



The New York Water Environment Association, Inc.

The Water Quality Management Professionals

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22 June 2020

Dr. Howard Zucker
NYS Department of Health
Corning Tower – Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

RE: CORONAVIRUS MONITORING IN WASTEWATER

Dear Dr. Zucker,

On behalf of the New York Water Environment Association (NYWEA), a nonprofit organization representing the interests of more than 2,800 wastewater professionals across the state, I am writing to express our support for developing tools to advance the monitoring and detection of CoV-SARS-2 RNA (the virus that causes COVID-19) in wastewater for New York State. As you may be aware, tracking infectious disease transmission through wastewater has been an important tool for safeguarding public health for nearly 25 years.

While recent scientific breakthroughs show that levels of coronavirus RNA in the sewer can be detected, analytical testing technology is still in the early stages. With further refinement of the technology and epidemiological methods, the presence of the coronavirus RNA in New York State's sewer systems can prove to be a value tool in providing advanced warnings of increases in coronavirus transmission in a geographically-targeted area and any surge in cases and hospitalizations. Eventually, this tool can help us identify areas where the virus is spreading, waning, or absent. Real-time monitoring of coronavirus RNA in wastewater can be an important tool to safely and effectively guide us through the process of reopening the state, and provide abilities to detect future viral infections in our population.

As a direct representative of public and private wastewater utilities, NYWEA is prepared to assist in the implementation of a wastewater coronavirus monitoring system by:

- Promoting the development of tools for monitoring and analysis for coronavirus RNA to its membership and the general public.
- Leading and coordinating sewer utility executives and managers with academic researchers, public health departments, and policy makers as we join forces to respond responsibly to the coronavirus.
- Providing technical expertise relative to the operations and maintenance of public sewer systems

Thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts. Combining our efforts, we can improve the lives of all New Yorkers and make our state safer from the threat of the coronavirus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William J. Nylic, III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the "III".

William J..Nylic, III
President

/Commissioner Basil Seggos
Dr. David Larsen
Brian Gramlich Rahm
Khristopher Dodson