

CLEAN WATER ADVOCATE

Deputy Assistant Administrator for the U.S. EPA's Office of Water, Joel Beauvais, will take the stage at the Association's February 21-24 Winter Conference to highlight the Office's top priority issues, as well as the importance of innovation and collaboration in achieving a healthier environment.



A Clear Commitment to America's Waters



DECEMBER 2015/JANUARY 2016

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NACWA

National Association of
Clean Water Agencies
1816 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington DC 20036-2505

202.833.2672 · www.nacwa.org

114th Congress Finishes First Session on Productive Note

While presidential campaign politics will no doubt impact the second session of the 114th Congress, both Congress, and NACWA, concluded the first session on a productive and positive note.

NACWA Scores Key Victories in Congressional Spending Deal

In December, Congressional negotiators reached agreement on a final [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2016 appropriations](#) package that included a number of major advocacy victories for NACWA and its members. Most significantly, Senate appropriators backed off demands that dischargers to the Great Lakes eliminate combined sewer overflows (CSO) and the use of blending during wet weather events. The CSO elimination policy rider was [inserted earlier in the year](#) in a proposed Senate Appropriations Committee spending package for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at the request of Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL). The negotiated FY 2016 appropriations package also replaced proposed cuts to the Clean Water State

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Water Resources Utility of the Future Spotlight Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission: Leading the Utility Affordability Challenge

As clean water agencies face increasing infrastructure and enforcement challenges, affordability has become a growing issue for utilities nationwide. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), serving Montgomery and Prince Georges counties in Maryland, is taking an innovative approach to better meet the needs of its ratepayers. The Commission is conducting a multi-year review of its rates and has already implemented significant changes to establish sustainable rates and a new customer affordability program.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 3 »

Microbead Ban a Major Victory for NACWA Campaign

On December 28, President Obama signed the *Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015*, marking a major victory for clean water and for the members of NACWA. The law bans the manufacture of rinse-off cosmetic products containing plastic microbeads after July 1, 2017, and prohibits the sale of these products after July 1, 2018.

Plastic microbeads are used as in personal care products, including skin cleaners and toothpaste. Microbeads have, however, caused concern among clean water advocates because they may not be removed during the typical wastewater treatment process. Pass through at treatment plants and into waterways could potentially cause harm to aquatic life and ecosystems. Natural alternatives can be easily substituted for plastic microbeads in cleansing and exfoliating products to eliminate microbead pollution at its source.



Before the federal law was passed, many major personal care product manufacturers had voluntarily agreed to phase out plastic microbeads. Many states and counties had also already passed or considered bans on products containing microbeads. The federal ban will ensure that all U.S. waters are protected from microbead

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Legal Victories in Stormwater & Biosolids Celebrated

In September, the [Ohio Supreme Court](#) issued a ruling in [Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District \(NEORS\) v. Bath Township, et al.](#), upholding NACWA Member Agency NEORS's municipal stormwater management program and fee. The court's decision not only affords legal recognition and protection for NEORS's stormwater management program, it also provides positive precedent that will benefit utilities managing stormwater nationwide. NACWA joined the Association of Ohio Metropolitan Wastewater Agencies in May 2014 in submitting an [amicus brief](#) in support of NEORS. More information on the decision can be found in [Advocacy Alert 15-16](#).

On December 21, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court issued a unanimous decision in support of the land application of biosolids. The case - [Gilbert v. Synagro](#) - addressed whether biosolids application is an agricultural activity protected under [Pennsylvania right-to-farm laws](#), and represents the first time that any state supreme court has addressed the

practice under Right-To-Farm Acts (RTFAs). The Supreme Court opinion underscores both the breadth of the Pennsylvania RTFA's protections and the widespread use of recycled biosolids in Pennsylvania and nationally.

NACWA filed an [amicus brief](#) in the litigation, which provided a vital national clean water perspective to the court. The court specifically cited the briefs filed by NACWA and other amici in determining whether the biosolids application was a "normal agricultural operation," demonstrating the value of NACWA's involvement.

While this precedent is only binding in Pennsylvania, all [fifty states](#) have enacted some form of RTFA. This decision will be very influential nationwide in future RTFA cases involving land application of biosolids. For more information on the decision, see NACWA's [website](#).

Can Compliance and Innovation Coexist?

The agenda for NACWA's Winter Conference, [Back to the Basics... Will Compliance Concerns Derail Efforts to Innovate?](#), will examine some of the most daunting regulatory requirements and external drivers – and how they're shaping the dialogue around the Clean Water Act of the future. Then 2016 Winter Conference will take place from February 21-24, at the [Westin San Diego](#) in San Diego, California.

But the clean water community is mounting an impressive response to these challenges, with innovation and technological solutions providing powerful new tools. This interplay between challenge and opportunity will provide the backdrop for the conference, February 21-24, at the Westin San Diego.

Kicking off the conference, a roundtable of distinguished guests and utility leaders will explore the Clean Water Act of the Future. Few would argue that the Clean Water Act, despite its successes, is no longer keeping pace with today's water quality challenges. Felicia Marcus, Chair of the California State Water Resources Control Board will participate in the discussion along with thought leaders from across the country.

Big Data to be Featured

Joe Whitworth, Executive Director of The Freshwater Trust, and author of the new book *Quantified – Redefining Conservation for the Next Economy* will provide a keynote address focusing on the growing volume of environmental data and information, and how it can be better utilized by the water sector. Drawing from lessons from the world's most tech-savvy, high-impact organizations, Whitworth will discuss how situational awareness, bold outcomes, innovation and technology, data and analytics, and gain-focused investment can help make real environmental progress.

Whitworth's remarks will be followed by the *Smart Utility & the Promise of Big Data Roundtable*, a discussion among technology/solution providers and utility managers on the role of 'big data' and how real-time decision-making and data analysis can help utilities better address the growing list of requirements they must meet.



Headlining the final day of the conference is the new Deputy Assistant Administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Water, Joel Beauvais. Beauvais' remarks will highlight the Office of Water's top priority issues, as well as the importance of innovation

and collaboration in achieving our collective goal for a healthier environment.

Additional information on the conference agenda, registration, and key deadlines is available at www.nacwa.org/16winter.

Hate choosing between NACWA's Winter Conference and The Utility Management Conference when planning February travel? Problem solved!

In 2016, NACWA's Winter Conference and The Utility Management Conference are co-locating in San Diego – providing attendees the ability to benefit from both exceptional offerings and save time and money. Join us for NACWA's [Winter Conference](#), February 21 – 24 at the Westin San Diego and [The Utility Management Conference](#), February 24 – 27 at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront. We hope to see you there!



**WATER
RESOURCES
UTILITY OF
THE
FUTURE**

In the Spotlight

The Water Resources Utility of the Future initiative (UOTF) is an initiative of NACWA, the Water Environment Federation (WEF), the Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF) and WateReuse. The initiative highlights the transformation of water utilities from 'sewerage agencies' to 'resource recovery agencies' by adopting innovative technologies and taking a more holistic, watershed-level approach to stretch ratepayer dollars and maximize environmental benefits. The Utility of the Future Spotlight seeks to highlight innovative efforts in the areas of technology, finance, communications and outreach, collaboration, and more.

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission: Leading the Utility Affordability Challenge

As clean water agencies face increasing infrastructure and enforcement challenges, affordability has become a growing issue for utilities nationwide. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), serving Montgomery and Prince Georges counties in Maryland, is taking an innovative approach to better meet the needs of its ratepayers. The Commission is conducting a multi-year review of its rates and has already implemented significant changes to establish sustainable rates and a new customer affordability program.

To create more stable rates, WSSC revised its policies to restructure a portion of its existing debt while issuing new bonds over a 30-year period and implementing a new Pay-As-You-Go funding source to reduce future borrowing needs. In addition to enhanced funding for infrastructure projects and reducing rate pressures, these changes better aligned the benefits of infrastructure investment with generational use of the facilities.

WSSC also made major changes to increase its fixed revenue by re-allocating revenues from variable rates to fixed fees. Only 3% of the Commission's revenue came from fixed fees, making WSSC highly dependent on sewer bills and rate income, a revenue source that varies. This makes customer rates more volatile since increasing capital needs would have to be covered through increased rates. To address this issue, WSSC updated its residential Account Maintenance Fee (AMF) from \$11 to \$16 quarterly. The fee had not been increased since the mid-1990s and did not adequately cover the costs of account services. WSSC also created a new Infrastructure Investment Fee (IIF), averaging \$6 quarterly, to fund the debt service for normal pipe and sewer renewal projects. The Infrastructure Investment Fee varies by meter size

and is being phased in over two years to reduce the impact on customers. All of these changes were agreed upon through regular conversations with stakeholders. By updating its fixed fees, WSSC was able to minimize the volumetric rate increase to 1%. Without these changes, the rate increase for FY 2016 would have been 6%.

WSSC also created a new Customer Assistance Program (CAP), funded fully by Commission revenues, to help low-income customers. Although WSSC already had an assistance program, it was limited and funded solely through donations. The Commission wanted to create a program that would provide a discount or credit for customers based on income for fixed fees and the State's \$60 Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund fee administered by WSSC. WSSC decided to provide credit only for fixed fees in order to not affect customer incentives for water conservation. Providing credit for only the fixed costs also addresses the issue of providing everyone access to clean water since CAP enrollees would only pay for the amount of water used and better manage their WSSC bills through conservation.

There were, however, major limitations. The Commission did not have income data to identify the customers that needed help, and the state did not allow for one group of customers to pay for another group. To tackle the first issue, WSSC partnered with Maryland's Office of Home Energy (OHEP), which administers the federal low income Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), to create a system where customers qualifying for HEAP would automatically be enrolled in the CAP. Automatic enrollment benefited customers because they would not have to apply separately for the new program.

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Customer Assistance Program



Federal Appeals Court Hears Water Transfers Rule Arguments

On December 1, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit heard oral arguments in a challenge to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2008 Water Transfers Rule. NACWA submitted a [brief](#) in the litigation along with a number of other organizations in 2014 supporting the rule. The Association has long been in favor of exempting water transfers from the federal Clean Water

Act regulatory structure. At least two of the three judges at the hearing seemed inclined to defer to EPA's judgement in the original rule and its exemption of water transfers from the permit program. Additional information on the case is available on NACWA's [website](#), and a decision is expected in the coming months. 🌊



New Jersey CSO Workshop Well-Attended, Additional Local Events Planned

NACWA hosted a [New Jersey Long Term Control Plan Workshop](#) in December for clean water utilities and municipalities that are beginning work on development of combined sewer overflow (CSO) long-term control plans (LTCPs). Nearly 70 people participated in the half-day event. Many New Jersey communities recently received new CSO permits requiring the development of LTCPs, this workshop was particularly timely and provided an opportunity for utilities in the state to learn the basics of the process.

NACWA is planning on hosting additional state and regional events over the course of 2016. Next up is a Region 9 Forum at the upcoming Winter Conference.

Regulatory Issues Front & Center as 2015 Draws to a Close

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was busy at the end of 2015 – releasing its proposed stormwater general permit rule on December 18, among other actions. In addition to analyzing the stormwater rule, NACWA provided comments on a proposed rule-making on hazardous pharmaceuticals, a draft guidance document on nutrients, and a Region 10 rule proposing criteria for the State of Washington.

EPA Phase II Stormwater Rule Published

EPA's proposed rule on changes to the Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) regulations was [published](#) in the *Federal Register* on January 6, setting a comment deadline of March 21. EPA released a pre-publication version of the rule on December 18, and NACWA distributed an [Advocacy Alert](#) ↗ in late December providing information and analysis on the proposal. Additional information on the rule is also available on EPA's [website](#). NACWA plans a robust comment effort and will continue to coordinate with the other municipal organizations.

Comments Filed on Proposed Ban on Flushing of Hazardous Waste Pharmaceuticals

NACWA submitted [comments](#) on December 23 on EPA's proposed rule, [Management Standards for Hazardous Waste Pharmaceuticals](#), supporting the proposed ban on healthcare facilities "disposing of hazardous waste pharmaceuticals down the toilet or drain." The Association supported the broad range of healthcare facilities included in the proposal, such as pharmacies, coroners, and long-term healthcare facilities, and recommended that the proposal be clarified so that the ban also applies to septic systems and decentralized wastewater treatment systems, not just to sewers leading to publicly owned treatment works (POTWs).

Nutrient Study Examines Removal Approaches

NACWA filed [comments](#) December 15 on an EPA study examining nutrient removal approaches at wastewater treatment plants. The draft document, [Case Studies on Implementing Low-Cost Modifications to Improve Nutrient Reductions at Wastewater Treatment Plants](#), offers several case studies where wastewater treatment plants have implemented what EPA considers 'low-cost' modifications to remove nutrients. NACWA's comments raised concerns that the document overlooks hidden costs to utilities and largely ignores the intricacies of the broader nutrient policy context.

NACWA Urges Withdrawal of Proposed Federal Criteria for Washington State

NACWA filed [comments](#) December 22 urging EPA Region 10 to withdraw its proposed human health criteria for the State of Washington. Over the past two years the Washington State Department of Ecology has conducted an extensive public engagement process to craft an approach to toxics control that would have provided more comprehensive protection than afforded by the Clean Water Act (CWA). EPA disagreed with key policy and risk decisions made by the state – decisions that the CWA reserves for the states alone – and followed through on its threat of federal promulgation, [proposing its own criteria](#) in a September 2015 *Federal Register* notice.

NACWA will continue to actively represent its member's interests on a wide range of regulatory issues. 🌊

NACWA Focuses on Water Resilience at Megacities Conference in Paris

Utility leaders and representatives from the largest cities across the world met in Paris at the [Water, Megacities & Global Change](#) conference in conjunction with the COP 21 international climate talks. The meeting, organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), underscored how climate and resiliency issues are fundamentally about water, and that all cities must share their strategies with one another to ensure they are adapting to – and mitigating the effects of – climate change.

NACWA was represented at the meeting by its President Adel Hagekhalil, Assistant Director, City of Los Angeles – LA Sanitation. Other utility leaders and representatives from Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York City and Chicago also attended. Hagekhalil discussed Los Angeles' own response to the drought and a climate-altered environment while underscoring the vital importance of sharing information and collaborating with cities to ensure a safe water supply and uninterrupted sanitation service for all.

Most important, the conference ensured that water would be a consideration for the COP 21 talks, which took place the week following the MegaCities conference on water. These talks did lead to an in-



NACWA President and Assistant Director for the City of Los Angeles - LA Sanitation, Adel Hagekhalil (right) shares key perspectives at the Megacities Conference.

ternational agreement that all countries should establish measures to ensure that global temperature should increase by no more than 2 degrees Celsius, but with a specific target of 1.5 degrees.

NACWA representatives also spent a day with the leadership of the Parisian wastewater agency – SIAPP. The dialogue shed light on the fact that the challenges faced in France and the U.S. are very similar. Both agreed that a stronger partnership is needed and the SIAPP and UNESCO representatives were invited to participate in [Water Week 2016](#) in Washington, DC in April. 🌱

NACWA's Voice for Clean Water Grows

As the leading advocacy organization representing the interests of the clean water community, NACWA focuses considerable energy and attention on expanding its membership to create a stronger unified voice in support of its advocacy initiatives. The Association proudly welcomes two new Member Agencies and two new Affiliate Members.

PUBLIC AGENCIES

[Maui County, Department of](#)

[Environmental Management, Wailuku, HI](#)

Represented by Eric Nakagawa, Wastewater Reclamation Division Chief

Joining NACWA in January, Maui County Department of Environmental Management is a public wastewater system that serves a population of 108,000. Maui County offers services in collection, interceptor, treatment, and reclaimed wastewater/reuse.

[City of Greenville, MS](#)

Represented by Brad Jones, Public Works Director

Joining NACWA in late December, the City of Greenville is a public wastewater system that serves a population of 34,500. Located in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, Greenville offers services in collection, treatment, and drinking water distribution. NACWA welcomes the City of Greenville as its first member in Mississippi.

AFFILIATES

[Tetra Tech](#)

Represented by Brian Jordan, Vice President

Rejoining the Association, Tetra Tech helps provide access to safe, abundant water supplies; effective treatment of stormwater and wastewater; flood control and restoration tools; and innovative watershed protection approaches to assess, protect, and restore our water bodies.

[Earth & Water Group](#)

Represented by Brent Fewell, Founder

Joining NACWA in January, the Earth & Water Group is a newly-formed DC-based environmental law firm. The Group offers legal services of a conventional law firm without the costly overhead associated with a traditional legal practice. Their primary services include Environmental Markets & Finance; Compliance & Risk Management; Environmental Permitting; and Government Affairs.

NACWA members are encouraged to make the most of their membership by ensuring that all key staff are engaged. Through the Association's organizational membership structure, staff at member organizations can receive NACWA communications; participate in the Association's active committees; engage in its awards programs; attend meetings and conferences; and contribute to the discussions taking place on the *Engage™* network. Please contact [Kelly Brocato](#), Director of Membership if you wish to have additional staff engage in your membership – or assess those from your utility already taking advantage of membership benefits. 🌱

Utility Scholarships Offered for Singapore International Water Week 2016

Utilities are transforming themselves – becoming innovative drivers of economic growth and resource recovery centers. The Water Resources Utility of The Future initiative helps utilities realize their ambition to be water resource recovery facilities of the future. One important aspect of this ambition is interface with global innovation.

NACWA, the Water Environment Federation (WEF), and the Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF) have partnered with the Public Utility Board of Singapore to offer sponsorships and host a U.S. delegation of high level utility managers to Singapore International Water Week (SIWW). Participants in the U.S. Delegation will have access to all SIWW events, plus events planned to provide special site visits and more intimate exchange opportunities.

To be considered for a SIWW 2016 Scholarship, utility managers must be employed as a high level utility manager of a United States water or wastewater utility and be a member of WEF or NACWA and/or work for an agency that is a WERF subscriber. Additional information on the scholarship can be found at www.wef.org/SIWWScholars. Applications will be accepted until February 17, 2016.

Singapore International Water Week (SIWW), July 10-14, 2016 is an opportunity to see the future of water solutions unfold. SIWW is



**Singapore
International
Water Week**

a global platform to share and co-create innovative solutions reinforcing a commitment to the global integration of sustainable water management strategies with urban planning processes. Addressing contemporary challenges, SIWW gathers global water leaders and practitioners from the public and private sectors to engage in discussion and debate, network with key industry players, showcase leading-edge technologies and best practices, and identify practical methodologies to address water issues. In line with global water industry trends and opportunities, SIWW 2016 will feature discussions on four themes:

- Smart Water Ideas
- Water Reuse
- Wastewater Management
- Integrated Urban Water Management

By promoting international exchange, NACWA, WEF, and WERF hope to breakdown international barriers, accelerate technology transfer, and create an understanding of innovative policy options to enable resource recovery. Scholarship recipients will be encouraged to write papers and make presentations about their experience at SIWW and will be provided forums to disseminate this information through NACWA, WEF, and WERF. 🌐



NACWA Talks Resilience at Water & Climate Forum

The potential impact of climate change on the water sector took center stage in December during the [International Water & Climate Forum](#) hosted by the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA). NACWA supported the conference and a number of NACWA members played prominent roles there, including Association Secretary David St. Pierre (at podium), and Executive Director of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, and Angela Licata, Regulatory Vice Chair of NACWA's Policy Committee and Deputy Commissioner of Sustainability for the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (right). The conference featured discussions on implementation of climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. NACWA's presence at the conference ensured that the perspective of municipal wastewater and stormwater utilities was included as part of the broader discussion of climate issues impacting the water sector.

Microbeads CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

pollution, and on a more aggressive schedule than many of the state and local laws. The federal law also includes “biodegradable” plastic microbeads in the ban, eliminating a loophole found in some state laws that only banned “synthetic” plastic microbeads.

NACWA Support Part of Nationwide Campaign

The Association strongly supported the legislation banning microbeads as part of its [Toilets Are Not Trashcans](#) campaign, which focuses on keeping inappropriate products and unnecessary product additives out of sewer systems to protect water quality and the pipes, pumps, plants, and personnel of the nation's wastewater utilities.

Through the *Toilets Are Not Trashcans* campaign, NACWA will continue its advocacy to reduce harmful products that are flushed or drained into the sewer system. In addition to supporting the federal legislation to ban microbeads, the Association has focused on non-dispersible products, such as wipes, as well as potentially harmful ingredients in consumer products. NACWA has also supported regulatory changes to ensure the proper disposal of unused pharmaceuticals, eliminate the antibacterial agent triclosan from soaps and other personal care products, and ensure the safety of approved nanomaterials for utilities and the aquatic environment. 🌐

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Revolving Fund program and maintained funding levels for other key clean water programs.

NACWA pursued every available advocacy avenue on the proposed CSO and blending policy rider, leading a coalition of Association members along with national and regional stakeholders over recent months in strong opposition to the measure. NACWA [argued](#) that it amounted to a \$70 billion unfunded mandate on Great Lakes ratepayers, would not result in any meaningful water quality improvement, and would set extremely bad precedent for the rest of the nation. In the end, NACWA helped forge a compromise between Sen. Kirk and other key Great Lakes Senators keen on avoiding a costly new mandate. The compromise agreement establishes a consistent standard for reporting CSOs to the Great Lakes, authorizes the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) for the first time, and replaces proposed cuts to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF).

The final bill did not include any policy riders or other language impacting EPA's implementation of the recent Clean Water Rule, though upon return in January the House passed a resolution disapproving of the Rule, a similar resolution was passed in the Senate in December. The Administration has promised a veto once it reaches President Obama's desk.

Finally, NACWA members can be pleased that FY 2016 appropriations for the CWSRF will continue to see robust support from Congress, receiving \$1.393 billion from appropriators. By funding the CWSRF at this level, Congress rejected the Administration's proposal to cut the program by nearly 30% and sent a clear signal that it considers investments in clean water a national priority and that funding levels should not be reduced or shifted to other programs.

Transportation Reauthorization Includes 'WIFIA Fix'

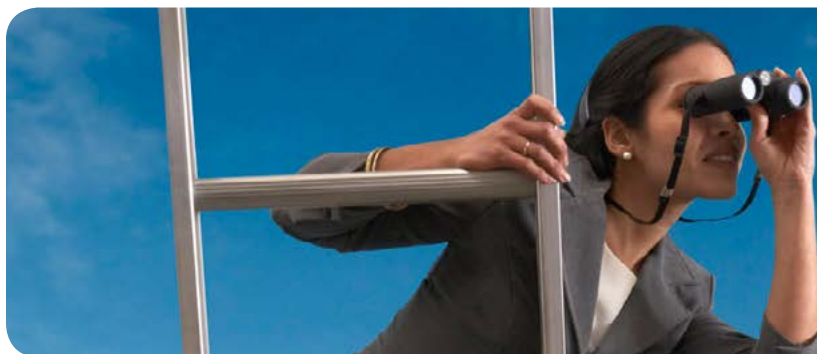
Congressional negotiators were also able to pass a five-year transportation [reauthorization measure](#) in early December that provides nearly \$300 billion to highway, transit and rail projects for the next five years. Significantly, the measure included a provision enabling borrowers under the recently established Water Infrastructure Financing & Innovations Act (WIFIA) program to use tax-exempt municipal bond financing as a match for federal loans. NACWA, the Water Infrastructure Network (WIN), and other water sector organizations have [advocated strongly](#) in favor of the 'WIFIA fix' and its passage by Congress is an important legislative victory for the sector.

The fix was necessary because the original WIFIA authorizing legislation contained a restriction on the use of municipal bonds due to concerns over costs. NACWA and other water associations argued that preventing municipal borrowers from using tax-exempt bond financing as a match for a WIFIA loan would significantly diminish the attractiveness of the program for municipalities. Several key Congressional lawmakers agreed, including Senator Jim Inhofe (R-OK) and Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, who led the effort to include the WIFIA fix in the transportation package. WIFIA is a pilot program and is designed to provide U.S. Treasury-backed loans for up to 49% of a water infrastructure project that costs at least \$20 million. NACWA anticipates EPA will be ready to launch the WIFIA program later this year once the program rules and guidelines are established.

Cybersecurity to Receive Continuing Attention

Congress was able to address cybersecurity information challenges before the end of its first session. Legislation establishing a legal framework critical to encouraging industry to voluntarily share cybersecurity information with the federal government was included as part of the year-end omnibus spending package, and excluded a key provision opposed by NACWA and other water sector organizations. The legislation, referred to as the *Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act* (CISA), requires the Director of National Intelligence and the Departments of Homeland Security (DHS), Defense, and Justice to develop procedures to share cybersecurity threat information with private entities, nonfederal government agencies, state, tribal, and local governments, the public, and entities under threats. Liability protections are provided to entities that voluntarily share and receive cyber threat indicators and defensive measures with other entities or the government.

NACWA anticipates that the second session of the 114th Congress will include the completion of FY 2017 appropriations and consideration of the reauthorization of water resources projects undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Association will look for opportunities to highlight and support the work its members are doing back home to ensure clean water is available to their citizens. 🌊



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In the Spotlight CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

To overcome the second obstacle, the Commission brought the program to the state legislature to receive legislative approval, a long and challenging process. In 2014, WSSC went to the state legislature but eventually withdrew the bill until additional implementation details could be worked out. WSSC went back to work to better define the program and returned to the state legislature in 2015. The CAP was approved and became effective on July 1, 2015. This was a huge victory for low-income residents within the service district. Without this program their average bill would have increased significantly due to the revisions of the new fixed fees. With the CAP in place, eligible low-income customer bills were actually lowered in FY16 due to the new available credits.

After the CAP was approved, WSSC worked diligently to ensure that the program was successfully implemented. The Commission reached out to many groups, such as building and business associations, to inform them about the change. They also conducted outreach about the new

program in target communities. The program has been a success with WSSC having given over \$300,000 in credits through October 2015 and no complaints about the program.

Over the next couple of years, WSSC plans to finish reviewing its tiered rate structure to determine if the current system best serves the community. The Commission also plans to work with the state to determine a way to reach low-income customers that live in master-metered housing, and do not currently receive a benefit through the CAP. Understanding that reviewing rates is an ongoing process, WSSC will continue to be open to new ideas that positively impact the community. Interested utilities are invited to contact WSSC's Chief Financial Officer, [Yvette Downs](#), with any questions. 📞

Is your utility implementing programs or practices that embody the Water Resources Utility of the Future? If so, please contact [Amber Kim](#).

Future Conferences, Workshops Offer Information & Insights

In the coming months, NACWA is hosting multiple conferences and workshops offering the most up-to-date information on legislative, regulatory, and legal developments – and providing attendees with significant opportunities to network with colleagues nationwide. The following is just a sample of the Association's offerings:

- **Winter Conference**
Back to the Basics . . .
Will Compliance Concerns Derail Efforts to Innovate?
February 21 - 24, 2016, Washington, DC
Join us as we discuss some of the most daunting regulatory requirements facing the community including potential standards for viruses, nutrient controls, and peak flow management – coupled with continued pressure from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enforcement and environmental non-governmental organizations. The approaches employed by EPA and other regulators – including imposing new, or amending existing, requirements through policy statements and guidance documents, instead of formal rulemaking – will also be explored. All of this will be put into the context of the need for broader change.
- **Water Week 2016**
April 10 – 16, 2016, Washington, DC
Water and wastewater professionals from communities across the country will come together to consider and advocate for national policies that advance clean and safe waters – and ensure a healthy sustainable environment.
- **National Water Policy Forum, Fly-In & Expo**
April 11 – 13, 2016, Washington, DC
The anchor event of Water Week 2016, the *Policy Forum, Fly-In & Expo*, will bring together water and wastewater professionals from across the country to meet with Members of Congress and federal regulators to share perspectives on federal clean water policy. The agenda will feature Congressional speakers, policy briefings, visits to Capitol Hill, and roundtable dialogues with key policymakers.
- **National Pretreatment & Pollution Prevention Workshop and Training**
May 17 – 20, 2016, Long Beach, CA
The *Workshop* program will focus on topics that promise to be important for pretreatment programs in the future, as well as issues that are currently affecting these programs.
- **2016 Utility Leadership Conference & 46th Annual Meeting**
Leadership Strategies for the Smart Utility
July 10 – 13, 2016, Denver, CO
Clean water utilities are embracing their roles as technology developers and incubators, job creators and economic engines within their communities. The 2016 Utility Leadership Conference will explore not only how utilities are adapting their management approaches to meet the changing expectations of both their ratepayers and employees, but also how these agencies will need even more innovative management techniques as utilities become increasingly complex and information becomes more widely available.

Additional information for all of these offerings and more is available on NACWA's [website](#). 📞