



Media release

Schaffhausen

09 December 2021

Experts call for smart technology to fight water losses

Episode one of the “Solving water loss for life” webcast series by GF Piping Systems is now online – an intensive discussion with experts including Stuart Hamilton from the International Water Association and Rodrigo Riquelme from Inter-American Development Bank.

How is water loss affecting the world? And how can utilities overcome the challenges of non-revenue water (NRW)? According to the panel of water loss experts in the first episode of the “Solving Water Loss for Life” webcast series, the fight against NRW requires combining two strategies: developing smart yet simple and cost-effective technologies and simplifying governance and management of utilities. The 40-minute discussion, moderated by Andrew Walker, involved four guests from different parts of the water sector, including the International Water Association (IWA), the Swiss research institute EAWAG, and the Inter-American Development Bank. Episode one of the “Solving Water Loss for Life” webcast series is available on-demand and can be accessed free of charge.

Quoting losses of 126 billion m³ of water and \$39 billion per year, the panel quickly underlined the importance of solving water loss. These losses can be physical, meaning that problems with pressure management or the material and age of piping systems can lead to leakages. In addition, water loss can be commercial in nature due to mismanagement within utility companies. Problems include inadequate metering technology, poor billing data, and corruption and theft. Furthermore, the experts agreed that while technological solutions will play a vital role, it is equally important to share information, create awareness and learn from mistakes, as there are many different approaches to combat NRW.

As every water network is different, the water loss experts conclude that it is necessary to approach NRW differently. On the one hand, the industry needs to develop solutions for utilities that adapt to their individual needs and make them as affordable as possible. This includes smart meters and sensors and approachable and mechanically simple technology. On the other hand, utilities must simplify governance and management within their organization. For example, performance-based contracts between utilities, banks, and contractors have effectively reduced water losses. However, as Stuart Hamilton of the International Water Association (IWA) stressed, fighting water loss does not have to be an overnight success: “In the industry, we never talk about failure, we just know what not to do again. Because solving NRW is not like an escalator, slowly going to the top. It is more like climbing a ladder – every problem you have is a weight on your shoulders that you can remove. It is about climbing the ladder, one step at a time.”

The guest-panelists included Rodrigo Riquelme, Water and Sanitation Lead Specialist at the Inter-American Development Bank; Stuart Hamilton, Chair of the Water Loss Specialist Group at IWA; and Dr. Christoph Lüthi, Head of the Department of Sanitation, Water and Solid Waste for Development, at the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (Eawag).

After participating in the first episode, Olivier Narbey, Senior Business Development Manager Utilities at GF Piping Systems, commented, "Having worked with many international utilities over the years, we are excited to have created a format that puts the challenges of water loss into the spotlight. Our goal is to help people understand the gravity of the challenges ahead. At the same time, we want to inspire people to take action, no matter how large or small that action might be – it all counts in the fight against water loss and non-revenue water."

On 20 December, Andrew Walker will host the second episode with a panel of worldwide water experts from across the sector who will discuss how utilities are innovating with technology to solve water loss issues and digitalizing their water networks to help reduce leakages.

To watch the complete first episode and to sign up for the second episode, "How utilities are innovating with technology," please visit:

<https://www.gfps.com/com/en/about-us/events/2021/solving-water-loss-series.html>

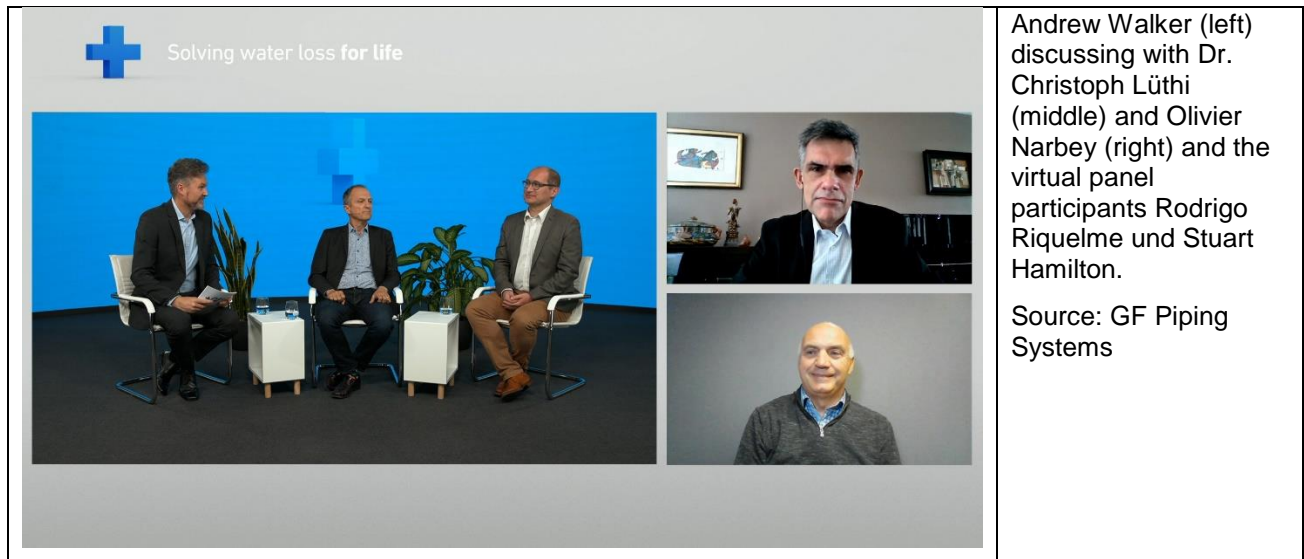
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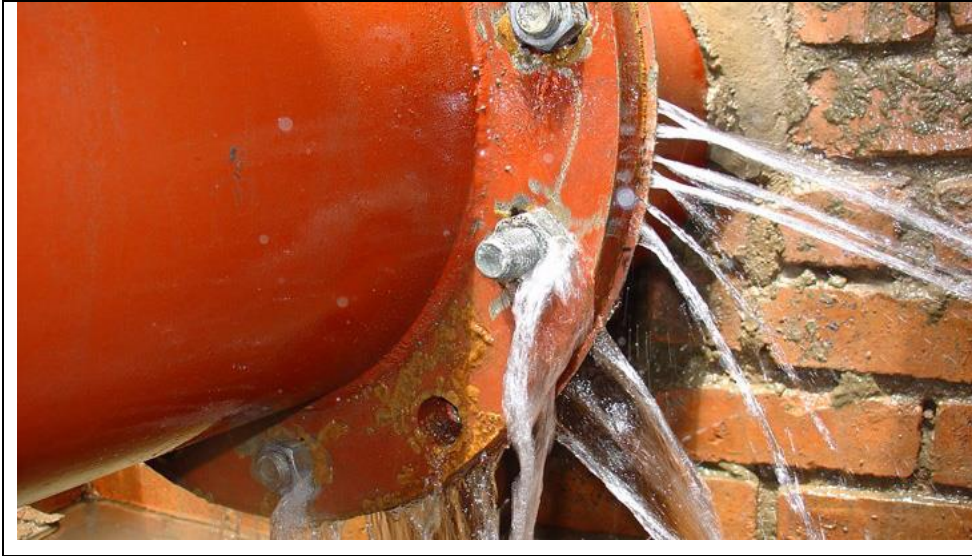
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About GF Piping Systems Ltd.

GF Piping Systems is the leading flow solutions provider worldwide, enabling the safe and sustainable transport of fluids. The company specializes in plastic piping systems and system solutions plus services in all project phases. GF Piping Systems has its own sales companies in 31 countries, which means it is always by its customers' side. Production sites in 36 locations in America, Europe, and Asia ensure sufficient availability and quick, reliable delivery. In 2020, GF Piping Systems generated sales of CHF 1,70 bn and employed 6'893 people. GF Piping Systems is a division of Georg Fischer AG, which was founded in 1802, and is headquartered in Schaffhausen, Switzerland
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Pictures





Non-revenue water

Source: Stuart
Hamilton