



ASTSWMO, Providing Pathways to Our  
Nation's Environmental Stewardship Since 1974

November 26, 2018

Dear ASTSWMO Family:

Let me begin by thanking you, the membership, for the opportunity to serve as your President for this year. This is not a job I have volunteered for, but a privilege you've allowed me to experience. And what a privilege it's been, working with and learning from Past-President Ken Kloo (NJ), outgoing Past-President Mark de Bie (CA), outgoing Secretary-Treasurer April Webb (KY), the Board of Directors, and our Subcommittee Chairs, all who have shown us a great deal about the value and strength of ASTSWMO.

We look forward to working with Vice-President Conchita Taitano (GU) and Secretary-Treasurer Tim Ratsep (DE), and learning from the experience and leadership they bring to the Executive Committee. We also welcome to the Board of Directors our new Region 1 Representative Millie Garcia-Serrano (MA), Region 2 Representative Mike Ryan (NY), Region 5 Representative Steve Sliver (MI), and Region 6 Representative Bill Shafford (TX). Our thanks to outgoing Board members Chuck Schwer (VT), Wilmarie Rivera-Otero (PR), Sandeep Burman (MN), and Dana Bahar (NM) for their service and dedication to the Association.

As a family we have, as in all years past, seen a number of challenges and accomplished a great many things. Our CERCLA and Brownfields Subcommittee, chaired by Amy Brittain (OK), and our Federal Facilities Subcommittee, chaired by Monica Sheets (CO), have had a very busy year working with the EPA Superfund Task Force in its efforts to improve the CERCLA process, expedite cleanups, and promote redevelopment. Past-President Stephen Cobb (AL) provided testimony on ASTSWMO's behalf to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce on "Modernizing the Superfund Cleanup Program." And speaking of redevelopment, this past year saw the passage of the BUILD Act, an extensive amendment to CERCLA that reauthorized and expanded crucial federal funding for brownfields cleanups. ASTSWMO was expertly represented by Executive Director Dania Rodriguez, members of our Board and the Brownfields Focus Group throughout this process.

Many of our member States have begun to tackle the challenge of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) compounds. Thanks to ASTSWMO Associate Director Charles Reyes and Sandeep Burman (MN) for representing our members at the PFAS Leadership Summit held in Washington D.C. last May. We also thank Sandeep for skillfully representing us at the House subcommittee hearing on PFAS. Due in no small part to ASTSWMO's leadership and counsel, we are beginning to see movement by EPA towards a national strategy for addressing this group of contaminants. ASTSWMO will continue to serve as a platform for members to share information on PFAS, and the Board and I will keep this issue at the forefront of our interactions with EPA leadership and Congress.

Our waste management programs continue their journey into the digital age with the launch of EPA's Hazardous Waste Electronic Manifest System. Our Hazardous Waste Subcommittee, chaired by Karen Hale (OH), worked extensively with EPA throughout the development and transition to the e-Manifest system. This past year we've seen significant developments in other areas of waste and materials management. EPA promulgated the first of two rule amendments addressing coal combustion residuals. The CCR Ad Hoc Work Group, chaired by Past-Presidents Mark de Bie (CA) and Bonnie Buthker (OH), have worked to keep the membership well informed of this important and dynamic waste management issue. Our Materials Management Subcommittee, chaired by Bob Blankenburg (AK), published a compendium of State resources on the economics of recycling, a piece that I'm sure will grow in informative value as our recycling programs adjust to volatile global materials markets.

Culminating several years of work and coordination on the first major revision to UST regulations since 1988, our Tanks Subcommittee, chaired by Leslie Carr (KY), partnered with EPA on a 50-minute webinar presenting the new performance measures. ASTSWMO was very well represented at this year's National Tanks Conference in Louisville, KY, with over 10 speakers who were current or past Tanks members.

Are you tired yet? I'm exhausted just telling you about just a few of the things we accomplished together in 2018. None of it would be possible without the dedication and hard work of our Task Force and Focus Group members and the expert leadership by our Subcommittee Chairs. Many thanks to outgoing Chairs Karen, Bob, and Leslie for their hard work, extensive expertise, and dedication to ASTSWMO. We look forward to working with incoming Subcommittee Chairs Paula Bansch (IN – Hazardous Waste), Cathy Jamieson (VT – Materials Management), and Matthew Jones (NH – Tanks) and observing them carry on the standard of excellence set by their predecessors.

Because, of course, we have much more work to do. It's your efforts along with the leadership and counsel of our State and Territorial Voting Members that drive our great organization. If you are not currently serving on a Task Force, Focus Group, or on the Board of Directors, I invite you to get involved and share in this amazing experience. But even if you're not currently in one of these roles, we still encourage you to bring issues and challenges your programs are facing to ASTSWMO's attention, so that we can tackle them together with our collective resources, knowledge, and experience.

I'd like to say a special thanks to our Past-Presidents. The opportunity to learn from your experiences and seek your counsel has been invaluable preparation for me for the coming year. But ASTSWMO still needs you. It still needs your knowledge, your experience, and your mentorship to maintain effective leadership for the years ahead. I challenge you to stay engaged in the Association and remain active with the Past-Presidents' Caucus, so that we may all continue to benefit from your service to ASTSWMO.

The theme for our 2018 Annual Meeting was "Modernizing Environmental Protection." I hope to build on this theme throughout 2019. Under President Kloo's leadership, we've enhanced our relationships with colleges and universities, to help identify and encourage the next generation of solid waste management officials. As that effort continues, it's time to focus on what we, as the current generation, will leave behind. Let's continue to discuss and share ideas about how to bring all of our waste management and remediation programs squarely and completely into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Let's

continue to encourage EPA to do the same. And let's not be afraid to share ideas about more than just how we manage sites and programs, but how we recruit and manage people as well. When we talk of retention, let's focus not just on what we lose, but of what we gain. It's critically important to pass on the knowledge and expertise of our generation, but equally important to learn from and gain fresh perspectives from the next generation. It's my hope that, working together, we can achieve more than just a succession plan, but a lasting sustainability in our chosen profession.

Looking ahead, I look forward to seeing everyone again at the 2019 Mid-Year Meeting in New Brunswick, NJ, May 1-2, the 2019 Joint Hazardous Waste and Materials Management Training Conference in August and the September 2019 LUST Workshop. The Board of Directors has begun the process of developing the 2019 Strategic Plan that will memorialize ASTSWMO's goals and hopeful outcomes for the next several years. We will hold our strategic plan work session at the January Board meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico. While in Puerto Rico, the Board will have the opportunity to give back, volunteer and assist one of the many communities still recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Maria. This day of service is being coordinated with Discover Puerto Rico and EPA Region 2. Finally, the Board will continue to monitor and coordinate with EPA on new and revised rules, shifting policies, reorganization efforts, and all matters affecting our member States and Territories.

Let me end by, once again, offering my sincerest thanks for the privilege of serving as President. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any member of the Board or Staff with advice and feedback on how we can continue the great work of ASTSWMO for our and the many generations to come.

With the warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vernon H. Crockett". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Vernon H. Crockett (AL)  
President