

Mobile Area Water & Sewer System (MAWSS)  
News Advisory  
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**MAWSS' Sims Wins Hatfield Award  
C.C. Williams Plant Wins Award of Excellence**



*Photo: AWEA 16 Sims*

*MAWSS Chief Treatment Plant Operator Mike Sims accepts the Hatfield Award from WEF's Karen Kubick.*

Mobile Area Water and Sewer System's (MAWSS) Mike Sims was named this year's winner of the Hatfield Award by Alabama's Water Environment Association (AWEA) during the organization's educational conference, April 11-13, in Orange Beach. The statewide award is presented to an operator of a wastewater treatment plant for outstanding performance and professionalism. The award was established in honor of Dr. William D. Hatfield who served as President of the Water Environment Federation (WEF) from 1958 to 1959. Sims is Chief Treatment Plant Operator for MAWSS' two wastewater treatment plants, the Wright Smith Jr. Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and the C.C. Williams WWTP, three decentralized wastewater systems and the municipal lab.

A water quality professional for over 25 years, Sims has actively worked through AWEA and other statewide organizations, to promote and improve training opportunities for treatment plant operators. He has actively served on committees and on the AWEA Board member for 15 years currently holding the position of Vice President, which carries responsibility for planning next year's educational conference. He has served as Public Works Operations Director and was

invited to become a member of AWEA's Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers (SS). He is on track to become the first Operator to hold all Board offices in the organization.

"We're proud of the accomplishments Mike has achieved and the level of professionalism he has brought to operators throughout the state," said MAWSS Director Charles Hyland. "He continues to raise the bar on everything he does for MAWSS."

Sims has been a part of the water industry since 1989 when he began his employment at MAWSS as an unskilled laborer in the Grounds and Maintenance Department. Within a few months he was promoted to Public Service Worker I and assigned to the Smith WWTP. By 1992 he had become an Operator, earning his Grade IV Certification in 1994, the same year he graduated from Faulkner State with an Associate Degree in Applied Science, Water and Wastewater Management Technologies. A promotion to Operator II followed in 1996, then Operator III in 2003 when he became Plant Manager of the Williams Plant. In 2008 he was named Chief Treatment Plant Operator over both facilities.

Before his involvement with AWEA, Sims served numerous roles, including President, with the Alabama Water Pollution Control Association (AWPCA) and on the Board of Directors for District III Wastewater. In 2006 he was named recipient of the Bolton-Crockett-Beck Award, presented annually to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the water and pollution control industry and supports the educational objectives of AWPCA.

In addition to Sims' personal honor, MAWSS C.C. Williams WWTP received AWEA's Award of Excellence for wastewater treatment plants treating more than 10 million gallons a day. The award is based on the plants perfect compliance record with permit requirements, safety and a site visit.

The Williams Plant has been recognized with Platinum Peak Performance Awards from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies for 14 consecutive years of perfect regulatory compliance. Documentation for a 15 year award has been submitted. According to Sims, the credit goes to the operators.

"Living along the Gulf Coast we have a deep respect and responsibility to protect the environment," said Mike Sims. "Our work directly impacts Mobile River and Bay, waters where we fish and swim. We want them to be available for our families to enjoy for generations."