

## HUELL HOUSER BEST IN BLUE AWARD: ACHIEVING COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE

The Huell Howser Best in Blue Award recognizes outstanding achievements by public water agencies in communicating with customers, legislators, media, the public and others. Winning projects and programs will quantifiably meet their agency's public information, communications or outreach goals in an innovative way while making effective use of available resources.

### Apply for this Award

Please review the [Huell Howser Best in Blue Award Guidelines](#) thoroughly before completing the award application. Applicants who do not meet the minimum eligibility requirements will not be considered.

Please use our [online application](#) for this award (Member login required). Applications must be submitted electronically **by Sept. 1** (or the next regular work day, if Sept. 1 falls on a weekend or holiday).

### Eligibility

- Open to public water agency members of ACWA.
- All or most of the work must have been executed between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31 of the previous year. For ongoing programs, please submit for one year of program only.
- An agency may submit only one entry per year.
- An agency may not submit again for three years after winning.

### EXAMPLES OF ENTRIES

Short- and long-term public outreach programs, crisis communications programs, employee relations programs, self-promotion campaigns, customer education programs, legislative outreach programs, agency anniversary campaigns. School education programs are not eligible for this award.

*Note: This award aims to recognize overall communications programs. Individual communications tools, such as a press release or event, should not be submitted unless they are supporting elements of an overall communications or outreach program being entered in this award.*

## SELECTION CRITERIA

- Were the objectives clearly stated and described?
- Were the chosen methods appropriate?
- Was the program successful? Does the entry material support the description of the results?
- Were the program and method(s) innovative?
- How well did the elements support the concept? Was it well-organized, well-executed and professional?
- Did the program or campaign increase the agency's transparency to the public? How?
- Was the budget appropriate for the program objectives? Did the program make good use of the available funds/resources?

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entries must include answers to the following questions:

- **Objective:** What were the objectives of the program? Describe your agency's goals and desired outcome and quantify, if possible.
- **Method:** Explain which tools, materials and/or events your agency used to achieve your objectives and why they were chosen. Include the role that consultants played in the program.
- **Results:** How did you meet your agency's communication needs? Quantify and qualify your results.
- **Creativity:** How did your program employ innovative communications methods and techniques? Describe any obstacles you had to overcome and the solution.
- **Transparency:** Describe how your program helped increase your agency's transparency.

Entries also must include the total budgeted amount for the program and break out all costs, including donated/in-kind services.

## SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Applicants may include supporting materials. Examples of supporting materials include press releases, bill stuffers, event photos, videos, websites and social media links.

## SELECTION PROCESS

The selection committee will review entries and select the agency that has demonstrated the most successful overall communications program.

## AWARD PRESENTATION

This award is presented annually at the ACWA Fall Conference.

## **Past Winners**

- Rowland Water District (2017)
- Joshua Basin Water District (2016)
- Dublin San Ramon Services District (2015)
- Cucamonga Valley Water District (2014)
- City of San Diego (2013)
- City of Sacramento (2012)