



**The New York Water Environment Association, Inc.**  
*The Water Quality Management Professionals*

525 Plum Street • Suite 102

Syracuse, New York 13204

(315) 422-7811 • Fax: 422-3851

www.nywea.org • e-mail: pcr@nywea.org

**CONTACT: Jason Zwetsch**, tunnel tour coordinator, 585-263-1577

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Public Officials Invited on Rochester Deep Tunnel Tour**

Rochester-area officials will don hard hats and descend 60 feet below ground to obtain a firsthand view and understanding of the county's critical underground stormwater tunnel network. This "hidden" infrastructure, called Monroe County's Deep Stormwater Tunnel System, is the focus of an unusual tour event for public officials to be held **Thursday, June 8, 2006** beginning at 11 a.m. at the Frank E. Van Lare Wastewater Treatment Facility, 1574 Lakeshore Boulevard, Rochester, New York. Participants will be safely lowered into the tunnel system to tour a portion of Rochester's 26-mile stormwater overflow abatement network via a special tunnel truck vehicle. The entire stormwater-sewer system serving Monroe County's four sewer districts runs 785 total miles. The event is being planned and hosted by members of the New York Water Environment Association's (NYWEA) Genesee Valley Chapter.

"Water and its careful management is the lifeblood of any community," notes Jason Zwetsch, a Rochester environmental scientist, NYWEA-member and tour coordinator. "Members of NYWEA and its Industrial Issues Committee want our public officials and citizens to be aware of just how vitally important our water and wastewater infrastructure is to our economic growth and quality of life, especially during times of crisis. We only have to look at recent disasters such as Katrina to realize that such investment is crucial to our safe and sufficient drinking water. Our stormwater tunnel system, built in the 1970s, is an example of environmental foresight in the cost-effective management of water quality."

**(MORE)**

*Tunnel Tour continued...Page 2*

The event, which includes a tour and historical presentation of the Van Lare Wastewater Treatment Facility, will educate officials on the importance of the water/wastewater infrastructure in protecting public health; the wastewater treatment and conveyance facilities already in place; and, the need for continual re-investment to maintain and, when necessary, modify or enhance public works projects. The event also includes a meet-and-greet session with refreshments. A number of state, county, or municipal officials are scheduled to attend, including John Graham, Monroe County Director of Environmental Services; New York State Senator, James Alesi, of Fairport; Monroe County Legislator, Stephanie Aldersley, of Rochester; Monroe County Legislator, Robert Colby, of Spencerport; New York State Assemblymen, David Koon of Fairport; and Monroe County Legislator, David Malta, of Webster.

**The New York Water Environment Association is a statewide, nonprofit organization of 2,100 environmental engineers and water quality management professionals that promotes clean water programs and related technical and public education. It also sponsors a scholarship program that encourages careers in science and engineering and provides humanitarian assistance related to clean water. Headquartered in Syracuse, NY, the NYWEA has seven regional chapters, 12 college student chapters and is an affiliate of the international Water Environment Federation (WEF). More information on NYWEA can be found at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org).**

###

**MEDIA NOTE:** The NYWEA Tunnel Tour event runs from 11 am to 3 pm, June 8, meeting at the Van Lare Wastewater Treatment Facility, 1574 Lakeshore Boulevard, Rochester, New York. The first tunnel tour begins promptly at 11:30, the meet-and-greet session/lunch is at 1:00, and the second tunnel tour begins at about 1:30. *The event's rain date is Friday, June 9 (same times).*

For additional questions or coverage arrangements, please contact NYWEA-Genesee Valley Chapter tunnel tour representatives: Jason Zwetsch at [585-263-1577](tel:585-263-1577) /[jzwetsch@nixonpeabody.com](mailto:jzwetsch@nixonpeabody.com); or, Kathleen Russell at [585-458-7550](tel:585-458-7550) /[kathyr@aftekfilters.com](mailto:kathyr@aftekfilters.com)