



# On the Water Front

September 2017 | A Message from John Balliew, P.E., President/CEO

## EPWater celebrates innovation at KBH Desalination Plant

Ten years ago, we opened the doors of the Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant, thrusting El Paso Water forward as a water technology innovator. Legislators, community leaders and water industry experts joined us Sept. 15 to mark the 10th anniversary of the world's largest inland desalination plant, which produces up to 27.5 million gallons of fresh water per day.

The KBH Desalination Plant has played a pivotal role in building up El Paso's resiliency.

The plant rose to the occasion when drought conditions limited river water availability on a hot day in June 2012. The plant came through, producing 25 million gallons – enough to meet the needs of 192,000 customers. In both freeze and drought, the desalination plant helped prevent water restrictions and potential water shortages.

### Diverse portfolio

El Paso Water's water portfolio is diverse, and we are forced by the environment we live in to make sure that we are covering all the bases. Desalination has become an important part of the puzzle that will ensure we have a vital water future for this community, including for our kids, grandchildren and anybody that wants to live here.

To mark the plant's milestone, we were happy to host water industry experts who provided an outlook for desalination and described obstacles to wider adoption. Also, academic researchers discussed findings from work underway or completed in the plant's in-house Consortium for Hi-Technology Investigations in Water & Wastewater (CHIWAWA) research laboratory, which has become a magnet for university researchers seeking water solutions in the arid Southwest.

Barbara Martin, director of engineering and Technical Services for the American Water Works Association, praised EPWater for "pushing the envelope so that we can provide a blueprint for utilities to follow."

EPWater brought the future to El Paso, and one of the brightest facets of our water future is the KBH Desalination plant.



Water plant Senior Technician Jose Ronquillo (*second from left*) shows feed water piping that feeds the reverse osmosis booster pumps at the KBH Desalination Plant.



On the Water Front is a publication of El Paso Water.  
Contact Christina Montoya at 915.594.5596 or [cmontoya@epwu.org](mailto:cmontoya@epwu.org) with any comments or questions.