The economy was the focus of the March 2009 issue of *EM*. As we entered 2009, a global economic crisis was at the forefront of everyone’s mind. For A&WMA members, how the environmental industry might be impacted by the recession was of particular concern. In this issue, we asked members and other experts for their feedback on where the industry stood at the beginning of 2009 as a result of the economic uncertainty, what challenges they thought lay ahead, and what environmental professionals might do to ensure their survival during the global recession.

In the article, **Working Smarter in the New Economy: A New Chapter in America’s Leadership on the Environment**, by Richard Crume, Stephanie Luster-Teasley, and Chatten Cowherd, the authors reflected on how the U.S. economy was evolving into something new—an economy with greater oversight and accountability, renewed transparency in procurements, and a newfound emphasis on sound fiscal management—and how the environmental industry might fare in these uncharted waters.

*Quoting from the article:* “How can we continue making progress on the nation’s environmental priorities in these tough economic times? One way is to be smarter about how we perform project assignments and research studies.”

In another article, **Looking for Opportunity in the Midst of Recession**, A&WMA Past-President Anthony Buonicore reminded us that in a bad recession environmental consultants just have to work a little harder and look a little deeper to find opportunities.

*Quoting from the article:* “Environmental consultants have a choice. They can complain about how terrible the market is, or they can work hard to seek out the opportunities that are always there. Yes, it may require a retuning of services and marketing efforts to target the ‘right’ clients with the ‘right’ services, but this should be viewed as a cost of doing business.”

Lastly, in **Avoiding a Compliance Downturn in a Rough Economy**, by Paul Gerbec and Mark Manninen, the authors considered how when faced with difficult economic conditions, successful and innovative companies seek out opportunities that will provide not just a way through the troubles, but a way to come out on top.

*Quoting from the article:* “One obvious impact will be that many, or even most, companies will focus their environmental programs on necessary compliance activities, while beyond-compliance initiatives will take a back seat.”

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