New Names …
Same Clear Commitment

Ken Kirk
Executive Director
What’s in a name?

• For decades, wastewater treatment agencies and organizations identified with what they took in (e.g. sewage, industrial wastes, etc.) . . .

. . . and the public viewed them as “polluters”, anti-environmental, and less than trustworthy.
Utility names aligned with the task.

- Alexandria Sanitation Authority
- Western Carolina Regional Sewer Authority
- Unified Sewerage Agency of Washington County
- Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage District

...did their jobs and tried to remain invisible to the public.
And national organizations stayed true to their members. . .

- The Association of Metropolitan *Sewerage* Agencies

- Federation of *Sewage Works* Associations (1928)

  Federation of *Sewage & Industrial Wastes* Associations (1950)

- *Water Pollution* Control Federation (1960)
Changing Times=Changing Attitudes

• U.S. surveys of public opinion tell us that Americans believe:

  - That they have a right to clean water.

  - That clean water has no local boundaries.

  - That the economy is inextricably linked to the nation’s waterways.
Changing Times=Changing Attitudes

• In the past 10 years. . .

Water sector agencies and organizations are changing names to reflect both their proud purpose and their product.

– Purpose – Environmental protection, water reclamation, water resource recovery, habitat restoration, etc...

– Product – Clean Water
Sometimes a tough transition. . .

- 1970-2005
  The Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies - AMSA

- Mid-1990 –
  Name change proposed – rejected

- 2000 (30th Anniversary) –
  Name change again proposed – Shift to AMSA (acronym only)
2005 - Name change embraced.

- On 35th anniversary AMSA becomes...

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies
2005 - New Strategic Plan & Big Audacious Goal

Core Purpose:
• Be the leading advocate for responsible national policies that advance clean water.

Big Audacious Goal:
• When people say environmentalist’– they think of us first.”
Same True for WEF. . .

- **Water Pollution** Control Federation → 
  Water **Environment** Federation in 1991

- And today. . . WEF has universally replaced the term “wastewater facilities” with “water resource recovery facilities”
What’s in a name? A lot!

- Alexandria Sanitation Authority → Alexandria Renew Enterprises
- Western Carolina Regional Sewer Authority → Renewable Water Resources
- Unified Sewerage Agency of Wash. County → Clean Water Services
- Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage District → NEW Water
New challenges & opportunities changing the game.

- Water and its management are viewed more holistically;
- Existing silos for Drinking Water, Wastewater, Stormwater are being replaced with ‘One Water’ approach;
- Green infrastructure is becoming a viable alternative to gray;
New challenges & opportunities changing the game. . .

• Water reuse, renewable energy, and climate adaptation present challenges and opportunities;

• Social media is playing an increasing role;

• Value of water receiving renewed attention;

• Water Resources Utility of the Future emerging.
...and the name game.