



**Statewide Water Policy Involvement**

On September 23rd, the New York Water Environment Association (NYWEA) was invited to participate in a roundtable on Infrastructure and Investment held at Pace University. The event was coordinated by Pace University's Academy for Environmental Studies and brought together high level government, policy, legal, scientific and other experts in New York's environmental field. The conference examined the need for a comprehensive state water policy and accompanying objectives that are specific to New York State's needs, and that address the failures and limitations of the Federal Clean Water Act. I'm very proud to report that NYWEA was well represented with member of the NYWEA Government Affairs Committee, Libby Ford, NYWEA President, Bruce Munn, and myself in attendance. Members of the Government Affairs Committee worked hard to coordinate the message that was delivered during the meeting. It was an honor for NYWEA to be invited to engage in statewide policy work that has the potential of long lasting positive implications so closely tied with our mission to protect public health. We'll be sure to keep you posted on our future involvement and how the concept of a comprehensive state water policy progresses.

Identified as a priority in its Business Plan, NYWEA continues to promote public outreach as a top concern. One of the audiences NYWEA reaches is elected officials. Originally conceived by Phil Smith of NYSDEC and developed by the Environmental Finance Center, at Syracuse University NYWEA has now taken the lead in coordinating Roundtables for Elected Officials that take place three times a year. Over the last six years these events have reached 442 people from 171 communities. The events are formatted in basic and advanced sessions. The basic session appeals to newly elected officials who are not entirely familiar with the workings of a wastewater treatment facility, including the financial and administrative responsibilities. The basic session ends with presentations by the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation and US Department of Agriculture/Rural Development on the funding programs available. In addition to some of the items covered in the basic session, the advanced session expands to include capital improvement, small town asset management, compliance, and public outreach programs.

**Outreach to Elected Officials**

Feedback from participants has been favorable, and these sessions will continue in 2010 around the state to maximize exposure for all elected officials. An added benefit of these programs is the networking that takes place among the attendees, as they hear about success stories and share the disappointment of unsuccessful programs.

Feedback from participants has been favorable, and these sessions will continue in 2010 around the state to maximize exposure for all elected officials. An added benefit of these programs is the networking that takes place among the attendees, as they hear about success stories and share the disappointment of unsuccessful programs.

**Roundtable Goals:** The goal of the elected official panels is to have the elected officials leave feeling empowered and to understand more clearly what they can do to be knowledgeable and efficient, and to help make the residents of the community understand the importance of their water/wastewater infrastructure.

**Chapter Meetings – Not to Be Overlooked**

Every NYWEA member takes a different approach in connecting to the organization. For some, involvement at the state level is of interest and attendance at the annual and spring meetings is important. For others, involvement in national Water Environment Federation activities is desirable. Wherever you live in New York (or near its contiguous borders), you're close to one of NYWEA's seven chapters. Each one of the chapters provides convenient, quality training for members and should be seen as a resource of opportunities to be tapped. Contact hours and Professional Development Hours (PDHs) are offered to wastewater professionals. For those members who cannot travel long distances to meetings, or are feeling the economic pinch, I would encourage you to take a look at what your local chapter has to offer – you won't be disappointed!

Lastly, many thanks to Jerry Lastihenos and Sandeep Mehrotra for sharing the Staten Island Bluebelt story with me, and for their help to develop this issue. We welcome input from all members, so please do not hesitate to contact me if you have an idea for a future theme for *Clear Waters* magazine.

*Patricia Cerro-Reehil*  
Patricia Cerro-Reehil

**Upcoming NYWEA Meetings**

**82nd Annual Meeting**  
January 31–February 3, 2010  
Marriott Marquis, New York City  
**Legislative Dialogue**  
February 23, 2010 Legislative Office Building  
Albany, New York  
**Spring Meeting Technical Conference & Exhibition**  
June 7–9, 2010, Rochester, NY  
For all meeting information visit NYWEA.org

**NOW IT COMES WITH A LIST OF INGREDIENTS.**



**EPA** DRINKING WATER. KNOW WHAT'S IN IT. FOR YOU.  
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set the national drinking water standards to protect your health and the environment. EPA's drinking water standards are based on the latest science and are designed to protect you and your family from harmful contaminants in your drinking water. For more information on EPA's drinking water standards, visit [www.epa.gov/dw](http://www.epa.gov/dw).