

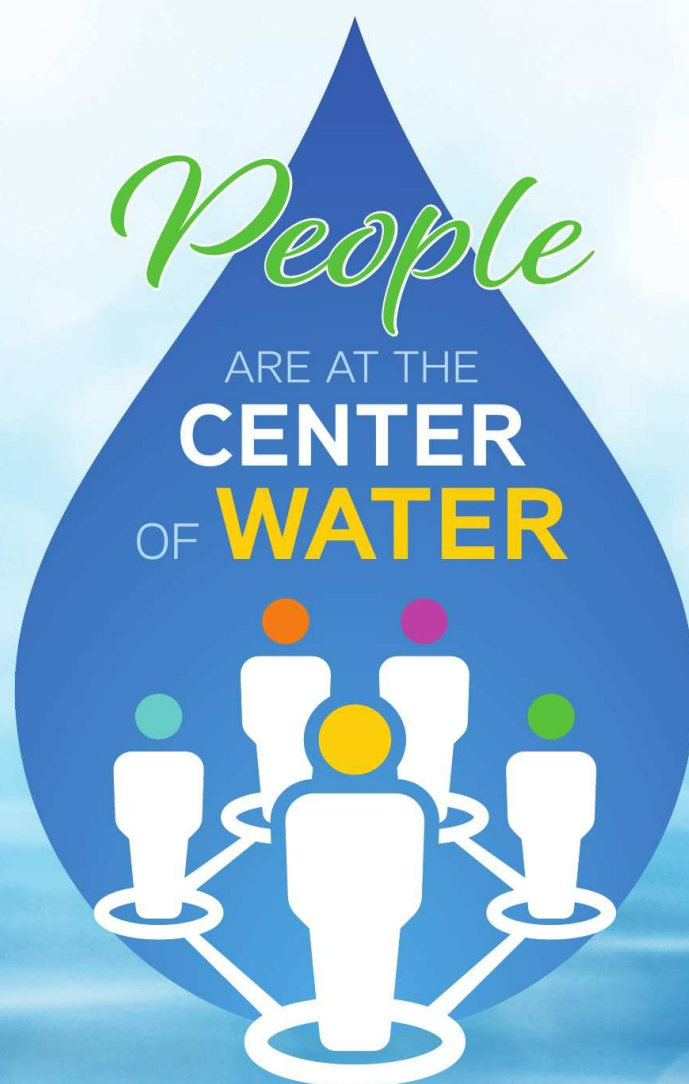
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Teaching about Water Careers through the Model Water Tower Competition

Will England, Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority

"By a show of hands, who wants to grow up to be a water professional?" This is a common question I ask when the opportunity allows me to talk to a group of students. Can anyone guess how many hands go up? If you guessed none, you would be correct. From a young age, children are exposed to careers such as firefighting, law enforcement, teaching, and construction to name a few. They learn about each job's responsibilities, their role in society, and the benefits they provide. Each of these professions fills a societal need, but where would our society be if we didn't have water and wastewater professionals? Where is the education about these careers? In order for these services to continue, the next generation needs to be aware that these careers exist and become interested in them.

The Model Water Tower Competition (MWTC) Committee strives to do just that; provide students with awareness of our important industry. The committee's motto is, "From today's youth, come tomorrow's leaders – let's lead some to the water profession!" Since 2012, this invaluable program has provided the framework by which a utility can engage middle school students in building functional water towers out of mostly recyclable materials. Each tower is judged on four main categories in the competition:

1. Design & Materials Ingenuity – creativity and thought put into the tower design.
2. Structural Efficiency – structure weight/ (volume x height).
3. Hydraulic Efficiency – time to fill and drain elevated tank with 1 gallon of water.
4. Cost Efficiency – cost/ (volume x height).

On the day of the competition, students get the opportunity to meet various water professionals and learn about the role they play in the utility. The more exposure we can give students to what we do as water/wastewater providers,



the greater the chances we will 'lead some to the water profession.' This competition is also a benefit to the schools providing a tremendous success rate of getting them STEM certified.

This year we are excited to announce that first and second-place winners from each local MWTC will advance to a state-level competition hosted in April 2023 at The Water Tower located in Buford, Georgia.

This will be the first year we are offering a state-level competition and we are excited to see the creativity and craftsmanship of each water tower made by the students that attend. Students will be allowed to rebuild/alter their towers between the local and state-level competition, using lessons learned.

The prizes for State are as follows: 1st – \$500, 2nd – \$400, and 3rd – \$300. This is up from the local prizes of 1st – \$300, 2nd – \$200, and 3rd – \$100.



“The committee’s motto is, “From today’s youth, come tomorrow’s leaders – let’s lead some to the water profession!”



If you have not hosted a competition before, I would encourage you to plan to attend our next virtual meeting to learn more about the program and how you can get started.

Several vendors have agreed to be sponsors of the state competition, but we still need more to make this a spectacular event. If your company or one you work with is interested in becoming a sponsor, please reach out to me at will.england@ccwsa.com.

If you have any questions about the Model Water Tower Competition Committee, please contact the Chair, **Lindsey Sanders**, at lindsey.sanders@hcwa.com. 