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Water Director Receives National Award

SALT LAKE CITY – Walt Baker, director of the Division of Water Quality, will receive the Association of Clean Water Administrators' (ACWA) top honor, "Environmental Statesman Award" at its annual gathering next week in Santa Fe, N.M.

The award is given to those who have shown leadership in national water issues. Baker, who served as president, vice president, and treasurer of ACWA, is the fourth recipient in Utah to have received the honor over the 35 years since the award was created. He follows former water quality directors Don Ostler (1997) and Calvin Sudweeks (1987) to receive the award. Gov. Scott Matheson received the award in 1982.

"I'm very pleased and honored to receive this award from my peers. It is made all the more meaningful as I note the names of past award recipients. They are individuals who I have looked up to and who have mentored me."

During Baker's term as president, from 2011-12, he led ACWA's strategic planning efforts, restructured its committees, helped develop a cooperative agreement with EPA, and organized one of ACWA's most successful annual meetings in Park City in 2012.

"Walt is known for working tirelessly to develop strong relationships with EPA, fellow states, and other water stakeholders – despite his own busy and demanding responsibilities at Utah DEQ," said Alexandra Dapolito Dunn, executive director and general counsel of ACWA.

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