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## NACWA

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# NACWA, WERF and WEF Collaborate on The Water Resources Utility of the Future. . . A Blueprint for Action

In early February, NACWA, the Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF), and the Water Environment Federation (WEF), jointly released a pioneering document that defines the evolving environmental, economic, and social roles that clean water utilities are playing in their communities. As outlined in *Water Resources Utility of the Future . . . A Blueprint for Action*, this new water resources 'Utility of the Future' (UOTF) is transforming the way traditional wastewater utilities view themselves and manage their operations. The document explores how traditional publicly owned treatment works have mastered their core wastewater treatment function and are now redefining themselves as resource recovery agencies and vital community enterprises.

The *Blueprint* opens the door to re-imagining the Clean Water Act in the wake of unprecedented progress and evolution over the 40 years since the Act's passage. "This *Blueprint* will help us realize a sustainable future that minimizes waste, maximizes resources, protects the ratepayer, improves

the community, and embraces innovation in an unprecedented manner," said Ken Kirk, Executive Director, NACWA.

### Conferences and a Caucus Follow Suit

As part of the evolving initiative, NACWA, WERF and WEF made certain that UOTF issues were front-and-center at their winter meetings. NACWA's Winter Conference, *Tomorrow's Clean Water Utility. . . Is the Future Already Here?*, explored the evolution of clean water utilities into resource managers that provide benefits to the environment and their communities. The Association's Summer Conference, *Managing & Financing the Resilient Clean Water Utility*, will examine other important components of the UOTF.

The Association has also reached out to the U.S. House of Representatives with a request to establish a Congressional Caucus on Clean Water Technology & Innovation. Such a caucus of legislators would be charged with exploring issues

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# Policy Forum to Examine Clean Water Act Viability; Set Course for Utility of the Future

NACWA's *National Environmental Policy Forum* is well-timed, bringing together policy makers and clean water professionals to discuss the country's most urgent clean water issues. Held in Washington, D.C., April 21-24, the *Forum* will explore the impacts to clean water from a 113th Congress that is focused on key budgetary issues – and an Obama Administration that has made clear that a proactive environmental agenda remains a top priority. The *Policy Forum* also takes place on Earth Day, providing a unique opportunity to re-examine four decades of utility leadership under the Clean Water Act and whether, and to what degree, the Act is helping or hindering a paradigm shift to The Water Resources Utility of the Future.

The *Policy Forum* will feature high level discussions and NACWA committee meetings on hot topic issues important to all Association members, including integrated planning and affordability, controlling agricultural run-off, opening renewable energy markets, and innovative financing for clean water investments. Key Congressional and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials will be among those speaking and attending, ensuring that Association members come away with the maximum amount of information on issues sure to impact their utility back home.

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## NACWA Shines Spotlight on Integrated Planning, Financial Capability

Since the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued its Integrated Planning Framework in June 2012, NACWA's focus has been on implementation and ensuring that clean water utilities have the information they need to begin tapping into the flexibility EPA appears willing to provide through integrated planning. The success of the Integrated Planning Framework hinges on whether communities take advantage of it to put EPA's offer of greater flexibility and prioritized investment to the test. NACWA is maintaining its clear focus on a number of fronts to ensure this happens.

### Implementation Workshops Garner Considerable Interest

As a central component of its ongoing advocacy, NACWA has committed to hosting, together with the Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA) and the Water Environment Federation (WEF), a series of workshops to help facilitate implementation. While the Framework is already being used successfully in the enforcement context, some of the most challenging aspects of integrated planning – dealing with pre-1977 water quality standards and handling sanitary sewer overflows, for example – have yet to be addressed in the permitting context. Enforcement negotiations have always provided EPA with more flexibility to be creative with scheduling and sequencing, but the true value of integrated planning is



*The Region 7 Integrated Planning Workshop, presented by NACWA in collaboration with ACWA and WEF drew over 70 people representing utilities, states, EPA and the consulting community. Future Workshops are planned in Region 10 and 5.*

### Link between Integrated Planning and Financial Capability Underscored in EPA Memo

After EPA released its June 2012 Integrated Planning Framework, it

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## Affordability is a NACWA Top Priority at Start of 113th Congress

With the 113th Congress up and running, NACWA has resumed efforts on Capitol Hill to address affordability concerns communities around the country are facing as they attempt to upgrade aging wastewater infrastructure and meet increasingly stringent EPA regulations. The Association's focus is two-fold – secure seed money to help early adopters of integrated planning succeed, and seek authorizing language to codify integrated planning and support more cost-effective methods for treating wet weather flows.

In line with NACWA's *Money Matters...Smarter Investment to Advance Clean Water™* campaign, the Association is hoping to secure funding in the Fiscal Year 2014 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) appropriations bill for integrated planning pilot projects, which would provide support to communities that want to pursue integrated planning locally. NACWA's proposal includes \$5 million in grants to clean water utilities or stormwater agencies to develop and seek approval for integrated plans. Three to five communities in each of EPA's 10 regions would be selected, with the funds awarded on a fifty percent cost-share basis with the federal government. NACWA is hopeful that this pilot program will spur greater adoption of integrated planning and provide communities who are inter-

ested in the approach with useful examples of successful plans and model programs. Spearheading the effort in the Senate is Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH).

### Introduction of Key Legislation Anticipated this Spring

The Association is also working to advance two pieces of legislation central to its affordability work: *The Clean Water Affordability Act* (CWAA), which was introduced last Congress by Senator Brown, and *The Wet Weather Community Sustainability Act*.

The CWAA would do four things: 1) reauthorize the Wet Weather Grants Program to provide funding to wastewater treatment plants to deal with sewer overflow issues; 2) codify integrated planning and extend EPA permit terms up to 25 years for communities with an approved plan in place; 3) encourage use of green infrastructure for managing wet weather; and, 4) require EPA to revise guidance on determining a community's financial capability to meet CWA obligations. Representative Bob Latta (R-OH) is working on similar legislation by the same name in the House of Representatives. NACWA hopes to see both of these bills introduced this spring and will be working to mobilize broad support.

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## Pretreatment & Pollution Prevention Workshop Offers Unique Opportunity

Pretreatment professionals should plan now to join their colleagues at the NACWA's *National Pretreatment & Pollution Prevention Workshop*, May 15-17, in Portland, Oregon. As the National Pretreatment Program enters its fourth decade, utility pretreatment programs are finding themselves with new responsibilities and challenges, while still maintaining their traditional functions.

### Panels to Examine Ongoing & Emerging Issues

Presentations at the *Workshop* will cover both traditional pretreatment topics, as well as new issues of increasing relevance to pretreatment programs. While setting local limits has been a core function of pretreatment programs since the beginning, but utilities are still challenged when new industries move in or unusual pollution situations arise. In the panel presentation, *Not Your Typical Discharger: Case Studies for Local Limits*, utilities will demonstrate how they have dealt with an array of unique circumstances. In *Clearing the FOG: Different Strategies for Different Sources*, panelists will discuss the strategies used to reduce FOG from both domestic and commercial sources.

Flushable wipes and other non-dispersible products are an increasing problem for utilities, causing clogged pipes and pumps and increased maintenance costs. Since most of these products are flushed

in people's homes, public education and improved labeling of products are essential components to solving this problem. Panelists in *Toilets are Not Trash Cans! Preventing Inappropriate Flushing* will update Workshop participants on the efforts by NACWA, the Water Environment Federation (WEF), and the American Public Works Association (APWA) to work with manufacturers and retailers on better "no flush" labeling and to educate the public on the appropriate uses of toilets and trash cans.

In addition to other informative panels, the *Workshop* will feature three roundtable sessions: one for participants to meet with other pretreatment professionals from their EPA Region, and two for discussing common issues faced by other utilities. These opportunities to network make the *Workshop* an invaluable experience.

A complete agenda for the *Workshop* – as well as registration, hotel, and travel information – are available on NACWA's [website](#). The group rate of \$155 per night at the DoubleTree by Hilton Portland is available until Tuesday, April 23, and reservations may be made by calling the hotel directly at 503.281.6111 or by visiting the [hotel website](#) and identifying yourself as a NACWA participant. 📌

## NACWA Works with WEF, APWA on Flushable Product Challenges

Many consumer products, whether labeled as "flushable" or not, are flushed down the toilet and then cause expensive problems in the sewer system. NACWA has been working with the Water Environment Federation (WEF) and the American Public Works Association (APWA) on strategies to address this problem.

Flushable wipes have been one of the primary areas of focus of NACWA, WEF, and APWA, as these products are clearly labeled as safe to flush, but do not readily disperse in the sewer system. When clean water agencies try to educate their customers that only toilet paper should be flushed, the labeling on these wipes presents a conflicting message. While voluntary standards exist for the nonwoven fabrics industry to determine whether their products should be labeled "flushable" or not, many utilities do not find these standards sufficient. NACWA and WEF have worked with INDA, the nonwoven fabrics association, on revising these standards.

NACWA, WEF, and APWA representatives, working with Costco, have been successful in securing the agreement of the large national retailer to modify the labeling of some products to include a "no flush" logo. As a result, new packaging began appearing this year on

wipes that are not advertised as flushable. The associations plan to talk to other retailers about package labeling, with a goal of prominent "no flush" logos on all products that are commonly flushed.

### Legislative Strategy Also Being Pursued

NACWA is also investigating a strategy to pursue national legislation that would require "no flush" logos on these types of products, and also to potentially address the products that claim to be flushable. Efforts in Maine and California to pass this type of legislation were unsuccessful, but given the significant costs to clean water agencies and the lack of regulation of these products, national legislation may gain momentum.

The Association has established a resources page at [www.nacwa.org/flushables](http://www.nacwa.org/flushables) with videos, educational materials, presentations, and other information about flushable wipes and other non-dispersible products. Clean water agencies can reference these materials and send in their own resources to post on the page as well. For additional information or to share new resources, please contact NACWA's Director, Regulatory Affairs, Cynthia Finley at [cfinley@nacwa.org](mailto:cfinley@nacwa.org). 📌

## Integrated Planning

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was immediately clear that the financial capability of a community to make its needed clean water investments had taken on even greater importance. The prioritization and sequencing of projects under the Framework will be heavily influenced by a community's ability to pay for them, making the methodology for assessing financial capability an important consideration for any integrated plan. Recognizing this important link, NACWA, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and other groups have continued to press EPA to overhaul, or at least refine, its dated 1997 Financial Capability Guidance.

On January 18, 2013, EPA issued a memorandum indicating that it was willing to discuss a number of areas where the Agency believes information, in addition to what is offered in the 1997 guidance, could better reflect the true ability of a community to afford certain water quality investments. The Conference of Mayors, to-

gether with WEF and other groups, is working on technical information that could be used to supplement the 1997 guidance consistent with the new memo. While NACWA is supportive of this effort, the Association continues to believe that a wholesale revision of the methodology in the 1997 guidance is needed. A NACWA Targeted Action Fund project is currently underway to outline a new approach to financial capability assessments that would better account for changing economic conditions through the forecasting of revenues, rather than making a snapshot assessment as with the current approach.



NACWA also remains active on Capitol Hill working on both integrated planning and financial capability issues (*see related article this issue*). 📌

## NACWA Honors Agencies as National Environmental Achievement Award Winners



*Tony Parrot, Executive Director and MaryLynn Lodor, Environmental Programs Manager, accept the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati's Public Service Award from NACWA Awards Committee Chair, Philip Friess, Technical Services Department Head, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County.*

NACWA recognized eighteen Member Agencies with *National Environmental Achievement Awards* (NEAA) at a ceremony on February 4, 2013 – during the Association's Winter Conference in Miami, Florida. The NEAA Awards recognize Agencies in three categories: Operations & Environmental Performance, Public Service, and Public Information & Education.

NACWA congratulates all of these *National Environmental Achievement Award* winners on their clear commitment to clean water and a safe, sustainable environment. *National Environmental Achievement Awards* will be presented to individual honorees in April at the Association's *National Environmental Policy Forum*. For more information on NACWA's awards programs please visit [www.nacwa.org/awards](http://www.nacwa.org/awards). 📌

## Affordability in 113th Congress

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NACWA is also working to secure support for its own wet weather proposal, *The Wet Weather Community Sustainability Act*, designed to enable communities to use alternative management and technology techniques to more cost-effectively address peak wet weather flows. The Association is circulating the proposal to Members of Congress to identify potential co-sponsors and has briefed EPA on how the proposed changes to the Clean Water Act would work.

NACWA's *National Environmental Policy Forum*, held April 21-24 in Washington D.C., will explore all of these issues in greater length, including how NACWA's members will benefit from these proposals and how they can most effectively advocate for them with their elected officials (*see related article this issue*). 📌



## NACWA, One Voice for Clean Water – Your Voice

**N**ACWA is the advocacy organization representing the interests of the clean water community. The Association's expanding membership creates a stronger advocacy voice for clean water utilities nationwide. NACWA proudly welcomes five new members.

### Public Agencies

#### Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, CA

*Represented by David W. Pedersen, General Manager*

Las Virgenes Municipal Water District provides potable water, wastewater treatment, recycled water and biosolids composting to more than 65,000 residents in the cities of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Westlake Village, and unincorporated areas of western Los Angeles County.

#### City of Beckley Sanitary Board, WV

*Represented by Jeremiah O. Johnson, General Manager*

The Beckley Sanitary Board (BSB) is a sanitary sewer and stormwater utility serving the greater Beckley, West Virginia area.

### Legal Affiliate

#### Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP

*Represented by Rhonda Sandquist, Shareholder*

Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP represents local, national and international clients in legal and lobbying matters across a wide array of industries including real estate, hospitality, private equity, telecommunications, technology, construction, energy, banking, finance, gaming and water.

NACWA's most powerful recruitment tool is its members. Sharing your membership experience with potential members is one of the most effective ways to communicate the value of membership. The Association thanks all who have shared the many benefits of membership with a colleague. If you are aware of a clean water agency or organization that would benefit from NACWA membership, please contact Kelly Brocato, Director, Membership Development at [kbrocato@nacwa.org](mailto:kbrocato@nacwa.org).

### Corporate Affiliates

#### Gresham, Smith, and Partners

*Represented by William Whitson, Executive Vice President*

Gresham, Smith and Partners provides design and consulting solutions for the built environment that contribute to the success of national and international clients.

#### Oracle Utilities

*Represented by Scott McBeth, Director of Industry Strategy*

Oracle Utilities provides a choice of applications, cross-enterprise business processes, and solutions that help its clients meet their biggest challenges while delivering vital services.



## Utility of the Future

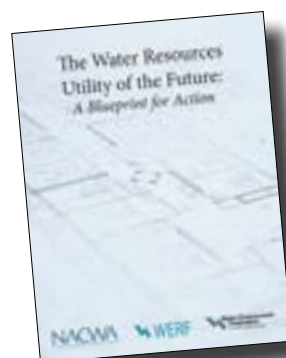
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relevant to the water resources utility of the future – with a focus on technology and innovation.

The three partnering organizations – NACWA, WEF, and WERF – continue to collaborate on this initiative, advancing individual and shared priorities in advocacy, technical input, outreach/communications, scientific research, data collection and media relations.

### Call for Federal Action Nears Release

Drawing upon *The Water Resources Utility of the Future . . . A Blueprint for Action*, NACWA will soon release *The Water Resources Utility of the Future . . . A Call for Federal Action*. This new concise and visual publication defines ten tangible steps that the nation can take to realize a shared vision for the water resources utility of the future. It will call upon Congress, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U. S.



Department of the Interior, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Energy, and other key federal agencies to rethink their relationship to the water sector, take the key actions that will put the Utility of the Future within reach for all utilities. *The Water Resources Utility of the Future . . . A Call for Federal Action* is slated for release at NACWA's *National Environmental Policy Forum* in April.

## National Environmental Policy Forum

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### Utility Executives Roundtable to Explore the Past & Future of the Clean Water Act

To explore these issues at the *Policy Forum*, NACWA has assembled a unique forum, *The Utility Executives Roundtable: A 2020 Vision for Clean Water*. The roundtable will bring together several of the original Congressional staff from both parties who helped author the Act. These former Congressional staffers will look back at the Act's early years and will engage NACWA members in a discussion to explore: 1) whether the Act has achieved its original purpose; 2) whether it is still as relevant as it was when it originally passed in 1972; and, 3) whether changes are needed to bring it into a 21st century that is focused on integrated planning, watershed and adaptive management, as well as resource recovery and sustainability.

### Water Issues to be Heard on the Hill

The Policy Forum agenda includes Member Agency meetings with Congressional delegations to raise issues of significance to individual utilities – and NACWA members as a whole. These critical meetings are being scheduled now. The Association has created a [Congressional Toolbox](#) to provide important information and briefing papers.

### See You in DC!

NACWA's *National Environmental Policy Forum* provides an exceptional opportunity to gain in-depth information on critical legislative and regulatory developments, and build meaningful relationships. Registration information and an up-to-date agenda are available at [2013 National Environmental Policy Forum](#).

## NACWA Heightens State-Regional Outreach at 2013 Policy Forum

NACWA continues to build on its commitment to work closely with state and regional groups representing the clean water community recognizing that today's state and regional clean water issues are likely to become tomorrow's national priorities. The Association's relationships with state and regional organizations are critical to ensuring that it speaks with one voice on advocacy issues and maximizes its effectiveness with Congress and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – at both its Headquarters and Regional Offices.

NACWA has committed resources and staff to accomplish these goals. During the Association's National Environmental Policy Forum in April, regional group liaisons will participate in a state-regional luncheon to foster relationships, and discuss clean water priorities and how best to leverage advocacy capabilities. A growing list of state and regional groups are joining with NACWA to present the National Environmental Policy Forum, among them the Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies; the New York Water Environment Association; the Illinois Water Environment Association; the Water Environment Association of Texas; and the Texas Association of Clean Water Agencies.

## Greitens to Keynote Summer Conference

Eric Greitens, former Navy SEAL, founder of The Mission Continues, and best-selling author of *Strength and Compassion* and *The Heart and the Fist* will keynote NACWA's 2013 Summer Conference in Cincinnati. His July 16 keynote will anchor the conference – *Managing & Financing the Resilient Clean Water Utility*.

Greitens draws from his experience as a humanitarian and Navy SEAL lieutenant commander to address leadership, team building, overcoming adversity, and the power of service. A noted humanitarian, documentary photographer, and researcher – he has worked across the globe.

As a Navy SEAL officer he was deployed four times, to Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, and Southeast Asia, and served as the commander of a Joint Special Operations Task Unit, commander of a

Mark V Special Operations Craft Detachment, and as commander of an al Qaeda Targeting Cell. His personal military awards include the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star, among a myriad of others.

After returning from Iraq, Greitens founded The Mission Continues, which empowers wounded veterans to serve and lead in communities across America. Greitens was appointed as a White House fellow, the most prestigious fellowship for leadership and public service and continues to study and teach public service as a senior fellow at the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and at the Olin School of Business at Washington University.

Registration for NACWA's 2013 Summer Conference, *Managing & Financing the Resilient Clean Water Utility*, will be available online in early April.

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