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Water Associations, EPA Release Case Studies for Effective Utility Management Practices

Alexandria, Va. - Six associations representing the U.S. water and wastewater sector, in collaboration with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), have released *Effective Water and Wastewater Utility Management Case Studies*, a companion document to last year's *Effective Utility Management: A Primer for Water and Wastewater Utilities*. This companion piece provides concrete examples and "how to" assistance for utility managers through profiles of four utilities that successfully applied the Primer concepts and tools to advance effective management practices and achieve long-term sustainability.

The Effective Utility Management (EUM) Collaborating Associations – the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), the American Public Works Association (APWA), American Water Works Association (AWWA), Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), , National Association of Water Companies (NAWC), the Water Environment Federation (WEF), and EPA – have been working together over the past two years to promote effective utility management across the water sector based on a series of Ten Attributes of Effectively Managed Utilities (Attributes) and Five Keys to Management Success (Keys) first identified in a report released by the group in May 2007.

"The case studies complement last year's Primer and online toolkit by showing how sister water sector agencies have applied the process in very practical ways to help improve their quality of service," said Ed McCormick, Manager of Support Services at the East Bay Municipal Utility District in Oakland, Calif. "The EUM process provides an innovative and comprehensive, yet simple tool to help water and wastewater agencies of all sizes to prioritize and systematically improve their performance."

The new case study document illustrates how four utilities used the Attributes and Keys, along with example measures and a self-assessment tool found in the Primer, to improve management operations, bring a crisp and cost effective focus to their initiatives, and supplement both their internal and external communications. Selected from a list of sixteen utilities from across the country, Columbus Water Works (Ga.), Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage District (Wisc.), Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources (Ga.), and Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (Mass.) all faced a range of challenges in their management improvement efforts, and found that the Primer concepts and tools significantly aided their efforts.

"These case studies demonstrate that the management, attributes, and measurement tools included in the EUM Primer can help water and wastewater utilities set priorities, meet challenges, and implement improvements," said John Young, President of American Water Services at American Water Works Service Co. in Voorhees, N.J. "The document further shows that the EUM's practical, user-friendly resources have been successfully used to enhance customer service and the integrity of utilities with varying size, customer needs, and operating challenges."

Overall, the experiences of the profiled utilities indicate that the Primer provides a highly cost effective and easy-to-implement set of tools and concepts for undertaking and improving upon existing utility management improvement efforts. “By using the Attributes you can develop a great strategic plan, goals, and measures, or you can very simply and inexpensively update your existing plan, as we did,” said Tyler Richards, Deputy Director of Operations and Environmental Services at the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources in Lawrenceville, Ga.

In addition to the Primer (available in PDF and as a new interactive tool) and the case studies document, the EUM also has an online Resource Toolbox that contains links to key resources and tools. These resources can be downloaded at no charge from www.watereum.org.

For more information about the partnering organizations, visit: AMWA at www.amwa.net; APWA at www.apwa.net; AWWA at www.awwa.org; NACWA at www.nacwa.org; NAWC at www.nawc.org; WEF at www.wef.org; and EPA at www.epa.gov.

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