

**From:** WEF SmartBrief <wef@smartbrief.com>  
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**March 24, 2025**



The water sector's most relevant news

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## TODAY'S NEWS

### Communities across the US celebrate World Water Day



Saturday was World Water Day, and communities and organizations across the US celebrated with creative initiatives to raise awareness about the importance of freshwater. Lynchburg Water Resources in Virginia hosted free tours of its facilities, Earth Echo International and Xylem International educated Wisconsin youth on the importance of water conservation and keeping non-flushable products out of toilets, and Casper, Wyo., held a

(Mint Images RF/Getty Images)

community clean-up event. **Full Story:** [Hawaii News Now \(3/23\)](#), [WSLS-TV \(Roanoke, Va.\) \(3/21\)](#), [Spectrum News \(3/22\)](#), [KCWY-TV \(Casper, Wyo.\) \(3/21\)](#)

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## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### UNESCO: Glacial melt threatens water supplies

Friday, March 21, marked the United Nations' inaugural World Day for Glaciers, and the event coincided with the release of a UNESCO report highlighting glacial loss trends. More than 9,000 gigatons of ice has disappeared since 1975 and sea levels are rising as glacial melt accelerates, potentially increasing flooding and threatening water reliability, said the report. **Full Story:** [Reuters \(3/20\)](#)

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## CIRCULAR WATER ECONOMY

### Pasco, Wash. plant uses algae to clean wastewater

The newly opened Pasco Resource Recovery Center boasts the world's largest algae-based system for wastewater treatment. This system effectively removes excess nitrogen from water using algae, helping to meet environmental standards for local irrigation. Martin Gross, CEO of Gross-Wen Technologies, highlighted the technology's ability to transform wastewater management.

**Full Story:** [KNDO-TV/KNDU-TV \(Yakima, Wash.\) \(3/22\)](#)

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## INFRASTRUCTURE WATCH

### Salinity threatens NYC's Croton water supply

Road salt, sewage treatment and water softeners are making the Croton Water System reservoirs saltier, risking their role in supplying drinking water to New York City. "If we don't change our ways, in 2100 the Croton Water System becomes a nice recreational facility, but it ceases to be a water supply," says Rohit Aggarwala, commissioner of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection. **Full Story:** [The Associated Press](#) (3/21)

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## FUNDING AND FINANCING

### Texas city unveils \$85M capital improvement plan

Belton, Texas, has unveiled a plan to spend an \$85 million through 2029 to address infrastructure needs and support growth. Expanding the Temple-Belton Wastewater Treatment Plant is a major focus area, with Belton set to contribute \$17.8 million to the project. Temple is expecting to provide the remaining \$53.4 million. **Full Story:** [KXXV-TV \(Waco, Texas\)](#) (3/21)

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## STORMWATER

### Volunteers aid bioswale restoration at Calif. school

Volunteers recently joined the City of Santa Barbara Creeks Division and the Watershed Stewards Program for a bioswale restoration project at Adams Elementary School in California. The initiative focused on clearing vegetation and installing new plants to help curb flooding, improve water quality and support biodiversity. "We want to help trap storm water and excess flooding and we want to slow it down, we want to sink it into the ground and we want make sure that it doesn't harm people in human infrastructure," said Aaron Reingold of Watershed Stewards. **Full Story:** [KEYT-TV/KCOY-TV/KKFX-CD \(Santa Barbara, Calif.\)](#) (3/22)

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## RESEARCH, INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

### Study: Rapid subsidence raising flood risk in Hawaii

Researchers at the University of Hawaii at Manoa found that parts of the Hawaiian island of Oahu are experiencing relatively rapid subsidence, which can worsen flood risk due to sea level rise. Some areas of Oahu were sinking by about 25 millimeters per year, nearly 40 times the island-wide

subsidence rate, the researchers found. "In places like the Mapunapuna industrial region, subsidence could increase flood exposure area by over 50% by 2050, while compressing flood preparedness timelines by up to 50 years," study co-author Phil Thompson said. **Full Story:** [Popular Mechanics](#) (3/18)

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## WMO: Over \$4.3T lost to climate events since 1970



(Thianchai Sitthikongsak/Getty Images)

Extreme weather and water events driven by climate change caused more than two million deaths and \$4.3 trillion in losses from 1970 to 2021, the World Meteorological Organization reports, noting that close to half of the world's countries still lack comprehensive early warning systems despite advances in forecasting technology. "Early warnings are not luxuries. They are necessities and sound investments -- providing an almost tenfold return," UN Secretary-

General Antonio Guterres says. **Full Story:** [The Express Tribune \(Pakistan\)](#) (3/24)

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## WORKFORCE

### Bolster your culture to survive uncertain times



(VectorInspiration/Getty Images)

When ambiguity and uncertainty strike, it may be your first impulse to "look at symptoms of failure rather than the source," writes innovation advisor Larry Robertson, who points out the source usually isn't the bottom line, the leaders or the circumstances of the outside world. Instead, the source is always your culture, which, when neglected, creates "weak links in the chain that allow your organization to weather change, adapt and thrive," Robertson writes.

**Full Story:** [SmartBrief/Leadership](#) (3/21)

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## TODAY AT WEF

### How safe is your cybersecurity?

Navigate the complex world of cybersecurity with ease! Written with utility managers and operators in mind, *A Guide to Cybersecurity for Water and Wastewater Utilities* provides accessible guidance



on how utilities of all sizes can manage their risks, focus their resources and implement controls to keep their facilities and their communities safe. [Order your copy today!](#)

   

(WEF)

## DEADLINE TOMORROW: Submit abstracts for Wastewater Disease Surveillance Summit



Join your public health and wastewater colleagues -- either in person or online -- at the 2025 Wastewater Disease Surveillance Summit in Los Angeles! Over two days, this free event will feature presentations, panel discussions and breakout sessions covering all aspects of wastewater

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surveillance practice, from program design to sample collection and analysis to data use. To share your expertise, submit poster abstracts by next Tuesday, March 25. [Get details.](#)

   



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