

2023 Water and Wastewater Utility Challenges

Our Water and Wastewater utilities need your help!!

Actions Requested

- 1. We want to offer our expertise to our elected officials in the successful development and implementation of new legislation and standards to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to safe and reliable drinking water and can enjoy a clean and healthy environment.**
- 2. We are grateful for your past assistance. NYS Water and Wastewater municipalities need additional funding to help cover the costs for new treatment plants to meet new regulations. The needs exceed the current resources.**
- 3. NYS Water Suppliers need flexibility on deadlines to meet new regulations.**
- 4. We support the existing US EPA protocols used to develop water quality standards that are based in science and provide meaningful public health protection.**
- 5. Budget NYS funds to replace dwindling American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) in the 2023 budget.**

Water and Wastewater Challenges

- **Lead and Copper Rule Revisions - Drinking Water**
 - NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council) estimates there are 360,000 Lead Service Lines (LSLs) in NYS. This number will likely increase once inventories are completed. Typical cost for FULL LSLR = \$7,500-\$10,000.
 - Total cost to remove LSLs in NYS- \$2.7 billion - \$3.6 billion based on current estimates.
 - October 2024 - Utilities must complete Service Line Inventories
 - Corrosion Control Treatment:
 - CCT Studies required by LCRR likely to affect ~100 systems.
 - Typical study cost- \$100,000 - \$200,000
 - Treatment upgrades- \$100,000 - \$500,000
 - An estimated total cost for NYS - \$400 million
- **Emerging Contaminants - Drinking Water**
 - \$2 -10 million - This is the conservative cost estimate to install PFAS treatment for a SINGLE utility that treats 1- 2 million gallons per day. That's just ONE small utility!
 - Lab Testing and Lab Capacity - There are only a few laboratories in NYS that are qualified to test and keep up with the new demands, more time is needed for testing.
 - Important Emerging Contaminants Timeline are going to be challenging to meet:
 - December 2023 - Final Emerging Contaminants Rule anticipated

- December 2026 - Final Emerging Contaminants Rule set and utilities to be compliant
- **Emerging Contaminants - Wastewater**
 - Disposal for biosolids costs has increased 75 to 100% in the past three years.
 - EPA Risk Assessment of PFAS (scheduled to be published in Q1 2024) in biosolids is delaying investments and contributing to increasing costs. WWTPs are not generators of PFAS, but receivers of PFAS. More research is needed to replace PFAS in manufacturing.
- **Supply Chain - Drinking Water and Wastewater**
 - Our water and wastewater utilities are being exposed to major vulnerabilities related to potential future events and shortages. Without ongoing deliveries to our treatment facilities - water cannot be treated properly and safely for consumption!
 - Chlorine
 - Chlorine costs to treat drinking water increased from \$0.62 per gallon in early 2021 to \$2.06 per gallon as of November 2022 - that's a 330% increase!
 - Mid to large sized utilities use approximately 250,000 gallons per year - operating expenses have increased by \$360,000 for chlorine costs alone.
 - Granulated Active Carbon (GAC)
 - Water Treatment Facilities (WTF) have seen a 12-58% increase over a 12-month period depending upon the type of carbon used. The WTF that use GAC to remove PFAS are at the 58% increase - which is extremely higher than the current inflation rate!
 - Energy: Electrical and natural gas costs have risen by more than 50% in the past year, directly impacting rate payers.
- **Workforce - Drinking Water and Wastewater**
 - More than 19 million New Yorkers rely on safe and clean water produced by less than 10,000 certified water and wastewater operators. The industry has been facing a workforce shortage and will only worsen in the coming years. The current water/wastewater utility operator workforce is aging out.
 - The NYSDOH Bureau of Public Water Supply Protection has an equally vital role in drinking water public health protection. Sufficient staffing is needed to oversee existing MCLs, establish new drinking water MCLs for emerging contaminants, and to provide technical assistance and engineering reviews to support community investments in local infrastructure. As more communities discover emerging contaminants that exceed notification levels or MCLs, water suppliers and local governments are ill-equipped to communicate health risks to the public. It is crucial that clear health risk communication is provided by DOH for water suppliers' dissemination to their communities.
- **Infrastructure - Drinking Water**
 - \$38.7 billion - The current cost estimate of repairing, replacing and updating New York's drinking water infrastructure. This cost doesn't include: costs for design or construction management (can be 20% of construction costs); costs for study of project alternatives; costs for project land acquisition or upgrades to utilities; post

COVID inflation of cost of materials and labor; construction of treatment for emerging contaminants; or climate change. *(Cited from a report from NYSDOH in 2008)*

- \$60 billion - A more realistic estimate of drinking water infrastructure upgrade needs state-wide.
 - \$2.4 billion - The current amount New York has invested in drinking water infrastructure. Approximately 95% of the projects submitted for inclusion in the DWSRF program remain unfunded due to a lack of available funds!
- Support for annual operating and maintenance subsidies for water utilities through the SWAP proposal.
- **Infrastructure - Wastewater**
 - \$31.5B - The 2012 cost estimate of repairing, replacing, and updating New York's wastewater infrastructure.
- **Affordability - Drinking Water and Wastewater**
 - LIWAP is the program that assists low income New Yorkers to afford water and wastewater bills, similar to HEAP. The money from ARPA is running out and this vital program should be refunded in the 2023 budget.

Summary

For over a century, with help from science and technological advances, our members, the professionals who operate and maintain New York's water and wastewater facilities, have been able to meet the challenges of proactive public health and environment protection, BUT we need your help now!

Water and wastewater providers are facing staggering costs and extremely tight timelines to maintain and replace aging/failing infrastructure, meet new regulations, and install new technologies to treat water that is being polluted by others. The burden of these costs and compliance timelines is astronomical and cuts into budgets for operations and capital improvements. In addition, it has a negative impact on affordability to NYS residents.

Every single day our water professionals have to figure out how to keep water affordable and somehow pay for the increased costs to treat that water and keep it safe for public consumption and the environment. There is only a finite amount of water in the world and it's our job to keep it safe. Now is the time to work together with the water sector and take action!

About the Organizations

New York Section American Water Works Association | www.nysawwa.org

Contact: Jenny Ingrao, Executive Director at jenny@nysawwa.org

About the New York Section American Water Works Association

Established in 1914, the New York Section American Water Works Association is part of the largest nonprofit, scientific and educational association dedicated to managing and treating water, the world's most important resource. With approximately 50,000 members nationwide and over 2,000 in New York State, AWWA provides solutions to improve public health, protect the environment, strengthen the economy and enhance our quality of life.

New York Rural Water Association | www.nyruralwater.org

Contact: Jamie Herman, CEO at herman@nyruralwater.org

About the New York Rural Water Association

The New York Rural Water Association (NYRWA) is a nonprofit incorporated in 1979, and is a state affiliate of the National Rural Water Association. Our mission is to provide our 1500+ water and wastewater utility system members with the expertise and training necessary to meet present and future challenges and to represent our members interests at the local, state and federal levels. NYRWA provides on-site technical assistance and emergency response as well as classroom training for the rural water and wastewater utilities in NYS who provide service to communities with a population of 10,000 or less.

New York Water Environment Association, Inc. | www.nywea.org

Contact: Patricia Cerro-Reehil, Executive Director at pcr@nywea.org

About New York Water Environment Association, Inc.

Founded in 1929 by professionals in the field of water quality as a nonprofit educational organization, NYWEA has over 2,500 members statewide and hosts several technical conferences each year for environmental engineers, scientists, public officials and others who work in water and wastewater quality management. NYWEA is a member association of the Water Environment Federation. NYWEA publishes Clear Waters, a quarterly educational trade magazine, administers wastewater operator training certification. NYWEA has seven regional chapters, 14 college student chapters and is a Member Association of the international Water Environment Federation.

We Appreciate Your Support!



New York Section

