

# Association of Environmental Authorities

## 2018 Wave Awards

### **Mt. Laurel Township MUA – Public Education (2 awards in this category)**

In recognition of the tour program that has greatly benefited public awareness of water and wastewater issues, especially with regard to sustainability, the MLTMUA is 2018 Wave Awards 11being recognized with one of its two 2018 Wave Awards for Public Education. The MLTMUA provides tours throughout the year to groups seeking further education on the role the authority plays in providing safe, clean water to the community. Its visitors have included engineering students from Drexel, the Mount Laurel Green Team, the Rowan at BCC Green Energy Camp, the DEP's Division of Water Quality, and classes of school children. Sustainability is a major focus for the authority and has become an important part of its education outreach program. Rowan at BCC Environmental Science classes, Doane Academy's Strong Ethical Leaders class, the Environmental Stewards Program, and numerous high school classes have taken advantage of MLTMUA sustainability program. From operators to management, the staff at MLTMUA works hard to make the tours enjoyable and informative, so that the public better understands what is entailed in providing safe water to the community.

Mount Laurel Township MUA's Social Media Outreach efforts have earned it a second Public Education award. In 2017, MLTMUA created a social media presence to better interact and serve its customers. The pages not only keep customers in-the-know about regular system repairs, holiday changes, and important notices, but they also put a local face to national issues facing the water industry. For example, one post showed equipment damaged from non-flushable wipes. Each post like this is a teachable moment to show residents how actions that may seem small, like flushing a paper towel or wipe, can have harmful consequences and be costly the utility. MLTMUA also uses the platforms to inform residents about infrastructure upgrades, which brings awareness to the infrastructure needs of our industry as well as the proactive work being done by the utility. Social media may be commonplace in most industries, but local authorities are still adapting to this form of communication. Mount Laurel Township MUA has shown it is a leader in embracing this technology to better serve and educate its customers.