

# 2026 Water Tower Showdown Quick Reference

## THE CHALLENGE

The challenge is to build a structurally efficient model water tower that holds one gallon of water and can be filled and drained quickly while also being aesthetically pleasing. Towers are judged on Structural Efficiency, Cost Efficiency, Design Ingenuity, and Hydraulic Efficiency. Prizes will be awarded to the top three scoring teams, with a top prize of a \$75 Visa gift card for each member of the first-place team, a \$50 gift card for each member of the second-place team, and a \$25 gift card for each member of the third place team. In addition to the competition, a tour of the treatment plant will be offered to participants during this event.



### TEAMS

Grades 6 - 8,  
4 students max/team



### FRIDAY

July 17, 2026



### TIME

9:30AM - Noon



### SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE WATER TREATMENT FACILITY

1500 Radford Church Rd  
Moneta, VA 24121

## JUDGING CRITERIA

Water professionals serve as judges for the competition and use a series of evaluations and tests to judge the towers. View full rules for specific qualifications in each category.



**Structural  
Efficiency**



**Cost  
Efficiency**



**Design  
Ingenuity**



**Hydraulic  
Efficiency**

## KEY DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

1

### Height and Size

The tank must be between 1.5 feet and 2.5 feet tall. The base of the model must fit in a square 1 foot on each side.

2

### Water Storage Capacity and Connector

Your tower must hold between 1 and 2.5 gallons of water and should not leak. You must use a 3/8" diameter connector on your drain pipe.

3

### Design and Cost

The more creative your tower the better! Using recycled materials for your tower also results in a better score.

## FREE REGISTRATION

### Register by July 2!

Register online at

[www.vaawwa.org/events/watertowershowdown2026](http://www.vaawwa.org/events/watertowershowdown2026)

Full Rules and  
and Registration



American Water Works Association  
**Virginia**Section

