



## **VWEA Website and Social Media Policy**

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media outlets (Sites) by members or guests of the VIRGINIA WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION, INC. (VWEA). For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation the VWEA website, blogs, forums, online file storage, and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements the VWEA Organization Manual and future policies regarding the use of VWEA's Sites.

VWEA's Sites are intended to provide networking and collaboration opportunities among members, and to discuss anything relevant to Virginia's water environment. The values most important to the social media culture include transparency, consistency, connection, creativity and promptness.

This policy is intended to lay out what is and isn't permissible both on VWEA's network and outside of it when identifying oneself as a member of VWEA. VWEA members are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy; however, violations will be subject to termination of use of VWEA's Sites.

### **1. Use of VWEA Sites**

Content and materials provided on VWEA's Site is designed for educational and networking purposes. VWEA does not control all of the materials posted via the Site and, as such, cannot and does not guarantee the accuracy, integrity or quality of the content.

All information, including but not limited to data, text, software, photographs, graphics, video, messages or other materials are the sole responsibility of the person or entity from which they originated. This means that you, and not VWEA, are responsible for materials that you upload, post, e-mail, transmit or otherwise make available to any portion of the Site. You are solely responsible for your own communications within the Site and the consequences of posting these communications.

When participating in one or more of VWEA's Sites, you cannot:

- Upload, post or distribute any vulgar, obscene, discourteous, unlawful, obscene, defamatory, abusive, slanderous, hateful, or indecent language or images as determined by VWEA in its sole discretion;
- Intimidate or harass another;
- Advertise specific products or goods without VWEA's prior permission;
- Post or distribute any software/materials that contain a virus or harmful component;
- Post the same note more than once or "spam";
- Impersonate another person or allow any other person to use your identification;
- Harvest or otherwise collect information about others, including e-mail addresses, without their consent;
- Advocate illegal activity or discuss illegal activities;
- Copy, quote, or otherwise recreate any messages, media, or other postings outside of VWEA without express written permission from the author; or

- Engage in any other conduct that restricts or inhibits any person from utilizing VWEA's Sites, or which, in the judgment of VWEA, exposes VWEA or any of its members to any liability or detriment of any type.

VWEA reserves the right (but is not obligated) to do any or all of the following:

- Investigate an allegation that a communication does not conform to this policy;
- Remove or request the removal of communications that are abusive, illegal, or disruptive, or that otherwise fail to conform to this policy;
- Terminate a user's access to the Site upon any breach of this policy;
- Monitor or disclose any communication in the Site; or
- Remove postings at any time and for any reason

VWEA assumes no liability or responsibility to users of the Site or any other person or entity for performance or nonperformance of the aforementioned activities.

## **2. General Practices**

You acknowledge that the VWEA may establish general practices and limits concerning use of the Site, including without limitation, the maximum number of days that uploaded materials will be retained by the Site. VWEA reserves the right to remove accounts and to change these general practices and limits at any time, in its sole discretion, without notice.

## **3. Termination of Use**

You agree that VWEA, in its sole discretion, may terminate your use of the Site, and remove and discard any materials within the Site, for any reason. VWEA may at any time discontinue providing the Site, or any part thereof, with or without notice. You agree that any termination of access to the Site may be effected without prior notice, and acknowledge and agree that VWEA may immediately deactivate or delete related information. Further, you agree that VWEA shall not be liable to you or any third-party for any termination of access to the Site.

## **4. Outside VWEA's Network**

It is permissible for members to identify themselves as representatives of VWEA on social media networks outside of VWEA. However it is the member's responsibility to represent VWEA in a professional manner, with the understanding that everything posted has the potential to reflect on VWEA and its image.

While representing VWEA on personal blogs or other personal posts, members must include clear disclaimers that the opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not represent the views of VWEA.

## **5. Security**

Social networking sites have varying levels of security and as public sites, are vulnerable to security breaches. Discussing proprietary information on such sites is not recommend, even in private messages between members who have authorized access to the information. VWEA is not liable or responsible for the compromise of members' information resulting from security breaches.

---

-----

## Helpful Tips for Social Networking

### **Protect your own privacy**

Privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see. Consider the content carefully before publishing and be cautious about disclosing personal details, especially the combination of your birthday, age, and place of birth.

### **Be Honest**

Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify that you are a member of VWEA. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. That said, be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy.

### **Respect copyright laws**

Respect the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others. When quoting, always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

### **Respect your audience and your colleagues**

The general public and VWEA members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious no-no's, but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion. Use your best judgment and make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of VWEA.

### **Respond to your mistakes**

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly and remove it immediately.