



Collaborations to Strengthen the Cause

On July 18, 2007, Governor Spitzer signed legislation to increase the Environment Protection Fund (EPF) to \$300 million by 2009. This is a record-breaking number for the EPF, and although this is not a significant amount of money when compared to the rising costs of wastewater and water facility upgrades across the state, it is, nonetheless, a step forward.

The EPF helps to finance many diverse projects that span outside of the traditional water and wastewater arenas. A range of environmental programs administered by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) including clean water projects is an area of focus for the EPF. There are three funding sections in the EPF that fund Clean Water type projects. \$12.8 million for Agricultural Nonpoint Source Projects (NPS) and \$6.4 million for Non Agricultural NPS projects, \$10.0 million for municipalities to upgrade municipal systems to meet stormwater discharge requirements. This section includes projects that would be required under MS4 permits and might be interpreted to include SSO and CSO projects. Other areas funded by the program, to name a few, are open space, working farms, municipal and urban parks, land stewardship, urban and community forestry programs and local recycling programs.

Most of the funding for the EPF is financed by the real estate transfer tax. The EPF was established in 1993, and since that time, has increased its financial allocation.

NYWEA was pleased to team with organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, Audubon, Natural Resources Defense Council, NY Public Interest Research Group, Sierra Club and the New York League of Conservation Voters to share our strengthened message that the EPF needs more funding.

Panels for Elected Officials

For the third consecutive year, NYWEA is teaming up with NYSDEC to coordinate wastewater panels for local and elected representatives. These free panels are designed to be a resource for mayors, plant superintendents and chief operators to better understand and manage their municipal systems. A series of three panels has been developed for Fall 2007:

- October 30 – Cortland County Grange
- November 1 – Chautaugua
- November 27-28 – Westchester County Center, White Plains



Available on the NYWEA website is the *Handbook on Wastewater Management for Local Representatives* that stemmed from our first panels held in 2005. Be sure to download your free copy and use it as a tool to help you make informed decisions for your municipality.

Joint Water Resources Symposium, November 13-15, 2007 Doubletree Hotel, Syracuse, NY

NYWEA is delighted to once again team up with the NY Section American Water Works Association and present a jointly sponsored Water Resources Symposium. Congressman Michael Arcuri will give the keynote address and the technical program provides a full slate of sessions covering topics geared to the water and wastewater industry. (See page 62 for more details.)

Energy Efficiency

NYWEA has been asked to participate in the Infrastructure Alliance for Energy Efficiency by Red Oak Consulting, who was recently awarded the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) Municipal Water and Wastewater Facilities contract through the Energy Smart Focus Program. Other participating Alliance organizations include: the NYS departments of Environmental Conservation, Health, and State, the Rural Water Association, American Water Works Association, New York Conference of Mayors & Municipal Officials, Association of Towns of the State of New York, New York State Association of Counties, New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation, USDA Rural Development, New York State Tug Hill Commission, RCAP Solutions, Syracuse University Environmental Finance Center, Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental & Energy Systems, International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Local Governments for Sustainability, and several chapters of the New York State Association of Regional Councils.

The overall goal of the program is to raise awareness of NYSERDA programs and stimulate interest in energy efficiency improvement projects within the water and wastewater sector. The Alliance will serve as a partial dissemination arm and assist with the development of customized outreach materials for statewide distribution. NYWEA members may be asked to fill out a survey to help identify and define the sector's energy efficiency needs.

NYWEA is a result of the sum of all of its parts. These types of collaborative activities illustrate how working together with other organizations on a mutual goal of building knowledge to improve efficiency helps us to strengthen our mission.

Upcoming Clearwaters Themes

Themes are assigned to each issue of *Clearwaters* to give NYWEA members a resource tool for a given topic. This issue is no exception, many thanks to the members of the Publications Committee and, in particular, President Tom Lauro, who suggested a topic near and dear to his passion, the Long Island Sound. Taking a look ahead, the Winter issue will cover "Mercury in the Water Environment." The Spring issue is slated to cover "Energy Efficiency." If you have ideas for topics to feature, please be sure to let us know.


Patricia Cerro-Reehil