

## Marisa Vergara

My name is Marisa Vergara. I serve as the Chair for the Texas American Water Works Association. In my role I support over 4500 members which includes licensed operators in water and wastewater treatment systems. I am also a Texas Professional Engineer. I support the proposed 4 hours of ethics training within the 3-year renewal requirements. This is a fundamental training topic that will support our water and wastewater front-line workers and provide improved public confidence.

The four-hour requirement every three years will allow the professional either annual 1 or 2-hour classes or more detailed 4-hour course options. As a water professional, I have found annual review and discussion of the ethics topic to be beneficial and educational. Reoccurring dialog and training help us to stay accountable to one another and to remind us that what we do every day impacts the lives of our Texas citizens.

I don't believe ethics training is a burden but a benefit to our operators. As a professional engineer for over 25 years, my experience on these types of trainings have provided technical, business and moral practice awareness. Our water and wastewater operators are challenged everyday with tight budgets, reduced workforce and changing technology. The ethics training will provide the necessary time to reflect, learn and share about the direct impact we have on the public's health and safety. We owe it to our great state of Texas to demand the highest ethical standards for our water professionals.