either you wanted to have smoking banned or you wanted recycling to take effect. It was always a combination of regulation and laws, as well as value change. The question is do the values result in the laws, or do the laws result in the values? They probably move forward hand in hand. I just think, in particular when you don't have a behavior modification that you're trying to achieve, I'm not sure what the outcomes would be around purely educational campaigns. We want people to care about water, and I do, I'm fully invested in water, but I challenge my own assumptions around that. I don't know that people feeling good about water is going to result in the right decisions. For example, we haven't talked about wastewater much. Drinking water is a lot cheaper than wastewater. Wastewater is very expensive. And I think it's hard pressed to even make that sort of self righteous, normative type of value position around wastewater, so we just go to drinking water because we know the arguments. We can say "Oh, that glass of water etc…" Drinking water is easier.

Haller: In Ottawa, we know we have problems because the beaches are closed regularly. Under the new infrastructure plan the mayor has announced that his number one infrastructure project is the wastewater, because everybody cares about the river and the beaches, and he's linked the swimability of our river to the wastewater site. It's that call to action, and as much as I say get away from that turn the tap off when you brush your teeth, my kids are adamant, and I don't fight with them. Even the fact that my town is at 50% water capacity, there's no scarcity. My kids know the value of water. They know it costs money and waste is bad, and they turn it off, and whether it makes a nickel of a difference to my life, they think water is valuable and any sense of waste is bad. People who leave their sprinklers on, and in my town you can leave it on all night and it might cost 15 cents.

Those points are brutal, but you're getting us right on. We've got to kick ourselves and say what are we thinking? Brings to mind that movie "Dave," about the lookalike who ends up being President, and I remember in a meeting him saying "We're spending $50 million on making people feel good about the used car they've already bought." And I'm almost feeling that stupidity around you've got to make people feel good about something they don't

understand… We have to follow up on some of those comments, but in a way I'm trying to move us to the second part of who are we targeting, and then we'll move on to the messaging. And I mentioned the kids, but my son won't vote for another 8 years, and won't be director of water for another 20. We've got to get some decisions made sooner than that, so this sense of just go to the kids and skip people over 20 because they're a lost cause is not the way we have to go. With some of the stuff Brent just said, why should anybody care? Do we expect people to care? And if we do, who are we going after? Who's our target? Is it the politicians, is it the public, is it the taxpayer, is it the business community, and how do you measure success? Making tough decisions and not getting ousted?

Freek: Can I just make a comment on Brent's comment, and be a little contrarian on my own here? Why do people get to not care? Why is that okay?

Wootton: Human nature. Scarcity is when people care. If you don't have scarcity people don't care.

Freek: But I think Bob would argue, if he were in the room, that there is an element of scarcity, and it is to do with issues like wastewater, because we're getting to the point when we're making things scarce. We're making things scarce by polluting them.

Wootton: But we mix up things in our arguments. We mix real and distant issues together, and in some ways that hurts the arguments. There are critical issues that people need to care about for tangible reasons, and there are things like turning of your taps. I live on a well and I can't even make the water levels go down.

Freek: What I'm saying is that these tangible things that people can do, like turning off the tap – I just drew a little diagram while we were talking about where does it come from? I said droplet, tap, pipe, plant, source, fish, pond, lake, sea, groundwater, hydrologic cycle, climate change – if we're not caring about what comes out of the tap, how are we supposed to care about the bigger things?

Wootton: My point is that that sort of stuff doesn't translate into making good decisions at the council table around infrastructure. Like arguments between centralized or decentralized. They're complex subjects that the public can't make informed decisions around. I'm fairly informed, and I don't know what my values are around it.

Freek: We don't need the public to make informed decisions around that. We need people like Rob's kids who are poised to be public director of water to value water from an early age so they can make informed decisions when they're sitting in council. We don't need everyone to understand, we need a few people to.

Wootton: There are just different ways to approach this. In the US there are very sophisticated marketing campaigns for advocacy groups around helping the government make good decisions, and those are very different approaches. Part of the problem is that we're not a cohesive stakeholder. It's not like the military or something for instance. Or eggs. Or MAAD, or anti-smoking. But they have tangible outcomes. This "care about water" sort of thing – if we want people to think water is great as a cultural norm, that's an outcome we can measure. You can say "Yeah, people seem to care more about it." Does that translate into good policy decisions? Maybe it would, but maybe not!

Reid: People should care because we really need to have sustainable systems and a sustainable environment, and what some of us see in the water sector is that general attitudes around water are leading to decisions where we're not getting the revenue numbers for these assets that make them sustainable. So we should do this education for the benefit of your children, because that's really the ultimate sort of measure of sustainability, whether or not it's going to be there for your children. I say we don't pay the right price for water. I say we don't pay the right price for a leather coat that you go and you get in the mall that's made in India in one of those sweatshops. I'm sure you've seen Watermark, and those tanneries – that's disgusting. We are buying cheap leather coats at the expense of all those people there, and that entire ecosystem. So I think it's a little bit motherhood, but it's actually real. These systems – we can see what's happening, and we have to try to make a call so that some knowledgeable people can do something about it.

Duff: There are a lot of good opinions around the table here – Kerry and Brent both made some good points. I think the question we really need to ask is not how much the coat costs but why do you need the coat in the first place? The bottom line when you're trying to convince public opinion is what's in it for me? Why don't people care? I flush the toilet, the water goes away. Who gives a damn? Has anyone asked the question why can't you swim at a beach after it rains? That's what's in it for me. I know exactly why you can't swim, and many around the table do. How do we promote that to people? I think that's how you can sway the opinion here.

Assi: I like fashion. I used to wear baggy clothes. I can't wear them, any more because it's not in anymore. My mom doesn't like me buying baggy clothes, so I have to buy these tapered pants. I could go to the seamstress and get my baggy pants hemmed, but there's always that kind of trend. It's marketing, publicity. There are H&M ads at every bus stop. We're part of this capitalist and consumption society. I think a good example is pop. The very first day of good weather, McDonald's had its $1 pop ads. They were waiting for that one day of good weather, and then they had their ad up. That's how proactive these companies are.

As far as expectations are concerned, something that resonated with me when I studied in Costa Rica: we were talking about climate change, and my professor looked at us all and said, "Who do you think will be affected by climate change? You think you guys will, when you're back home in your nice places? Probably. But you'll be bailed out."

To Bob's point, you cut $1million, you spend $10 billion. While we are affected, there's money that will come in. So there's that expectation that we can be reactive. That's something that I don't agree with, but there is this expectation that if you have a pothole, somebody will come and fix it.

Duff: Much like the pothole idea, when Bob suggested never let a good disaster go to waste, you'll make the call when the brown water starts coming out of your tap.

Tucci: Measuring success can be very difficult. Are we actually talking about prevention, because prevention is so difficult to measure. You mention always taking advantage of a good disaster. If a disaster doesn't happen, how do we sell that? How do we say "Look, we've taken these actions, and look how well prepared we were." People only care when something bad happens. Like the flooding last summer. People cared.

Freek: I'm struggling with the same question. With some of the work that Leslie's doing with WaterTAP, we're trying to show that spending money on something that make things more efficient in the long term can save you money compared to the traditional method. So using new technologies to create efficiencies will save you money in the long term. If you're a municipality, how do you make saving a sexy thing, rather than spending a sexy thing. I think that's very similar to what you're talking about. How do you make a thing that didn't happen a thing to celebrate?

Evans: The Europeans are now the big savers. They went from spending every dollar that they had to saving 3, 4, 5 per cent now. Unfortunately, effects of climate change and economic situations, these are bad situations that have to happen in order to make the public notice. Walkerton's a perfect example. Something happened. We realized we had to learn from this. And then time passes – look at the stock market now. We're reaching as high as we've ever seen, and we're setting ourselves up for another crash. We need to learn from our mistakes, which history has shown we typically don't. And to add to your point, there are definitely multi-facets. Technology will be one of the biggest proponents of change. The reality will be ever shrinking budgets. There will never be enough money to go and replace all the pipes or refurbish them all. So you need to find other ways to - spending $50,000 on a piece of equipment because that's what you used to do doesn't mean that it's the right thing to do. The problem we have on the technological side of things is that you have legislation and regulations that were written 10, 20, 60 years ago that don't accommodate for these new technologies when it comes to bringing some of these new technologies to the table. I'm speaking from a real time monitoring standpoint. When we do have partners who are interested in trying something new, trying a pilot project, they're then concerned about what the government will think.

Haller: The Canadian plumbing and heating association has already closed the door for the 2020 Canadian building codes, so if you've got a new idea you're looking at 2025.

Assi: When I told some friends that know I work in the environmental field but don't know the field at all that I was working in Walkerton they said "Oh, so they brought you in to solve the Walkerton crisis?" And I'm thinking, "That was 10 years ago, what's wrong with you?" That's how disconnected people are. What kinds of campaigns were successful? David, having worked at Toronto Health, what kind of issues have come up, and what kind of campaigns have you guys launched that have been successful that can then be modeled and applied to water?

Tucci: From personal experience, we just launched a campaign at the end of the last year. We're trying to do more outreach, and connecting with the public more in terms of water, and I deal more with recreational water – backyard swimming pools and whirl pools etc, because a lot of drowning occurs at home. That campaign got us invited to some industry expositions, and that got us to the point where we more visible, and in that sense there was some success. We want to say "Yes, we're health inspectors involved in regulatory inspections and what not, but we're also going to start caring about residents with backyard pools, to help residents stay safe."

Other ones to think about just off the top of my head was personal service settings, like piercers and tattoos, keeping the cleanliness exposed etc.

Exposure is important. Maybe enhancing exposure of water and infrastructure issues, maybe that would help get the public more engaged. There are problems, this is what they are. Or if there could be a grading system? Disclosure is so important.

Haller: You had mentioned the blue flag earlier, which is a great disclosure tool. Lets people know the quality. Leslie, you've been doing work with MPMP, and how communities are exposing, sharing, and what information's public.

Herstein: Something that both Bob and Brent said – Bob had said that the engineers and the utilities have done such a good job that we don't care, or that we don't think we need to, and Brent was saying that that's the contract that we have. And I agree. The hydro-social contract has always been "you provide, and we don't have to care." Why should people care? Who are we targeting? Is the contract a good thing? Do we need the help of the public to move politicians, to move utilities, to move all of those people? Does that contract need to change, and will that change naturally with different types of technologies that require the user to be more involved?

Stadnyckyj: To bring it back to the water side, I don't know how it was measured, but the campaign that comes to my mind is the kids drawing the fish on stormdrains. I know that changed my mind a bit about what I may or may not have dumped down storm drains. It was effective.

Wootton: We need an agreed upon objective. Are we trying to get more funding by all levels of government, or are we trying to change the values survey? Those are very different objectives in my mind. As some of you noticed, the Harper government announced $100 million spent on the military. Front page news. That wasn't because citizens of this country were clamoring for that, and yet the government did it. Why? It probably has more to do with creating a legacy or something…

Haller: We have a multi-pronged battle ahead of us. As a sector we need to keep working on that federal government. We need more funding, we need them to identify water as a priority, and we need the provinces on board. Today we're really taking the battle to the local level. As I said, when I'm in those meetings with my department heads and we're fighting for our own internal budget, and they say well we've got this triple pad, and I say we're going to tear up all the streets, and they're all laughing at the utility guy in the room, saying "As if!" So we're working on several fronts. We're trying to get better asset management, we're getting the tools to try and help communities, we're working at the government levels, and we also have to work on public attitudes. This western hemisphere right that we have – if you just think in the last two weeks we had a provincial election in Ontario and less than half the people voted, and at the same time how many people died in the Ukraine trying to vote? How many people had their red fingers cut off trying to vote in the Middle East? I'm not in favor of mandatory voting, but it's become such a complacent, taken for granted thing. People are dying without water also, and we have so much of it we take it for granted. Campaigns are underway to get voting rates up to 60%, and we have to do the same where we get people to recognize water.

Reid: Rupi said that Walkerton was a long time ago, but if you look at what's happening with the post-Walkerton regulations, standard of care just came in at the start of 2013. To a certain extent, I don't know if we have to care that much in Ontario specifically, because the standard of care puts such

an onus on municipal councils to do the right thing. You give the example of spending money on the water pipe. Now, if the utility management comes forward with the budget and says "Look, we need to do this," and the council says "No, go put a band aid on it," they can go to jail or be fined $4-million. So there's a big punitive stick that's going to hit public decision makers on water here in Ontario, so I think water pricing is going to naturally go up.

Sanford: What you're talking about is very important. On one hand you're doing the standard of care and upgrading all the standards associated with drinking water quality, but you haven't approved any major source water protection plans. You're heading for a crisis here, a collision. You're going to raise the standards for drinking water quality while still deteriorating the ecosystems that generate that water supply. You can't afford the infrastructure you've got, let along the infrastructure needed to meet those standards. And you're cruising for a real collision with larger scale landscape changes that will make water quality even more difficult to achieve. So this makes this conversation even more important.

COFFEE BREAK

Haller: Okay so we're going to keep snacking as we go along. We've got to come out of this room with a little bit more. We've really put together an impressive group, and we've got a lot of ideas. I think everybody's got out their comments, their feelings, their sense of all this. James has to come out of this with something more than an episode of the Canadian Dinner Party, where everybody gets together and there's some great conversation. We talked about a multi-pronged approach. But here's brass tax: we, the utility sector, have to get money spent on infrastructure. It's there, it's looming. Bob was saying we're not going to catch up to that deficit. That deficit's getting away on us, and we've got to start dealing with it on multiple fronts. As a professional organization, I'm dealing with my utility leaders, that they understand their tasks, and they get it. We're dealing at a federal and provincial level. The reality of Canada is that more and more is going to happen at a local level. Local decision making and council decision is really where a lot of Canada is moving. This local level and these city states that need water to survive, those decisions are coming locally. We're working at all these levels, and one of the levels we're working at is public opinion and public attitudes.

That's where we have to go today. We have to have a booklet at the end so that BCWWA next year, when they run their water week, they'll pull out our booklet and say "Okay, here are some of the messages that should be going out there, here are the targets for these messages, and here is some of the methodology we're recommending you use to get that message out there." So we've got to start talking now about the messaging. It's about who are we targeting and the message for each of those targets. The methodology we use to get to those targets with those messages will be different.

When Kerry and I started talking about this, we were both obsessed with the "dumb ways to die" videos. My kids sing the song, and there's a game they play and get killed. There's a viral video about dumb ways to die. At the end there's this great song and a game. It's obviously stupid. But the railway put it out, and included walking on railways as a stupid way to die. The kids don't know who sponsored it, but they now equate walking on railway tracks in Prescott as just as stupid as showering with a hair dryer.

Evans: Just to add to that, there's a company that has a "practice safe sex" saying where it's "practice safe breath." A kid goes in to a store and he's trying to determine which flavor or size, and in your mind you're going down one route, but you end up going another. So provocative works! I don't know how to relate that to water, but it might resonate.

Assi: There was an interesting sign I once saw which was a photo of a guy's body half way in to the toilet and it said " we don't swim in your toilet so don't pee in our pool."

Haller: Every cottage has those signs: "If it's yellow let it mellow, if it's brown flush it down." Everybody should be forced to live in a cottage or on a ship for a while, to learn to appreciate water.

Wishart: Maybe something we should do is go back to the question of who is our target audience. Are we looking at a big city audience, a small-medium sized city? There's different messages there, because there's different capacities, different situations that they're under. I would imagine that in Toronto you would have to have something that crosses a pretty broad cultural spectrum. What might work in one area might not work in others. What might work in Ontario might not work in Alberta. One of the things we can do to help is narrow down who our audience is, what size community, what type of community. Might help narrow the focus a bit, because I don't think we're going to get everybody. I think part of it maybe is early adopters. For example, I heard something recently where I forget if it was York or Peel Region, they were having trouble getting a lot of conservation measures in place, so they went after the plumbers. Because the plumbers installing a toilet in your house, there's an up sell for the plumber to go to a low flush toilet, because you're charging a bit more for it. Using the plumbers and equivalents across the industry as part of your sales force was certainly a viable and successful trial run, and that might be something to consider in this context. Who are the other people we can leverage to get the message out?

Agnew: I'd like to add, we funded a green plumbers program through the Green Communities Foundation that was modeled after what's been successful in the States, where they do actually bring plumbers in for training. They did all this polling afterwards and the plumbers said "Yeah, this is great! Now I know that this stuff exists and how much money it can save homeowners. That's fantastic, but the people aren't asking for it." And then the Green Communities said part of the issue was that there wasn't one body to sponsor them. In the US, there was one body that stood behind the green plumbers certification program. They ran it, administered it, and measured it. In Canada, it's really difficult because the culpability is all over the place, because there's not one plumbers union or anything that's universal. But I think that's a great idea, it's just how to globalize it.

Sanford: I'm listening to this conversation, and if you're looking for an idea to do this, I think what you're looking for is an idea everybody here can help with and synergize. For me I think the biggest problem that I see is that Canadians just don't understand that the infrastructure they have exists and that it matters, and its state. I think the target should be Canadians who are disconnected with the realities and the state of their infrastructure. I think that way you solve the problem we're talking about here in terms of rural and urban. Because I think if you could do both that'd better. In this country, there's a tremendous rural and urban split. I'm reminded of a water conservation commercial from Tucson, where this little old lady with a cane

hobbles up to the front door of this house, and the sprinkles are on outside at night, and this young man comes to the door, and he's sprinkling illegally. So she kicks him in the nuts and walks away. The commercial's 15 seconds, and everyone in Tucson got it. If you can have something where a plumber comes in and says "It's not your tap, it's everything out there related to water that you can't see," something poignant like that, that everyone can use and say "Maybe that's the way to start mobilizing." But you can't have a single image. You have to have an entire integrated system of targeted messages that go to various profiles of who you want to reach.

Wootton: Still trying to figure out what our goal is. I've heard you say a couple times, Rob, that you want to see more money spent. This morning, and now you've reiterated that. If that's a CWWA position or your members are saying that, then I'm trying to reconcile that with the asset manager report card stuff that came out. I was at the Canadian Network of Asset Managers meeting not long ago, and I was expecting a sky is falling mentality when I was invited to keynote, because in water circles like this, that's the narrative that we hear. But I was surprised by how laid back they were. When you read the report, it's not a sky is falling report. There are challenges – we have to spend about $180 billion – but that's across all infrastructure. I didn't get a sky is falling response, I got a "Yeah, we have some challenges" response. "We know where they are, we know where they are in a year, we know where they are with water, wastewater," but folks generally felt that it was under control. I didn't get a sense of urgency.

The other surprising thing was that I expected to get more highway people, but 80% were water and wastewater people. So I'm trying to reconcile the people that are working on this stuff with the messaging I'm hearing from you. I know there's a spectrum, and that people overstate the urgency. Construction guys and engineering firms will overstate. In this room, where we're not politicians, what is the realistic need? How do we measure what we want to do and why? Is it really like we don't think we're going to spend on this before it's at a critical state? I can't really resolve what –

Haller: I don't think we are spending on it, not at those levels. The comments I'm getting straight out of public officials and FCMs – they get it, but they don't feel there's support for those decisions, and they're not going to make them unless they feel there's support or urgency in the community. Bob and I were talking yesterday. We have to be positive. We can't panic, we can't melt down, and we can't start crying. It's achievable. We've got to keep the message positive. It is achievable, and if we give in to doom and gloom, we're done. We can't even start. We've got to be positive. Most of the people that are there with the asset management plans are the largest communities with a lot of money. It's a lot of the others aren't at that table.

Wootton: So maybe larger centers don't need help. They know what they're doing, they have good asset management plans, they're narrowing that gap through sophisticated tools, etc… That's a distinction that's very important to me. Are we talking about small communities in Newfoundland, or are we talking about the GTA?

Haller: So do we not need the campaign?

Wootton: I'm not saying that, I just don't want to have assumptions. I'd like to narrow in and have an evidenced based approach.

Doyle: What I would say I need in Charlottetown is next year I need a rate increase. I think that's what a lot of municipalities need. I don't think any of the

problems that we're facing in Charlottetown or that other municipalities are facing are unsolvable by the technology that exists today. And I don't necessarily need people to understand the problem. I don't need them to know the composition of asphalt or what a pipe looks like underground, but I do need to know that I can make a recommendation to council for 10 cents more per cubic metre, and know that it's not going to cause the sky to fall. I'd rather not be called a thief in the process, which sometimes happens. I think if you had a campaign for the masses – people that aren't very well off financially still pay their cable and phone bills – if we could make a comparison between how much you pay for phone and cable compared with water, and how much you get in both situations, I think that would appeal to the masses, and would appeal to the general public who don't care or need to know more about it. So what if a campaign said "If we nationally spent 10 cents more a cubic metre on water, what would our system look like?" You saw the examples from the Netherlands yesterday, how much they charge for water and what they're able to do with that. If we had that little bit of extra money in our pocket, we could provide a lot more service and do a better job taking care of our resources.

Haller: So we've got value for money, some what if questions.

Wootton: What's important about what you're saying is the value of messaging, but also who the target is. You're saying it's the ratepayers and the council who makes changes for ratepayers.

Evans: It has to be the ratepayers. If you want the politicians to listen and care, they need to know that there's enough of a constituency who want to be behind that. Politicians are happy to jump on any bandwagon that's going to get them reelected. We just need to figure out how to push the right buttons to get them behind water.

Herstein: A really good example I've seen is Hamilton, when they wanted to increase their water rates. One of the things they did was have a chart, which is in their state of infrastructure report, where they compared how much you spend a day on beer, paper, gas, bottled water, and all these things that people use on a daily basis. It hit home. They connected that to your level of service.

Reid: One of the things that I'm hearing is that a lot of times we talk about de-politicizing positions around water, where it's actually sounding as thought the reverse is true. We've got to engage people on the right rates, and actually politicize that. And the most sophisticated municipalities actually have figured out a way to somewhat depoliticize using information. The City of Hamilton, the City of Toronto, despite the mayor, still were able to increase their water rates. It was just really, in one way, through making sure that the issue was considered very carefully, as opposed to some sound bite around keeping taxes low. So I think maybe we have to get a little politicized.

Assi: I think you're absolutely right. If you can bring it up to the mayor's level – we were trying to get buy-in for a community energy plan, I think almost about a $50 million investment to ensure you could have a distributed energy system. My manager managed to get the mayor to come with him to the QUEST Conference, and showed her about the long-term value. She was chaperoned around, saw best practices, and met with the Guelph mayor. After the weekend she came back in on Tuesday and it was lost. What happened to last week? If the public changes their attitudes and you bring it up to the politician, their number one priority is constituents. They'll respond. They want that one vote.

Haller: I don't imagine getting people to start a letter writing campaign. But getting them to accept, without rioting, a 10 cent increase…

Assi: But maybe increased inquiries, which heightens that awareness, which can trickle down internally. I think maybe the politicians are starting to receive calls, and then internally they're beginning to follow up, etc…

Evans: You need something that really gets in their face. You mentioned before about how internet is the #1 service out there. And then we're talking about comparing the value of water versus internet or a phone. What if we did something saying "Could live without TV for a day? Try living without water for a day." You've got the person standing in the shower, all soaped up, and no water's coming out, or trying to brush her teeth, and no water's coming out. This guy's going to work with soap in his hair, or toothpaste in her mouth. They go to have a coffee and it's only coffee grounds. Just putting a spin on things that brings to the public's face where they'd miss water from their daily routine. Plus a link to the website where you then hit home the proportional cost of water versus internet, phone, television etc…, tying in with an increase in the cost of water. Put in relative terms, you can measure it by seeing what kind of traffic is being driven to the website. And while they're there, drive home that you can't live without it, and look at the fraction of a cost water costs you compared to anything else. But it has to be witty and catch attention.

Haller: I like the idea of buying that $3 bottle of water, and then having a bath filled with that water. $87 for that bath! Water your lawn: $432!

Agnew: This is more of a communications tactic than a campaign, but I think there's an opportunity to be opportunists without ambulance chasing too much. Water issues are cropping up more often, so I think it's important we're talking about this tool kit for municipalities. Making sure there's some messaging in there around "Okay, something happens in the community, now's the time to insert yourself into the situation and say this is why we need money for wastewater." Flooding – this is why we need money for stormwater. It doesn't need to be technical, but it plants the seed and gets people thinking about it. It'll be something they're already reading. It requires a lot of strategy to not be seen as opportunists, but I think there's a lot of opportunity to capitalize, insert yourself into the conversation, make sure that people understand the 'why?' Then, when you bring forward something like a rate increase, people will better understand the situation.

Sanford: It's an important conversation. I really like the idea of these value comparisons. You've got a plumber who comes to the door and a guy's got shaving cream on his face because he can't get it off. He tells him "It's not your tap, it's everything out there you can't see." The guy says, "How much?" Less than cable, less than internet, way less than beer. This is the increase we need. "Water, can you afford not to have it?" There's lots of ways, but I think we need to get at the infrastructure thing specifically.

Stadnyckyj: To Ramona's point, it seems like a good objective. Maybe it's a ten cent increase, maybe 5 cents, or maybe here's a road map to how to get 9% over 9 years like we've seen in Toronto. I still think the challenge, when we're talking about the public, and whether it's small or large – and I've had the privilege of working in both rural and large communities – I've found the smaller the community the more the residents know and want

to know. But it still comes down to a question of education and awareness about the assets. I think the challenge with a lot of water infrastructure is that it's hidden, and if we're going after politicians – and those are the people that will help support this rate increase – there's going to be a tremendous struggle against that triple pad ice rink which is visible and always there. If you're putting in a new pipe line, you're digging something up and you're burying a brand new thing under the ground that nobody will see. A lot of these new water plants that are being put in look like houses so you can't even see the new water plant, because it's hidden. This is all great stuff, but I think it's got to come back to base education of showing pipes, showing where that stormwater drain is, of opening up the doors to a plant, and if you can get that certain group of people to understand that, you might be starting a movement.

Assi: Just wanted to come back to the question we sent in the email. What behavior reaction do we want, what are the major messages we want to get out, how might we best communicate them? Are we looking for a change of public perception in rate increases? Are we looking for infrastructure investment? What are we doing?

Wootton: Examples people are giving are going back to drinking water. Turning the tap off – what does that have to do with secondary or tertiary treatment in a wastewater treatment plant? It's so localized, the needs, across the country. I think what you might need to do in Charlottetown – I think education is critical in every community – but I'm not sure how a national campaign is going to help anyone in a local community per se. I get nervous thinking about being dependant on the rate payers' mood, quite frankly. It feels like a losing proposition. There's only one tax payer. Because of the way things are, that's where the money comes from. Water rates etc…, that's only one source.

Haller: It's about investment in infrastructure. One of the elements is water rates. In my community, we raised the rate 300%. But at the same time all we did, as I explained, was just moving it from your tax bill to your water bill. In that year we froze taxes, 0% tax increase, but we raised it and it worked out to a 2% increase. Everybody around us was doing more. But we showed water, what you pay in taxes with water paid as a tax, was a 2% increase. All we did was slide it from one bill to another. Out of your household you weren't really paying anymore, it's just an accounting thing. We had to do a lot of work around that.

So water prices are one of the things. And just to say, we aren't coming out of this with the image and slogan that we want. Here are some examples or ideas of imaging that you can use, but it may be a national campaign. City of Toronto might have something specific. You want to look at the water rates, you're going to take what comes out of this and maybe use it as a framework for your communications plan. BCWWA is doing a water week program in 2015. They'll frame some of their messaging from what we give them. It's not a one size fits all, it's a framework. We were talking about demographics that were out there and how much info is known about each of us, how closely can we focus our message after what we're calling influencers? If only 50% are voting, let's go after the 50% who vote. The ones who aren't voting probably don't care. Who has an influence in the community? Maybe different education levels are our targets. Are we after the chambers of commerce in each community to make an economic business argument for this?

Wootton: Last week David Dodge made some comments saying now is not the time to slash the deficit, now is the time to have deficits and to go into debt, because interest rates will never get better. That's a completely different set of stakeholders to target with that kind of message. As opposed to the average person where you'd say we want to hike your water bill by 30%, are you okay with that? Your example of electricity rates in Ontario – I just think the general constituency in Ontario, there's only a small route you can take. No matter how good your campaign is, they're going to just say no. Everybody values electricity, but that doesn't mean they're going to pay more.

Haller: Thoughts about the target? How we focus this? Are we focusing everybody? Are we looking higher education? Are we targeting different groups? Different strategies for different groups?

Evans: I think if we're targeting the infrastructure side of things, you almost need to show the underground process. You almost need to go from – you've got the water, it's pristine, just out of the treatment plant, then you have it navigating through – maybe from a water drop perspective – where it's going through the pipes, and everything's going well and then you kind of hit an area where the pipes are really gross and disgusting, and then they then eventually leads to – you've got some drops that start leaking out through the sides. Trying to display this aging infrastructure so you can actually see it, because it's out of sight out of mind. And then kind of end with this water that – this contaminated water that goes through these crappy pipes coming out of the tap into someone's water glass or someone's toothbrush. Then you have something where you're tying in a slogan or website saying "Just because you can't see the infrastructure aging doesn't mean it's not there." If you are trying to portray the infrastructure cycle, people need to see it. So whether you're doing it with images of cut out pipes, it has to be – people are becoming more and more stupid. The reality is that most people are not informed, they're not taking the time to do research, they believe what they see on TV. So you don't want to scare the crap out of them, but also want to show "Hey, as much as the water was clean to this point in time, by the time it gets to its end destination, there's no guarantee that the infrastructure is in place to keep I that way. "

Assi: What I'm hearing is education and awareness is what we're going for, but at the same time people still drink and drive. So we've got great sound bites and messaging, but how does that lead to infrastructure investment? Just trying to make a connection. If we're doing education and awareness, then that's the focus of the report? And does that become "Here, municipality, here's an education and awareness campaign"?

Wishart: To jump in about the target audience. We're going to shortly release a national priorities report. Our leadership group says there are the four things we're worried about: communication around rate; risk management; adjusting to change; and my mind is blank for the fourth. We're very deliberately targeting not the general audience. We're targeting, and this is at the behest of senior water managers, we're closely targeting councilors and concerned citizens, the informed public. It's a very high level, in no way shape or form in the detail we're talking about today, but what we're trying to do is start the conversation amongst people who are mildly or deeply interested. This is entirely complimentary to this conversation we're having today. By targeting this group, the support we can get out of a water campaign is then reinforced. This priorities report won't be nationally distributed, won't end up in the

Globe and Mail, but for the decision makers and some of the influencers, if this gives them a little leverage and information and background, we move the ball a little further down the field.

Haller: We suggested as we came in to this, maybe we're working through other grassroots – the Ottawa River Keepers, the Lake Ontario Keepers, and their networks. They are influencers who care about wastewater and beaches and the effect on the environment. They're caring about the watershed side, and are going to make some influence. Now, we have half an hour. We've got half an hour to get out of this group what we're not hearing yet.

Duff: To be honest, I think we've got one big thing of what I was looking for, which was the audience. We've made great progress in the last 5 minutes. Early adopters, plumbers and industry professionals, councilors, concerned citizens, private groups, gatherings, and those interest groups who have an element of trust among those people, who listen to them. Any others? I think by targeting those individuals, we can reach the rest of the general public. You can't educate everybody.

Wootton: Look to other models – transportation, power, health, education, military – if your goal is more spending, they didn't get more spending through public education. Was it because the general public cares? They certainly don't care about the military. So if your target is federal spending, I think it's lobbying on the hill, quite frankly.

Haller: She's going to put out a water increase, and the community is going to freak. Halifax is dealing with the wastewater!

Wootton: Success at the community level when you have a really good council who knows how they're going to sell – it's about history, it's about what happened at the last council, it's about the public being mislead, it's so unique to every community.

Haller: Regina did a P3, and there was a well-financed campaign against them from the unions and people worried about privatization of water, and they went out to the community and told them what was going on and gave them a lot of information. It led to a referendum, and the community voted for a P3 model that the council was proposing. It was a really great campaign. We're looking at that as to what they did and how they shared information and dealt with the concerns of the community.

Reid: I think something that the Ontario Environmental Industry Association does very well is that they engage at Queen's Park and they go with delegations, and they meet with individual MPPs and Ministers, and they just educate them. I think having a very targeted model at the council level would be very beneficial.

Assi: Out of the six or seven targeted audiences, pick a few of those, and pick a few ideas. If it's concerned citizens, here's the focus; if it's councilors, here's the focus; if it's utility managers, here's the focus. Pick a few, get success. Take some time to work on messaging, language. Get some successes, get some trickle down. You spoke about local channels. You find your local water keeper, give them your messaging, and then they use whatever channels they've got.

Haller: Ads that direct people to a website with more information, that they can expand more, so they've got somewhere to go for more info, comments, feedback, or to deal with people. There's got to be a base information centre.

Evans: Anybody with anything to do with water could really get behind it if they believed the messages.

They could be your foot soldiers getting the message to their base. WaterTAP has its own network, as does OWWA, CWWA. If you want to be targeting people who care, you have to start with people already learning about water who are involved, and then we can, in turn, help educate other people.

Assi: Would that be preaching to the converted though?

Wishart: What you're talking about is using your network to then go out and do the next step. If you just educate the network, that's marginal value, but using the network to go out and take that next step further and reach out…

Sanford: I was just going to suggest giving some consideration in choice of target audience by looking into social media profiling mechanisms and platforms to investigate what kind of values people would have that would support this, and then go after the people who have the kind of values that would see what you're doing as really important. I think that could go beyond the categories. Also, investigate those profiling opportunities so you get to the proper channels. It's sometimes very surprising where those values reside. Touch on those values and you can mobilize people of a different clan. That could help get this past the problem of preaching to the converted.

Assi: How high up the top priorities of the councilors in Alberta today is the whole flood mapping?

Sanford: Well, my wife's a councilor, so… I think if you look at a case like flood mapping, the values you might look for are people who believe strongly in their communities, who are concerned about protecting their families, people who have values associated with investments in their homes. So you know where to look.

Assi: Is there a way from that experience, could you have a story for a target audience of councilors, can you find a way to use the values experience in Alberta? A councilor tells a story and either you've got your narrative, or a sound bite, or a visual, and it's coming from a councilor. "Here's what we missed. Here's the million we missed, here's the 10 billion we're spending now. Do it. Don't wait."

Sanford: I think the flooding in Alberta has undermined people's confidence in their own security, and that's a different proposition.

Duff: Position your councilor or any type of representative with the cost of doing nothing versus the cost of doing something, and let them worry about getting the message out to their general public or constituents. If the cost of water goes up, council has a reason why, and they're informed as to why. Let them worry about getting that message out. I can, however, promote certain messages in what I call the shotgun blast. Mostly it's contained, but there can be some collateral damage. You'll hit those audiences in that broad style of communications. Councilors will always listen to councilors as long as what's in it for them is answered. If you promote why you should do this and what you're going to get in return, you'll get them on board. It really doesn't matter what your argument is. Tell them what's in it for them and convince them of that, and they'll do it.

Haller: What else do we need to know?

Duff: What the actual message is to each individual group. What's in it for them? What should I communicate to these groups? Councilors, special interest groups – what should I tell them?

Haller: Why don't we just take a few groups?

Duff: I would do the industry professionals, councilors, and I'm including some concerned citizens, because if you hit the councilors, you'll get them as well. Let's start with those two.

Haller: We need to present a business case that talks about failure. Doing nothing versus action. An ounce of prevention, a pound of cure.

Evans: If you could somehow show the interconnectedness of all your structure. Say for instance if you had a watermain break underneath, you might not know about it, but if suddenly the road starts to sink or collapse, it could be that some infrastructure will affect other infrastructure. A bridge. At some point of time it will require replacement – I forget which bridge, but they were talking about how you can build a new bridge for $1 million or you can continue to repair the same bridge over and over and it will cost three times that. The Gardiner Expressway argument.

Wishart: The other thing I think is important is that we tend to always talk drinking water here. But certainly in my organization if you're talking water you're talking drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater, because they're interconnected. These are all assets of the same substance. Water, it all goes to infrastructure, but it also goes to the environment, the economy, public health. When I talk water, I'm involved in all three.

Reid: I think one of the reasons we talk about the price of water so much is because that's generally how they measure the wastewater coming in anyways. Usually the water is volumetric in meters, and then based on that there's a surcharge for … water. So I think it would be an interesting message to get out there. How do you pay for wastewater treatment? How do you pay for stormwater? And stormwater's a real messaging challenge, because it's actually not done very well. It just started showing up on my water bill in Richmond Hill. A lot of people don't realize how somebody that operates a wastewater treatment plant gets money to operate it.

Haller: One of the problems we need to fix in terms of education is the water bill. A lot of people can't read them, don't understand them. They're so confusing. When we talk about making it visible, just making a water bill that's understandable would be a help. It would probably be a huge step forward for people to appreciate what's going on.

Herstein: And a lot of people don't get a water bill. It depends on where you live, but I don't get a water bill. Condos don't get a water bill. Very few people who don't have a household don't get one.

Haller: Right. The other target was on the wider audience. How do we target that? We've had a lot of images here, about life without water, the value of water, what if you didn't have it for a day, how do you value it versus everything else? You get mad when you see a guy on welfare drinking and smoking, and then somebody complaining about a water bill but he's watching the internet or has a cell phone. It's almost the same way for us. So we've got those compare issues and images, and a lot of the message was about bringing it up from underground. I like the concept of following this camera that goes from the source through the plant to the tap. Or you can walk to the lake and get a bucket.

Wootton: I'm just going to put out there that I'm still skeptical. I think that if our health care system was a user-pay system, I don't think it would work. I think we have a good health care system relative to many parts of the world because it isn't a user-

pay system. I'm just not convinced of the logic I'm hearing in this room that if you convince people of the value of water, which I don't think they can understand – the complexities of the whole system, drinking water, storm water, wastewater – and if even if they do that they'll then say "Yes, I'm good with a rate increase," unless it is absolutely tied directly to something that is going to affect their life in that immediate situation.

Haller: I'm not sold or set on user-pay either. There are a lot in the community who are not sold on user-pay. There has to be some volumetric stuff to control consumption –

Wootton: - but I just mean with the whole thing about getting more investment around water in this country – I'm just not convinced the shortest route to that is going to the citizen and saying "Imagine if you couldn't drink water…" We're not a water scarce nation. It's not in our cultural mind frame.

Haller: They decided in a lot of towns to rip up the streets or put up taxes this year. They're going out talking about water user bills, or how they're going to do stormwater upgrades on your tax bill instead of an arena, and how they're going to take that federal grant money that was just handed out and put it into underground stuff that you're never going to use, and at the end of the day that's not going to make one speck of difference to your life, and we have to have them understand that. I think there has to be a public appreciation of that. I'm working on behalf of the politicians right now, to give them a break. I'm trying to give them the strength to make those decisions. It's not a call to action. Maybe there's not a measurable thing here. I don't know. Royal Bank, are you measuring how many customers you had last year, and how many this year, and so many are related? You've got all those customers because they like jumping in the lake? They feel great and they feel RBC is doing something good and they feel good about RBC. It's not measurable. My leaders who are elected, I need to go to them and I need them to feel confident that they're going to make the tough decisions and not get killed. I can't measure it until they start making those decisions. Most of the guys I work with can't sleep at night if they think anything's wrong with the water. There's the Walkerton assholes who – that was murder. There was negligence, but 99% of my guys and women that end up working in this industry couldn't sleep if they thought there was something going on, and if that watermain break happens, they're down there in the middle of the night, and it's gone and cleaned up and you drive to work over the cut without even knowing there was a cut that night. Somehow the communities got to have an appreciation of what it is we're doing, so when they make those tough decisions they feel confident that the public's going to understand.

Freek: Just one observation, and I may be being rude by putting Rachel and Clark on the spot, but we haven't heard from them, and they're relatively new to the water sector, whereas the rest of us have been entrenched for a few years, so I'd be really interested in hearing their thoughts on what they've heard today and whether or not they've got some ideas they'd like to hear.

Phan: One of the things I struggle with as a journalist by training, is my expertise is in trying to tell stories, and get that to the lay person, the general public. Talking to people in the water industry, sometimes it's hard for me to grasp what is being said, so that's one of the things I struggle with. Even now when I'm trying to process what we're throwing at each other, I'm not really sure what the focus is, what we're trying to get across.

Kingsbury: I think it's important that we help the public to understand enough that progress can be made in their communities. For example, the example of Ramona's where she said she just needs to be able to get a rate increase through without being vilified.

Reid: I think it's the job of the local politicians and local council, and the public works managers and the communications departments to actually get that message out about "This is your water rate, and that's why it makes good sense," but I think we absolutely should direct our message towards the councilors and those concerned citizens. Because otherwise it's a very indirect approach to get to a decision maker, and why take an indirect approach when you know who they are.

Duff: This past winter in particular, I was constantly hearing reports from various media outlets of yet another watermain break. Traffic's being rerouted, or this intersection's closed. To me, from a journalistic standpoint, that too is another opportunity to say "Folks, infrastructure is aging, we need to fix this!"It's just another opportunity to get a message out by leveraging what's already on display.

Evans: You've got road repairs and a lot of those things that fall under a different aspect from a tax bill perspective ,as opposed to your actual water bill. Is there any way of trying to move – not that we all want to see an increase in property taxes – but would there be a way to move some of that infrastructure to a different funded tax bill so you're not seeing that 10% increase from the water side of things? Because I would look at it as being the same type of infrastructure as driving a car.

Duff: Or another option would be, if you're already tearing the road up, why not fix the pipes underneath it while you're doing that, and you don't even have the bill?

Herstein: They do that in Cambridge. And so everyone knows that…

Haller: Most communities are coordinating now. When you tear up there's a huge integrated system that everybody knows well in advance, we plan out all infrastructure together. Heather?

Agnew: I'll echo James. I 100% agree with you. I think with the watermain breaks, any time there's anything water related, that's an opportunity to get out there and talk about why it matters, what the issue is. It's an easy way to insert yourself into the conversation.

Freek: So not necessarily ambulance chasing, but would it be appropriate for this campaign or guide book or whatever to say "In case of this, here's a list of things you can put out in your region." You can tailor it to your region, but here are some ideas of where to go. It'd be more about guiding people on their messages than telling them exactly what the message is.

Herstein: It'd be great if it was interactive, whatever you're putting out. There are lots of examples of municipalities and groups that have ways of doing things that work really well. It'd be great if that could be exchanged in some way, shape or form.

Duff: No question. Interactivity in any campaign will always raise results.

Herstein: I'm saying, though, for a way to communicate. So not just for the public but for municipalities and decision makers to say "we did this, this campaign, and it worked. We think this is why it worked…"

Haller: Last time around the table!

Assi: Your stakeholders: are those utility managers who are up at night to deal with the watermain breaks?

Haller: Our masters are the municipal councils.

Assi: So if there's a watermain issue, who specifically would be up at night?

Haller: It'd be the utility guys. We've always said we do our job so well, nobody knows we're doing it.

Assi: But that reaffirms Brent's point. It's expected. The last thing this utility manager wants to wake up to is a big public outcry. There's no water, or whatever the issue is. There's a big public outcry, then it's on the councilor's table, then the local paper's there. So the whole point is to keep it from reaching that point, which then leads into the expectation. When I wake up, I don't know that Joe the utility manager has been up all night, because we had to make sure the rest of the community didn't find out about the issue.

Haller: We have to be careful when we jump on these things. Winnipeg has frozen lines. They could be brand new lines we put in last week. They're going to freeze, and it has nothing to do with infrastructure. Winnipeg's cold. Montreal. They had a boil water, and people are saying "Here's an example of infrastructure failure in Canada!" No it is not. It had nothing to do with aging infrastructure. They were doing regular maintenance and a pump that has a shut off valve, the shut off valve broke, so it pumped more than it should of so it started to pump out gunk from the bottom. No one was ever at threat. They said boil water until they found out what was going on, and then they figured out everything was fine, and then they lifted it. To me that's an example of trust. You want your utility to do it. You trust your utility because they did the boil water. Each situation is so unique. Although millions of people were affected, it had nothing to do with infrastructure.

Stadnyckyj: I think the ambulance chasing approach is the wrong way to go. In fact a lot of the good success stories I've seen, not necessarily in Canada, but down in Dallas, Miami, Baltimore – we'll stay in pipelines for a bit. They had a massive line rupture, which is obviously a PR disaster for the utility. Last thing you want is to start inserting messages of people who have different agendas, because that'll come back to bite you. But you see once they start taking progressive and positive moves from that disaster, all of a sudden a positive cycle starts reinforcing. Miami, for example, had a very large trunk main basically explode a couple years ago. There was zero money for condition assessment. A consultant came and said replace the whole thing. It was going to cost $140 million. Then they started doing condition assessment. All of a sudden they found $20 million in the budget that never existed, and they started doing more and more savings and communicating that with the media on their regular platform. Now this is a regular $3 million over two year program that they're doing. I think it's a great example of how a positive PR cycle helped do the right behavior versus a negative one.

Chen: I'm a little overwhelmed by this discussion. I agree with what most everyone has said. The one thing that was said earlier about reaching the kids, and how that can't be the only thing, I agree with that, but I think it can be a very good starting point, and I don't necessarily agree with whole "we can't wait until they become older" part. I think what happens is they bring it back to their parents, who can be active members of the community. I've been

told about the recycling program that kids will take something and bring it back to their parents. I'm not saying a parent would necessarily change behavior completely, but the executive director of WAEO, he goes to web classes, and they have programs where brownies and boy scouts have little badges for going to wastewater treatment classes, and the children might bring that information back to their parents etc... I think the kids are actually a great place to start.

Haller: I can't run the tap, I can't mix up recycling, I have to wear a seatbelt, I can't smoke – it's all my kids know. They won't let me do anything. "Daddy, you had two beers!"

Chen: Someone mentioned it earlier – it's really hard to get tours of plants! I have a friend who's a high school teacher, and he wanted to go to a treatment plant. He had a grade 10 or 11 chemistry class, and it was just impossible for him to get on site.

Wootton: Well they don't have time. They don't have spare staff to do that. I do believe in the value of education, I'm just not convinced that it will result in more money being spent. And if that's really the objective, I'm going to keep challenging assumptions around that.

Tucci: Just when you were talking about messaging to councilors and talking about prevention and how it's hard to quantify that, maybe there's a way to look at things – I know you were mentioning before how folks don't even know when there's been a break because it's fixed by the time they go to work – maybe there's a way to quantify the costs from those breaks, and take that to council and say this is how much we spend on a yearly basis on repairs. If we have this x amount of dollars in investment, we can save. Or from a wastewater management approach, maybe there's a way to create jobs from investment. It's kind of beyond me, but maybe we can use it to sell it to councilors or politicians by saying if we invest we'll save, or if we invest, we'll create jobs and strengthen the economy, and moving forward, they'll love that.

Haller: We have to have a great element that goes after those council members. Whatever we give them has to be done in a public way to it's transparent, and they go in with this saying "I'm making this decision based on this information that's on our website." And we support them, and it's a really strong part of the utility and the leaders here to give that information. And it's all public. None of this is secret.

Doyle: I feel pretty confident in the messages I need to deliver on a regional scale. It's a little tricky when we get to a national message on water, but I think there's enough similarities across the country in terms of the focus on infrastructure funding that there are ways to do an education and awareness program that will capture those messages. That's what I'm taking from today. I've certainly got some new ideas about approaching issues at home.

Evans: The only other perspective that we haven't really spoken about is funding a major initiative like this. I don't know if there's a way of bringing in a corporate or multiple corporate sponsors, sponsors that can actually spend the money. What RBC is doing with the Blue Water Project is clever on a couple different angles. Tangibly it's probably not going to result in additional business, per se, but they'll be seen as good corporate citizens. If there are other - whether you have infrastructure companies back an infrastructure related push, I don't know if that's then biased, and it's going to affect the overall heart of the campaign. But having money behind you will

support the ability to get the message out to as many people as possible. Using the free network of existing organizations is the grassroots way to go, but if there was an appropriate partner…

Haller: RBC is doing its thing for whatever reason, but know that what you're doing is great, and we all appreciate it, quote it, and use it. We need to put some effort in to drilling into that more. Because it's really valuable, and as you move forward, please keep connected with us. We can feed what we need to know to you, and maybe it gets on to your national survey. It's really a national tool, and so many more people are responding to RBC than will to CWWA.

Evans: The other thing we didn't really talk about today is that with new technology and new ways of doing things, there are potentials for cost savings within the existing infrastructure way that things are currently being done. By embracing – I'm biased here of course. But with one of our products we can help assist with adjusting chemical usage. So you optimize the chemical process which either improves the water quality or would result in cost savings that you can redirect towards – basically the payback can be a fairly short amount of time for a particular analyzer, and you're going to reap the benefits on ongoing savings going forward. One example I'll give you: a municipality in the US ended up buying our equipment, spent $100,000 on it, for TOC replacement instruments. Basically they were spending $100,000 a year on it. So within the first year, it paid for all the equipment, and over a five year period they had four years of complete savings. I think having the municipalities and the organizations working hand in hand with organizations like Real Tech and other companies, we can provide the innovative technology which will in turn save money, would allow them to redistribute these funds towards other areas of need. But we need the support to get in to some of these structures. Getting the buy in from the municipalities, but as well as the MOE and some regulatory bodies, because as much as they're here to help, they also hinder at times, and can hamper the use of innovation.

Stadnyckyj: This is an amazing panel. It's a big subject, and I think simplicity and really understanding the audience is where you want to move. Going back to the original questions in the email, that critical piece, it's tough to do.

Reid: I think there are sort of two levels on the big picture sustainable solutions: protection of the environment, and I think that broad public awareness and education are great. But when it comes down to spending dollars to get an asset replaced, or rehabilitated, that's when we should be focusing right in on councilors etc…

Herstein: For me it's always about I want to make sure the municipalities have the money they need, but that they're spending it wisely, so that they're not spending $10 million when they could spend $1 million. Helping them do that, and then looking at ways that different asset management approaches have happened I think would be really useful for people that do want to raise their rates and be responsible. I think it's time that those municipalities that are being responsible shouldn't be the ones that are not getting the props they deserve.

Haller: If you get a chance to hang with Leslie, talk to her. Pretty major paradigm shifts of thinking, and a few years from now we're going to go to council with the Herstein model. She's really working on some really deep thinking about how we get to where we're going. Fascinating stuff. Now, Kerry, you can wrap up: are we even close to when we were drinking beer in Calgary?

Freek: I think we've involved more people in the discussion. We're all to blame now. Just a thought about channels and unlikely places: not everyone's as lucky as Charlottetown to have somebody like Ramona working on communicating these issues and having a solid communications plan for getting these issues out and messages out, but sometimes they are lucky enough to have a budget. I think you'll see from somebody like Evan Pilkington's model where he's going around saying "Look, I'm going after people who have a budget but people who don't know how to spend it on communications." That's a really good way to get your programming in to smaller and medium sized communities that don't have somebody that's doing communications on this particular issue. You can say I have a pre-packaged program that looks just like this, and you can tweak it based on your needs. Thanks for your $10,000, we'll carry it out for you, or this is how you can wisely spend the $10,000 to communicate a message to further the agenda.

Haller: Thank you. I think there are so many wonderful ideas here, and so much thought, and I think we're going in the right way. I think we're a hidden underground thing that needs to be made more visible. I think there's potential for greater appreciation and understanding. If we're going to be spending money, they need to know that it's being spent wisely. That we're being efficient, that these things are being done intelligently and that there are business cases for them. All that background information has to be there. The more concerned people are going to drill down for it, look for it. The council member that makes that decision basically has to have that in their hand before they go forward. But the more we share that and the more visible we are in the community, I think the greater potential we have for support. Thank you so much. It'll probably be August before I start looking at a draft out of this. We'll be sharing all of this with all of you that were here, and especially with my main client, BCWWA. It will have a lot of the backgrounder. The survey we did earlier, the conversation that happened today, some of the direction, some of the thoughts. In the end it will be a product that's kind of a communications framework. Trying to answer some of those questions about who's our target? What are the messages? Some of the methodology that we've thought about that we can start to share with our members. I don't think we're in any way beyond the start or the beginning. This is one step. We'll add more communications, discussions. I'll take advantage of other opportunities, like our national drinking water conference, or the next time we'll be together again for the summit. I want to thank Actual Media for coordinating, but most of all I thank you guys for taking that extra half day after the summit. Really appreciate it.

The CWWA Public Attitudes Project 2015 report is available for download online.

Go to url cwwa.ca/CWWApub_e.asp to read more.




Changing Public Attitudes on the Value of Canada's Water System Infrastructure

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