



By Peter J. Censky



## What to expect at WQA Aquatech USA 2012



# Breaking the Mold in Vegas

*High-value consultative encounters—that is what you will find when you walk into WQA Aquatech USA this year. Forget about the old model for tradeshow and conventions, with row after row of booths and staff sitting on folding chairs, unapproachable behind tables and cubicle walls. We are throwing out the “jail cell” approach.*

This year, WQA Aquatech USA will take place in Las Vegas, March 6 to 9, at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

From the moment you arrive, you will see what the exhibition and conference have evolved into: a dynamic and interactive experience in which the goal is to develop relationships and share knowledge. While exhibitor booths remain a key part of the show, they are really diving boards from which to plunge into a wealth of intellectual exchange.

Interaction is the focus. We have been increasingly shifting educational sessions onto the trade-show floor and asking exhibitors to offer presentations. This approach promotes business contact time and enhances networking.

Ric Harry of WaterGroup Cos. Inc. is a long-time participant. “In the past, as a vendor, if we were just standing in a booth waiting for people to show up, we would have a significantly smaller number of people to

interact with,” he said. “Now there is far more opportunity for interaction. WQA Aquatech USA is the place to go to keep current, continue our education and create and maintain those relationships that add value to our life and our business.”

The program will include at least 56 educational sessions presented by experts and leaders in water treatment. Attendees also will be able to take advantage of exhibits featuring new products, services and solutions. Renowned experts will present talks on what today’s customers are looking for and how to dominate your niche market. These include Wednesday’s keynote speech, “Make My Life Easier: What the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Customer Really Wants,” and Thursday’s keynote speech, “The Inner Secrets of Outrageous Marketing: How to Dominate Your Market Niche.” Additional sessions will focus on special hints on how to market the research results from the Battelle

Softened Water Benefits Studies and final barrier treatment.

More than 30 hours of continuing education credits will be available for certified personnel. Exams also will be conducted for those who wish to be certified for the first time.

The transformation of the show already has been paying off for participants. Data show that 79% of attendees at WQA Aquatech USA 2011 were decision makers for their companies, and another 14% made key recommendations. This means attendees will be meeting the “best of the best” at the show.

This becomes even more important as new technologies continue to emerge. There have been significant technological changes over the years, and the show allows visitors to see these technologies applied in ways they might not experience in their offices or business sectors.

On a personal note, this will be my last WQA Aquatech USA as executive director of the Water Quality Assn. For 25 years, I have seen firsthand how the show and the water treatment industry evolved and professionalized more and more. My admiration for the hardworking, ethical and talented men and women in this industry has endured throughout. I hope to see you in Las Vegas, where we can raise a glass of treated water—and we all know there are ways beyond filters and other systems to turn water into a treat—as we celebrate past success and look to future opportunity.

Registration and hotel reservations are now available. This year, a new \$90 all-access pass allows admission to every educational session, all exhibits and all networking events, normally a \$300 cost. For more information or to register, visit [www.wqa-aquatech.com](http://www.wqa-aquatech.com). *wqp*

Peter J. Censky is executive director of the Water Quality Assn. Censky can be reached at [info@wqa.org](mailto:info@wqa.org) or 630.505.0161.

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