



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

May 13, 2021

Contact: Elizabeth Gara
Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA)
Tel: 860-841-7350/E-Mail: gara@gmlobbying.com

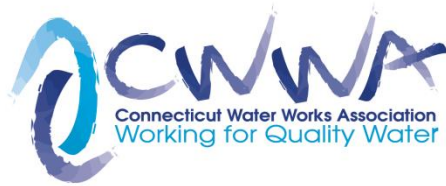
WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING SHOULD BE A TOP PRIORITY

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA), which represents municipal, regional and private water companies serving residents and businesses throughout Connecticut, is urging lawmakers to include investment in water infrastructure funding in its plan to allocate federal funding under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

“Recognizing the importance of replacing and upgrading aging water infrastructure to provide residents and businesses with safe, reliable public water supplies, the ARPA emphasizes that funds may be used to make investments in water infrastructure, including building or upgrading facilities and transmission, distribution, and storage systems, the replacement of lead service lines and climate change initiatives,” said Elizabeth Gara, Executive Director of the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA). “Given the lifelong impact of lead exposure on children, the U.S. Treasury Interim Final Rule encourages states to consider funding projects to replace lead service lines,” Gara noted.

“Unfortunately, Governor Lamont’s plan for the allocation of the state’s share of federal funding under ARPA does not target any funding for investment in water infrastructure. Although municipalities may use their share of ARPA funding for water and sewer infrastructure, less than 1/3 of public water customers are served by municipal water companies. As a result, customers of private and regional water company are unlikely to benefit from ARPA funding unless the state revises its plan to include investment in water infrastructure,” Gara explained.

Connecticut’s private, regional and municipal water companies are facing considerable challenges in replacing aging infrastructure, improving the efficiency of treatment and distribution system, and upgrading systems to comply with state and federal requirements, including 1) identifying and replacing lead service lines; 2) testing and treating public water supplies to address emerging contaminants such as PFAS, 3) hardening infrastructure to enhance climate resiliency, and 4) modifying dams and distribution systems to make stream flow releases.



“Given the significant costs associated with meeting these challenges and the tremendous benefit to public health, the environment and economic development, targeting federal funding to water infrastructure investment should be a top priority,” Gara said.

“Currently, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program provides low interest loans to assist water companies in financing needed infrastructure projects. However, without direct grant funding to supplement low interest loans, the cost of many critical water infrastructure projects is prohibitive, undermining efforts to move forward with projects that are vital to meeting the state’s public health, safety, environmental and economic development goals.” Gara said.

“CWWA urges lawmakers to ensure that the funding under the ARPA can be used for important public drinking water supply projects by all of Connecticut’s public water suppliers for the benefit of residents and businesses in Connecticut,” Gara said.

CWWA is a trade association representing municipal, regional and private water companies throughout Connecticut. As stewards of the state’s water resources, Connecticut’s public water suppliers are committed to providing residents and businesses with safe, high quality drinking water supplies to meet public health, public safety and economic development needs.