

ASSOCIATION OF WATER BOARD DIRECTORS – TEXAS

2023 PROJECT AWARDS APPLICATION FORM

All applicants must be a member in good standing of AWBD. All applications must be accompanied by a resolution adopted by the Board of Directors and be received by October 31, 2023.

The purpose of this program is to encourage our membership to share information about the wonderful projects that the districts are accomplishing that will improve and enhance the lives of our constituents. These projects must have been completed within the past three years from the date of the application.

The recipients will be judged by category within one of the five award divisions based on the response to the questions under the *Summary Review*. Applications will be judged by a panel of professionals with experience in the field and the winners will be announced at our Mid-Winter Conference in January 2024.

AWARD DIVISIONS

The award will be presented to one District in each category:

- I. Water District I: Less than 500 connections
- II. Water District II: 501 to 1,000 connections
- III. Water District III: 1,001 to 1,500 connections
- IV. Water District IV: over 1,500 connections
- V. Management District, Levee Improvement District or Other Special District not including water/wastewater services.

NOMINATION

Name of District: North Fort Bend Water Authority

District Award Category (see above: I, II, III, IV, or V): V.

Address: 10777 Westheimer, Suite 500 City: Houston, TX

Zip Code: 77042 website: www.nfbwa.com

Phone#: (832)975-1578 email: nfbwa@bgeinc.com

Application Submitted by: Whitney Milberger

Title: NFBWA Communications, Public Relations, Water Conservation, and Reuse Phone #: +1 (713) 488-8279

Email: wmilberger@bgeinc.com BOD Resolution adopted on: 09 / 26/23

Submitted for the Following **Category**: (Check the box that best applies)

Water and Wastewater Facilities

Water Conservation

Landscaping, Parks & Trails

Roads and other Public Infrastructure

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please provide a summary description of your project in 125 words or less; include a title of your project if applicable. Also include a timeline of your project from conception to completion,

Association of Water Board Directors (AWBD) - Texas

Project Awards Application

Management District

Water Conservation Category

North Fort Bend Water Authority



Association of Water Board Directors- Texas 2023 Project Awards Application

North Fort Bend Water Authority: Sub-sigh-who? OH! Sub-side-nce!

In 2005, the North Fort Bend Water Authority “NFBWA” was created with the main goal of reducing subsidence in northern Fort Bend County. Its mission is to provide, conserve, and educate. The lack of awareness on who the NFBWA is, what subsidence is, and the miscommunication on why there is a regional water authority fee on consumer water bills came to light through retail leadership surveys in 2020.

With the NFBWA's land encompassing **141 square miles**, expanding population of **over 320,000 residents**, and **over 80 retail water providers**, the Board of Directors knew it had to act and become a leader for water information in the region and its community, but how could the NFBWA do this in the most effective and creative way? Well, the NFBWA initiated a mass communications effort with the main objectives of providing its customers and the community with helpful resources to maximize communication regarding who and what the NFBWA is, and its impact on the community. The NFBWA was not aware of any other regional water authorities/entities that had also pivoted massively in the social media realm. Results of the efforts have been measured both:

- Qualitatively through direct customer service and requested feedback; and
- Quantitatively through online platform analytics.

The NFBWA launched a large-scale website redesign, where user experience and content create a more consumer friendly resource. The NFBWA additionally launched a new public awareness campaign on social media platforms called the “Water Force”. The overarching strategy for the NFBWA provides:

- An understanding of what the NFBWA is and how its work impacts the local community,
- Education on subsidence,
- Resources to water providers and residents on implementing water conservation efforts; and
- Information about the NFBWA large-scale projects, rebate opportunities, and rates.

The 2022 calendar year data illustrates that the NFBWA has been able to successfully communicate with their target audiences and begun working towards larger organizational goals, especially through its

website. This led to a drastic decrease in the site's bounce rate (56.26% to 2.46%), meaning that the site is now much more engaging for users. The website had a total of 20,117 new users for the 2022 calendar year. This is an 85.8% increase on previous years.

The Water Force campaign has been a major success when it comes to understanding who the NFBWA is and its impact on the local community. In 2022, there were 121,921 users reached through Meta ads. There were 641 new Facebook followers (from 678 to 1,319) and 192 new Instagram followers. It's one thing to gain followers, but the NFBWA has been working hard to prove that the content is relatable, user-friendly, and educational. The NFBWA has annually budgeted and spent approximately \$220,000 per calendar year on this initiative which totals about \$660,000 for the three-year duration. Sub-consultants, contractors, and media buys are included in this overall cost.

To make the content relatable, the NFBWA has focused on posting informative topics like water fees, native and adaptive plants, subsidence, and water saving tips for the target audiences. Ultimately, the NFBWA can now serve as the regional water educator it strives to be. It is a source that all the communities within northern Fort Bend County may use for valuable and accurate information regarding water sourcing and conservation. Since inception of the new campaigns, this has worked. NFBWA customers and other regional water purveyors now link and source the credible information from the NFBWA.

The model the NFBWA used via stakeholder surveys was the most beneficial tool in helping guide the process moving forward. This model is strongly encouraged for replication. It states to the end user "we listened" and helps them feel they have a voice in government affairs and direction. It always helps to have community cheerleaders as well, especially when the entity is known by most due to its fees.

The NFBWA is committed to helping the community directly as much as possible. The website includes a "contact us" submission form where the community can ask questions. In 2022, the NFBWA received and responded to over 250 inquiries via the contact us submission form.

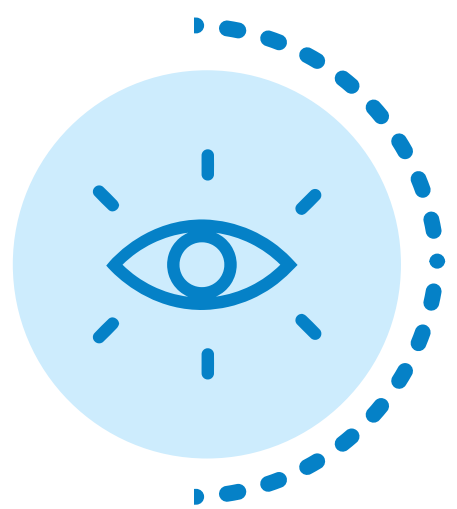
The following pages illustrate the mediums the NFBWA developed with the results for 2022 that effectively enhanced the regional water purveyor's image in a year of Texas drought and higher volume fees.

North Fort Bend Water Authority

PROJECT TIMELINE

2020 STAKEHOLDER & LEADERSHIP SURVEY

The lack of awareness on who the NFBWA is, what subsidence is, and the miscommunication on why there is a regional water authority fee on consumer water bills comes to light.



2021 WEBSITE LAUNCH

The NFBWA launches a large-scale website redesign, where user experience and content create a more consumer friendly resource.



2022 WATER FORCE

The NFBWA launches a new public awareness campaign on social media platforms.



SOCIAL LAUNCH

NFBWA works to prove that the content is relatable, user-friendly, and educational, which has led to increased engagement on multiple social media platforms.



The EPA estimates that showers use 2.5 gallons of water each minute. For a 20 minute shower, that's 50 gallons of water! Cutting your shower time down to five minutes saves hundreds of gallons of water each year.

For more water-saving tips, visit our website at <https://www.nfbwa.com/water-saving-tips>.



- Plant: Coral Honeysuckle
- Exposure: Full Sun
- Water needs: Low

The Coral Honeysuckle is a vine that blooms best in late winter and early spring. The plant's unique red flowers are known to attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Coral Honeysuckle is an excellent garden plant that does well with a supporting structure like a fence or trellis. Mature plants can grow over 15 feet tall and 15-25 feet wide. The plant tolerates both hot and cold temperatures well, making it a gr... [See more](#)



Learn more about how the NFBWA fee works at nfbwa.com/our-fees.

What percentage of your fees go towards infrastructure?

A: 24%

B: 50%

C: 82%

Answer:
82% of the NFBWA fee is used to provide vital infrastructure for the community.

For a breakdown of what our fee provides, go to nfbwa.com/our-fees



RESOLUTION APPROVING SUBMITTAL OF
THE PROJECT AWARDS APPLICATION FOR INCLUSION IN
THE ASSOCIATION OF WATER BOARD DIRECTORS - TEXAS
2023 PROJECT AWARD PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors (“the Board”) of North Fort Bend Water Authority (the “Authority”) has reviewed all the requirements for participation in the Association of Water Board of Directors Project Award Program; and

WHEREAS, the Board has discussed and reviewed the Authority’s application in its entirety and has confirmed the inclusion of all necessary documentation required for submission to the Association of Water Board of Directors 2023 Project Award Program; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has fulfilled all the necessary requirements for inclusion in the Association of Water Board Directors 2023 Project Award Program; Now, Therefore

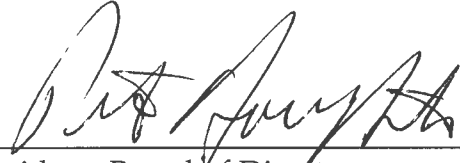
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF NORTH FORT BEND WATER AUTHORITY THAT:

Section 1. The Board does hereby approve the submittal of the 2023 Project Award Application for the period of the previous three (3) years for participation in the Association of Water Board Directors Project Award Program.

Section 2. The President or Vice President is authorized to execute and the Secretary or any Assistant Secretary is authorized to attest this Resolution on behalf of the Board of the Authority and to do any and all things necessary to carry out the intent hereof.

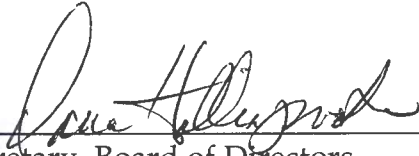
[EXECUTION PAGE FOLLOWS]

PASSED AND APPROVED on September 26, 2023.



President, Board of Directors

ATTEST:



Secretary, Board of Directors

(SEAL)



North Fort Bend
Water
Authority



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