This year, we have all faced many more challenges, uncertainties, and angst than at other any time in the past 75 years. A&WMA’s goal throughout has been to bring certainty to those areas that complement our mission and focus, while acknowledging that there is always room for improvement. Adaptation has allowed us to remain financially solvent, while providing equivalent and meaningful programming and services through new platforms.

In retrospect, the year started well. We held excellent Inter-council and winter Board of Directors meetings in beautiful San Francisco in January. From the restaurant at the top of the San Francisco Hyatt hotel, you could see the expanse of the Pacific Ocean on the other side of the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, Mount Tamalpais, and the Berkeley Hills, as well as several other incredible cities in the distance. A&WMA’s Board welcomed two new directors, Rashmi Pathak and John Kinsman, and we had a robust discussion about many subjects around member services and engagement. While our discussions focused on becoming more innovative with programming and content, we had no idea of the paradigm shifts heading our way.

Just a few (short) months later, we held our first Virtual Annual Conference & Exhibition with more than 600 attendees, 220 papers, 24 sponsors and exhibitors, and many of the same activities of a face-to-face annual conference. Following on from a very successful Virtual ACE, we held a virtual Science of PFAS conference and a virtual New Source Review workshop that were both huge successes, as have been the many webinars we have organized and held throughout the year. I cannot stress enough how lucky and fortunate we are to have such a wonderful and adaptable headquarters staff.

This has been a dichotomous year—both very long and very short at the same time. I am not sure how that works, but I have heard from many other people who feel the same way. This most unusual year has had its disappointments, but also fantastic positive surprises. For example, I really appreciate and enjoy being able to go to the A&WMA website at any time of the day or week and watch a presentation that I missed from a past conference or webinar.

Many thanks and recognition to the Board of Directors, and especially to those who have completed their terms during the Great Pivot Year: Mike Markey, Corey Mocka, and Rahul Thaker. With this last missive as President my duties transition to Brian Bunker, who I am certain based on his sage advice and multifaceted support of the Association will be a prodigious and innovative leader in 2021. Moreover, my sincerest appreciation and thanks to you the members for participating in content development; webinar/conference attendance; advertising, exhibiting, and sponsorship; and last but not least, for your continued support of this Association as members.

This month in EM, the U.S. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) are the focus. Reviewing the standards on a five-year cycle allows the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to assess where the United States stands with regard to setting ambient threshold concentrations for carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particle pollution, and sulfur dioxide. The three articles published in this issue offer a thought-provoking review of the standards, the impacts of ad-hoc changes to the review process, and how the states and federal government are managing cooperative federalism under the U.S. Clean Air Act.