

2026 Laboratory Workshop: Creating Public Trust through Collaboration, Innovation, and Data Quality

July 15-17, 2026 | Austin Permitting & Development Center

Day 1 – July 15, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Registration & Breakfast	
9:00 – 9:15 AM	Welcome & Opening Remarks	Trinity O'Neal, Austin Water Jennifer Whitaker, Trinity River Authority Joseph Fielding, Trinity River Authority
9:15 – 9:30 AM	Keynote Speaker	Dorian Olivera, Director, Environmental Lab Services, San Antonio Water System
9:30 – 10:00 AM	TCEQ Laboratory Accreditation Program Annual Update	Krista Butler, Lab Accreditation Work Group, Air Monitoring Division, TCEQ
10 – 10:45 AM	Changes Coming to the 2016 TNI Laboratory Accreditation Standard	Elizabeth Turner, Quality Assurance Director, Eurofins Environment Testing
10:45 – 11:15 AM	Networking Break	
11:15 AM – 12 PM	Wastewater Microbiology 101: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly	Rasha Maal-Bared, Principal Scientist, CDM Smith
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Lunch	
1:00 – 1:45 PM	Field to Laboratory: Ensuring Competence, Compliance and Traceability	Elizabeth Turner, Quality Assurance Director, Eurofins Environment Testing
1:45 – 2:30 PM	Using Enumeration to Guide RTCR Responses: A Data Driven Approach from Austin Water	Kasi "KC" Clay, Water Quality Manager, Austin Water Racquel Bass, Water Quality Laboratory Supervisor, Austin Water
2:30 – 3:00 PM	Networking Break	
3:00 – 3:45 PM	Using Adenosine Triphosphate Testing to Support Water and Wastewater Utility Decision Making	Rasha Maal-Bared, Principal Scientist, CDM Smith
3:45 – 4:15 PM	Doing More with Less: Strategies for Managing Workflow and Maintaining Data Quality During Staffing Shortages in a Municipal Wastewater Laboratory	April Allen, Laboratory Environmental Manager, City of Dallas

5:30-7:30 PM Networking Event at the Brewtorium (6015 Dillard Cir A, Austin, TX 78752)



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Day 2 – July 16, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Registration & Breakfast	
9:00 – 9:15 AM	Day 2 Welcome	Jennifer Whitaker, Trinity River Authority
9:15 – 10:00 AM	The Case of the Failing GGA: A CBOD Whodunit	Trinity O'Neal, Laboratory Supervisor, Austin Water
10 – 10:30 AM	Jar Testing Design and Strategies	Cooper Christenson, Laboratory Assistant, City of Arlington
10:30 – 11:00 AM	Networking Break	
11:00 – 11:45 AM	WET Testing: Mystery Revealed	Jennifer Whitaker, Manager, Lab Services, Trinity River Authority
11:45 AM – 12:15 PM	Aging Labs: When to Fix, When to Replace, and How to Tell the Difference	Steven P. Andersen, National Laboratory Specialist and Senior Architect, Mead & Hunt
12:15 – 1:00 PM	Lunch	
1:00 – 2:30 PM	<p>Roundtable/Panel Discussion Session</p> <p>Attendees will participate in interactive roundtable discussions focused on current challenges, emerging trends, and best practices in water and wastewater laboratories. These facilitated conversations provide an opportunity to share experiences, ask questions, exchange ideas, and collaborate with peers from across Texas in a relaxed and engaging setting. See the discussions below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lab vs field sampling vs second lab data discrepancy, plant operators 2. Sampling to plant decisions: decision making based on plant data, rapid response situations, critical data requirements, collaboration 3. Budget vs lab performance: making decisions to expand testing or continue subcontracting, justifying purchases to upper management 4. Automation in the lab: benefits, issues, lessons learned 	
2:30 – 3:00 PM	Networking Break	
3:00 – 3:30 PM	Automated Electronic Record Keeping of Non-Routine and Esoteric Analyses	Chris Couch, Vice President, BTSOFT
3:30 – 4:00 PM	Building a Resilient Laboratory: Leadership at Every Level	Justlyn Ferrol, Laboratory Supervisor, Red River Authority of Texas Environmental Services Laboratory



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Day 3 – July 17, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Registration & Breakfast	
9:00 – 9:15 AM	Welcome & Workshop Overview	Trinity O'Neal, Austin Water
9:15 – 11:45 AM	<p>Workshop Session Document Traceability in Environmental Laboratories: Meeting TNI Requirements Through Practical Implementation</p> <p>Effective document traceability is a cornerstone of quality systems and regulatory compliance in environmental laboratories. This interactive workshop will explore the traceability requirements of the TNI Standard and provide practical approaches for implementing and maintaining robust document control processes. Through a combination of presentations, real-world case studies, and panel discussions, participants will examine common challenges related to document creation, revision, approval, distribution, retention, and record management.</p> <p>This session will be a deep dive showcasing lessons learned from laboratory practices and assessments, successful traceability practices, and facilitate discussion among laboratory personnel, from technicians to lab managers and quality assurance managers. Attendees will gain actionable strategies to strengthen their document management systems, improve compliance, and enhance confidence in the integrity and defensibility of laboratory data.</p>	
11:45 AM – 12 PM	Closing Discussion & Adjourn	



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