

# Committee on the Environment

AIA Knowledge Communities



## Letter from the Chair

Hello COTE Community!

When the AIA published the [Sustainability Leadership Opportunity Scan](#) in 2013, its purpose was to "identify leadership opportunities and recognition for architects through sustainability." Seven principal trends and priorities emerged from this research and while Energy, Health, Materials and Resilience are all receiving much-warranted attention, COTE continues to see that Water is also a critical issue and leadership opportunity for architects.



But it isn't an easy or clear-cut one. In August, a 1000-year storm poured over 7.1 trillion gallons of rain onto Louisiana, [resulting in 13 deaths](#), over 60,000 buildings damaged and [one-third of the state](#) declared a federal disaster area. Simultaneously, in the western US, 100% of California is [experiencing drought conditions](#) resulting in reduced available surface water and more importantly, a significant [decrease in available ground water](#). At least 36 states currently face potable water shortages. And contaminated municipal water isn't just happening in Flint – it's happening all over the country. Increasingly, [architects](#) are [assisting cities](#), communities, campuses and clients around the world as they "plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt" to adverse conditions and events.

Opportunities range from simple decisions such as specifying water conserving and efficient fixtures and equipment to working with code and local officials to create on-site water reuse and treatment plans. And working with governments, planners and engineers to prepare for rising seas and increasing deluges. As Louisiana, California and the rest of the nation attempts to tackle their water issues, COTE and AIA Architects must also take this opportunity and responsibility to design for our water future.



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Thanks for reading,



Paula McEvoy, FAIA, LEED Fellow

2016 Chair, AIA Committee on the Environment Advisory Group

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## Learning from the Leaders: Collective Wisdom & Feedback Loops (Part 2)

By Kira Gould



EUI of the project is strong, but not quite in line with energy model predictions. As a result, extensive retrocommissioning has been undertaken. | Austin, TX | ARCHITECT: Lake|Flato Architects, H-E-B, Selser Schaefer Architects | PHOTO: Mark Gaynor

[Read part 1 of this series >](#)

The “Collective Wisdom & Feedback Loops” section of the AIA COTE Top Ten recognition program has always been one of my favorite aspects of this unique design awards program. It used to be called “Lessons Learned,” and I have always felt that it is the part of the entry that invites reckoning and speaks directly to the realm that is most wanting in this sector. [Read more >](#)

## SpeakUp! An AIA Corinthian’s Perspective

By Mary Ann Lazarus, FAIA



PHOTO: Eli Meir Kaplan

What do the states of Argos, Athens, Corinth, and Sparta have to do with the AIA's Advocacy agenda? A great deal, it turns out. Those are the names of the fictitious states that the 176 attendees represented at the very successful inaugural AIA SpeakUp that took place in Washington DC from July 13-15. SpeakUp is the name for the AIA's new advocacy and action event. Rather than follow a standard (aka boring) agenda of large group presentations and break-outs, the AIA leaders took a risk and created a competition where attendees were divided into four teams to apply lessons in creating an advocacy campaign. And the risk paid off big time! [Read more >](#)

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## More news



### Architects launch climate change advocacy group

[Architects Advocate](#) is a public outreach campaign that gives voice to important issues affecting healthy and livable communities and cities. As of today, 64 firms have agreed to display the banner on their company websites. [Learn more >](#)



### Full Disclosures

In an age when transparency is expected, being open about materials requires a real commitment. For many industry observers, this movement toward responsible sourcing (and, indeed, greater sustainability) is both a welcome sight and a long time coming—but it also has a long way to go. [Read more >](#)

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# AIA

## Education Spotlight

### Materials Transparency: Risks and Opportunities for Architects

This enlightening session with legal, insurance, and practice leaders will enhance your understanding of the risks and opportunities of materials transparency. Learn best practices, recommendations and AIA Contract Document model contract language to address some of the risks associated with materials transparency.

**September 8 at 3:00 ET**

[Learn more & register >](#)

### New! Materials Transparency & Risk toolkit

Would you like to bring the materials transparency and risk dialogue to your local AIA network? Check out this toolkit to help get the planning started. [Download >](#)

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## Upcoming Events

### September 15-16, Living Product Expo '16

Pittsburgh, PA

The Expo is an opportunity for participants to share and discover disruptive new ideas and technologies that are reshaping the materials landscape, accelerating the pace of innovation and making Living Products possible today. [Learn more >](#)

### October 5-7, Greenbuild 2016: Iconic Green

Los Angeles

Greenbuild 2016 celebrates the icons of our movement. Those who are working in the trenches today, and those who are in line to take up the banner and lead the way into the future. [Learn more >](#)

**Look out for COTE's Greenbuild-themed September issue!**

### February 10-12, Taliesin West Colloquium

Scottsdale

Join the Historic Resources Committee at Taliesin West to learn about and discuss inspiring and unexpected case-studies that will make you rediscover the potential within your own community.

[Sign-up](#) to receive Taliesin email updates.

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## Call for submission

### U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit

Recognizing the critical role of buildings and the built environment in enhancing climate resilience in urban areas, the US Climate Resilience Toolkit wants to hear from architects. They have invited AIA members to submit climate-related case studies for the Urban topic area.

Launched in 2014 by the federal government, the US Climate Resilience Toolkit is a public venue for your efforts and has a target audience of practitioners, policy leaders, government officials, and business leaders across the nation with 12-15K website visits per month. [Learn more >](#)

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