



# Press Advisory

---

**For Immediate Release: October 18, 2007 Contact: Adam Krantz – 202/833-4651**

October 18, 2007. -- The Water Infrastructure Network (WIN) and its members today called on Congress to celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act by re-establishing its commitment to investing in clean water infrastructure legislation.

The 1972 Clean Water Act authorized an infusion of federal funds demonstrating America's commitment to restoring its precious water resources. Faced with industrial pollution, untreated sewage, and burning rivers, Congress said – enough is enough – and made a historic, long-term commitment to our nation's water quality.

One of the major tenets of the 1972 statute was the authorization of federal financial assistance to wastewater treatment and water quality improvements. In the formative years of the Clean Water Act, the federal government invested more than \$72 billion to help cities build wastewater treatment plants that significantly contributed to the clean water progress over the past 35 years. But funding levels have dropped dramatically in recent years, producing an ever-widening gap between identified needs and resource commitments.

However, much more needs to be done. The EPA estimates that 40 percent of our nation's waters are impaired for their most basic uses of fishing and swimming. The Water Infrastructure Network estimates the 20-year need for clean water infrastructure at approximately \$300-\$500 billion over the next 20 years. The WIN estimate is echoed by the EPA and the Congressional Budget Office.

Despite this data, federal funds for water infrastructure have plummeted 70 percent since 1980 and almost 50 percent since 2001. Left unaddressed, enormous infrastructure gaps have consequences.

WIN believes the Senate should act as soon as possible to introduce and pass similar legislation to H.R. 720, the *Water Quality Financing Act of 2007*, which passed the House on a 303-108 vote and would provide \$14 billion over four years for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. WIN also believes a long-term, sustainable funding solution via a clean water trust fund is essential, and we commend the October 16, 2007 House passage of H. Res. 725, making a commitment to work toward such a trust fund.

David A. Raymond, President, the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) said, “We have the technology, the capability, and the expertise. We need a Federal commitment to clean water. We urge quick action this Congress to make clean water a priority.”

Steve Sandherr, Chief Executive Officer of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) said, “While measurable progress has been made in making the nation’s waters swimmable and fishable over the last 35 years, the lack of funding at all levels of government puts these gains at risk. There is an urgent need for an immediate boost in funds for both the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) programs. There is also wisdom behind establishing a sustainable source of funding for clean and safe drinking water infrastructure, much like the Highway and Aviation Trust Funds.”

“Without adequate Federal funding for infrastructure rehabilitation and replacement, sustained water quality is an impossible goal, said Larry Frevert, President, American Public Works Association (APWA.) “On this, the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act, we urge Congress to act now to adopt water infrastructure funding legislation.”

“Dwindling federal commitment to the nation’s water and wastewater systems has left us facing the possibility of a lesser water quality than existed prior to the Clean Water Act’s passage,” said W.F. Marcuson III, Ph.D., P.E., Hon.M.ASCE, president of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). “We have the economic strength and the technical know-how to solve this problem. What we lack is the political will to use them. That has to change. We call on our national leaders to recommit themselves to protecting public health and safety by investing in our vital water and wastewater systems.”

Ray Poupore, Executive Vice-President, National Construction Alliance, stated, “Investing in water infrastructure benefits the environment and the economy. For every \$1 billion invested in water infrastructure spending, 47,000 jobs are created in America.”

Ken Kirk, Executive Director of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) stated, “As the primary stewards of our nation’s waters, the nation’s public wastewater treatment utilities stand committed to achieving the lofty objectives of the Clean Water Act. The 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act is not just a time to celebrate our progress but is a time to recommit to the local-state-federal partnership that made the Nation’s water quality gains possible. Without a long-term investment commitment from the federal government the last 35 years of environmental progress will be lost — we must not let this happen.”

Mohamed Dahab, President of the Water Environment Federation (WEF) said, “The current funding provisions of the Clean Water Act were last renewed in 1987. Since then, the “cost of clean” has increased manifold. The partnership between the federal government and local communities has been a great success and it needs to be continued.”

---

The Water Infrastructure Network (WIN) is a broad-based coalition of local elected officials, drinking water and wastewater service providers, state environmental and health administrators, engineers and environmentalists dedicated to preserving and protecting the health, environmental and economic gains that America’s drinking water and wastewater infrastructure provides.

[www.win-water.org](http://www.win-water.org)