

BCWWA's 2020 Virtual Conference & Tradeshow Attendance Justification Toolkit

The BCWWA's conference and trade show has always existed exists for our industry to come together to connect, engage, learn and share. While nothing can compare to the power of an in-person conference, unprecedented circumstances challenged everyone to find new ways to connect and learn. Now more than ever, it's crucial that our industry get together to explore new solutions, perspectives and technologies.

BCWWA's 2020 Virtual Conference will continue to provide a valuable and productive platform to connect with manufacturers and suppliers, network with colleagues, engage in educational sessions and build skills and industry knowledge.

The BCWWA Virtual Conference & Tradeshow will take place November 3-4, 2020.

In the face of reduced budgets and increased expenditure scrutiny, our association recognizes the challenges that come with securing approval for attending professional development events. We have created this kit to assist you in getting approval to attend our conference.

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Employer Approval Tips

Many of the benefits of attending a conference can be difficult to quantify. When you propose attending to your employer, don't focus on simply attending but rather on the knowledge and experience you will bring back to your organization.

Here are several tips to guide you place your request for approval to attend:

- Your organization is investing in you; provide details about what you hope to gain by attending.
- Share what sessions you plan to attend and the value they could have on your work.
- What vendors you hope to connect with and the products or services that could help your organization.
- Which experts you will have access to and what knowledge you can bring back to share with your colleagues.
- It is a cost-effective way to earn educational credits – CEUs will be tracked with your attendance at education sessions. You will be able to download a report of your attendance credits. Delegates can continue earning CEU credits until the end of December 2020.
- The virtual offering means there is no additional costs to attendance other than your time and the registration fee (no travel or accommodation fees to budget).

Benefits Worksheet

Networking Opportunities	UTILITY CONTACTS: Find other utilities facing the same problems as our organization and develop contacts who can share their knowledge of cost effective solutions so that we can learn from their mistakes and benefit from their successes.
	VENDOR CONTACTS: Meet vendors who can share valuable information about new products or services that may be of value to our organization.
	SUPPORT CONTACTS: Government officials and engineers that know which technologies qualify for grant funding and how to obtain it.
	REGULATORY CONTACTS: Agency reps that can help us clarify and understand our regulatory requirements so that we remain current on compliance issues.
Continuing Education Credits	By attending, I will minimize my time away from my work while getting the continuing education credits I need to maintain my certifications.
Find solutions to our current problems (regulatory issues, equipment issues, management issues, customer service issues, process issues, etc.)	Issue 1:
	Issue 2:
	Issue 3:
	Issue 4:
Innovation	Meet vendors and operators that know our processes and can give us insights into how we can deliver better performance using equipment we currently use but at a lower cost.
New Technologies	See where the industry is heading and which innovations are making it much more cost-effective to operate our processes.
Knowledge Sharing	SUPERVISOR'S REPORT: prepare and submit a written report to my supervisor of my findings and of the short-term and long-term action items that result from my attendance at the conference.
	STAFF BRIEFINGS: prepare and deliver a staff briefing of my findings so that others may benefit from my attendance at the conference.
	TRAINING ASSISTANCE: help others learn how to effectively attend a virtual conference and deliver the maximum benefit to the Utility upon their return.

Letter to Employer Template

Below is a template to send to your supervisor or employer to explain the benefits of attending BCWWA's Virtual Conference & Tradeshow. You may copy all or any portion of the template to suit your needs.

Dear **<supervisor's name>**,

I would like to represent **[insert company name]** at BCWWA's Virtual Conference & Tradeshow. Attending this conference will enable me to participate in a number of continuing educational sessions that are directly applicable to my on-the-job performance. Over the course of two days, I will be able to:

- Hear from expert keynote speakers from across the water industry
- Update my knowledge through technical sessions
- Benefit from networking opportunities with a diverse range of water professionals
- Get up to date with industry trends and new technical developments on the virtual tradeshow floor
- **<insert specific business/networking opportunities for your organization>**

This conference will also allow me to network with a variety of industry experts and peers that are willing to share their experiences and best practices during live chats as well as Q and A's.

The virtual format of this year's conference means gives access to all of the conference educational sessions as well as the tradeshow floor up until December 1, 2020. That means, I can attend sessions live on November 3-4 and interact with other attendees and catch up on additional presentations or re-watch sessions I found to be valuable.

I am seeking support for the registration fee which totals:

The opportunity to develop connections and gain industry-related knowledge at this type of an interactive event is infinitely valuable to my performance and evolution as a **[insert job title]**. I truly look forward to the opportunity to share and receive insight with/from industry peers and experts. The value added by the knowledge and information I will gain at the BCWWA Virtual Conference & Tradeshow and bring back to our staff makes sending me to this convention a wise investment. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,