

Water and Sanitation in the News

7 Keys to 'One Water'

It's a buzzword for the industry, but what does it really entail?

A mind-set that all water has value

"All water can and must be managed carefully to maximize its benefit." The volume of water lost in the distribution system has become a focal point for municipalities in recent years, brought to the fore because of scarcity, economics, and continuously deteriorating pipes. But another reason for the attention is the newfound ability to detect leaks through technological advances.

A focus on achieving multiple benefits

"Design and implement programs with a focus on achieving multiple benefits — economic, environmental, and social." You may already be familiar with the "triple bottom line" approach to sustainable development, a framework that considers the three Ps — profit, people, and planet — and is very compatible with One Water.

A systems approach

"Tackle problems based on the complete lifecycle of water and larger infrastructure systems — rather than limiting ourselves to one piece of the equation." Water reuse can happen at various stages of the water cycle and can be executed by various players (industrial, municipal, on-site). Shortening the typical route from wastewater to useful water expands supply and preserves infrastructure, bringing immediate value to practitioners and long-term benefits to the industry at large.

Watershed-scale thinking and action

"Communities must reconcile their water demands with the imperative to sustain the resource for future generations." Watersheds are shared, and thus it is a shared responsibility to keep them clean. For wastewater treatment plants (WWTP), it's imperative that they stay ahead of potential threats. Understanding risk can help prevent pollution events, mitigate those that occur, and justify infrastructure investment.

Right-sized solutions

"Focus on the appropriate scale of intervention to achieve the desired outcome." WWTPs serving large cities with ample budgets can afford big, expensive improvements, but sometimes smaller-scale solutions are more sensible and cost-effective. There are also times when a small utility with limited resources needs a big fix. While the One Water philosophy can be applied at any scale, the utility and the public are best served when solutions are "right-sized" to efficiently meet the objective.

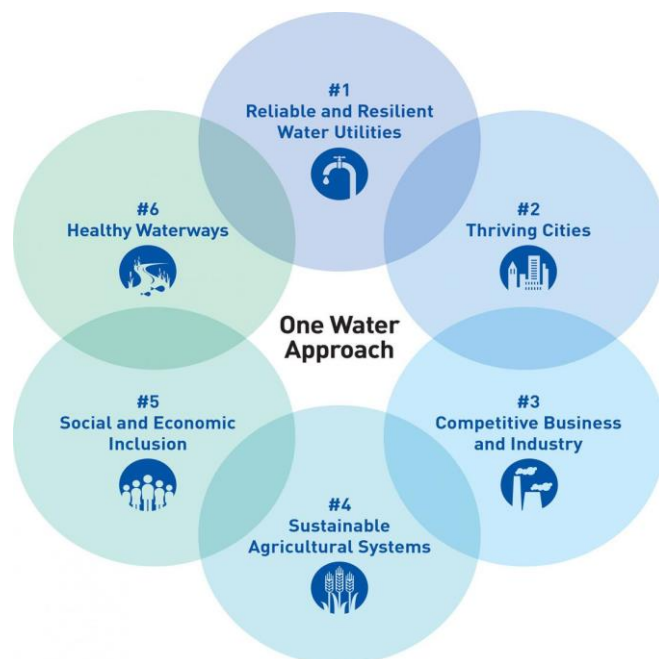
Partnerships for progress

"Recognize that all sectors are part of the solution to a water-secure future." Protecting our water supply is a group effort — it takes many hands to achieve it, or just a few to spoil it. Water stakeholders across the board can align capabilities for mutual benefit while also serving the One Water initiative.

Inclusion and engagement of all

"Leverage investments in water systems and water resources to build stronger communities, a clean environment, and thriving local economies for all." Water connects us all, and water and wastewater utilities, as caretakers of this precious resource, are inextricably bound to the community at large. Sadly, this bond often goes unacknowledged beyond the surface-level relationship of service provider-to-customer, amounting to missed opportunity.

There is much more to the One Water story, of course. It is a cyclical, never-ending journey, like that of water itself.



Source: [US Water Alliance](#)

WAMTech supports the principles of One Water by providing innovative technological solutions aimed at safeguarding the water cycle. Feel free to get in touch with us to see how our software systems and related service could benefit you, your organisation, or community.

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