

## NATIONAL WATER RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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### Editor and Writer Gina Vartanian to Depart NWRI after 20 Years of Service

Fountain Valley, Calif. – After serving 20 years as the “Voice of NWRI,” Gina Melin Vartanian is leaving the National Water Research Institute (NWRI) to spend more time with her young family. NWRI is a nonprofit organization devoted to addressing water quality and supply challenges.

“Over the past 20 years, it became progressively more difficult to separate Gina’s and NWRI’s contributions to water quality science and water resources policy,” said NWRI Executive Director, Kevin M. Hardy, J.D. “Her body of work is undeniably significant and influential. We will miss her personal warmth and dedication to NWRI, its Member Agencies, partner organizations, and clients. Everyone here at NWRI supports Gina’s decision and wishes her and her family all the best as they open this new chapter of life together.”

Vartanian, NWRI’s Communication Manager, joined NWRI after graduating from the University of Southern California. She was hired by NWRI’s first Executive Director, Ronald B. Linsky, who was an advocate of supporting young professionals and Vartanian’s first mentor in the water industry. With Linsky, she partnered with Dr. Chittaranjan Ray to co-edit of the first textbook of its kind, *Riverbank Filtration: Improving Source Water Quality*, published by Kluwer in 2003. During this time, she also served as editor of *Ultraviolet Disinfection Guidelines for Drinking Water and Reuse*, an oft-cited NWRI document that has set standards in the water industry for the use of UV technology to treat pathogens in water.

In the mid-2000s, NWRI began to shift its focus to addressing the needs and challenges associated with potable reuse, which involves the use of highly treated recycled water to augment drinking water supplies. Vartanian was an enthusiastic worker on numerous projects and activities related to this emerging opportunity. She served as editor and helped administer more than 20 NWRI expert panels reviewing complex potable reuse projects, from the Groundwater Replenishment System in Orange County, California (the largest project of its kind in the world) to a first-of-its-kind direct potable reuse (DPR) project in the small resort town of Cloudcroft, New Mexico.

Vartanian also worked with the State of California’s Expert Panel on Surface Water Augmentation and Direct Potable Reuse, and served as editor of the 420-page document entitled *Expert Panel Final Report: Evaluation of the Feasibility of Developing Uniform Water Recycling Criteria for Direct Potable Reuse*, published in August 2016. The report was used as the basis for State’s own report to the Legislature, submitted in December 2016. The State has since been engaged in developing criteria for DPR and, in collaboration with major water industry research organizations, is funding efforts to address the six research areas recommended by the Expert Panel.

(MORE)

Other influential reports that Vartanian edited include *Potable Reuse Research Compilation: Synthesis of Findings* (with co-editors Dr. George Tchobanoglous and Jeff Mosher) and *Risk-Based Framework for the Development of Public Health Guidance for Decentralized Non-Potable Water Systems*, both of which were cited as the top two reports in 2017 out of 79 published by the Water Environment and Research Foundation (WE&RF) and Water Research Foundation (WRF).

Her most recent report, which she co-wrote with Mosher, was *Guidance Framework for Direct Potable Reuse in Arizona*. It was published for WaterReuse Arizona and the Arizona Water Association, and is being used by the State of Arizona to help develop regulatory criteria for DPR.

Known for her high-quality and personable support, Vartanian was a true asset to NWRI and its Member Agencies. Altogether, she managed the development of newsletters, reports, summaries, and other communication materials for the benefit of NWRI's Member Agencies and Corporate Associates. She also assisted with many other duties, such as overseeing the NWRI's Clarke Prize selection process and providing support to the Clarke Prize recipients as they prepared the lectures given at the award ceremony.

"I have had an incredibly wonderful career," said Vartanian. "Every day, I learned something new in the realm of water science and outreach. I witnessed the planning, development, and implementation of amazing projects that helped communities across the country receive safer, more abundant sources of water. And I was fortunate to work with some of the most knowledgeable and dedicated professionals in the water industry. I'm going to miss them the most. Working with people like George Tchobanoglous of UC Davis, Mike Wehner of OCWD, Bob Ghirelli of OCSD, water reuse expert Jim Crook, or public health expert Joe Cotruvo made me want to come to the office every day with a smile on my face, knowing they were going to challenge me in some way, and I was going to love it. I hope I can be just as great a teacher to my children as they have been to me."

Vartanian's last day of service at NWRI is July 13, 2018.

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*The National Water Research Institute (NWRI) was founded in 1991 by a group of Southern California water agencies in partnership with the Joan Irvine Smith and Athalie R. Clarke Foundation to promote the protection, maintenance, and restoration of water supplies and to protect the freshwater and marine environments through the development of cooperative research work. NWRI's member agencies include Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Irvine Ranch Water District, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Orange County Sanitation District, Orange County Water District, and West Basin Municipal Water District. Please visit [www.nwri-usa.org](http://www.nwri-usa.org) for more information.*

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