



What's New At CEU Plan

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Water for Jobs

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"Water for Jobs" Campaign Lives Beyond the Election

All of us in the water/wastewater industry know that much of our infrastructure is in dire need of replacement. Water and sewer mains, lift station pumps, wells, and treatment plant equipment, unfortunately, do not live forever—though we often try to make them do so.

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) evaluates America's infrastructure every 4 years and produces an [Infrastructure Report Card](#) based on their findings. In 2009, our country earned a disgraceful grade of "D-" for both water and wastewater.

Funding water and wastewater system rehabilitation or replacement projects is always a challenge. Money is tight, and often there are several "top priority" projects that need to be done, with barely enough in the budget for one of them. According to the ASCE, our water and wastewater systems face an annual shortfall of at least \$11 billion to replace aging infrastructure.

The High Cost of Ignoring the Problem

We all know the result of sticking our heads in the sand. Deferred investment in infrastructure repairs may lead to major [water main breaks](#), [sanitary sewer overflows](#), [improper treatment](#) and other threats to the environment and the public health. Resolving these major issues often costs more than performing properly scheduled maintenance or replacement.

If nothing else, these untimely events can lessen our customers' trust. And certainly, none of us wants to be in front of the news camera or on the front page of the newspaper.

Economic Effects of Aging Infrastructure

According to ASCE President D. Wayne Klotz, P.E., "Crumbling infrastructure has a direct impact on our personal and economic health, and the nation's infrastructure crisis is endangering our future prosperity . . . Our leaders are looking for solutions to the nation's current economic crisis. Not only could investment in these critical foundations have a positive impact, but if done responsibly, it would also provide tangible benefits to the American people . . ."

Another ASCE report, [Failure to Act: The Economic Impact of Current Investment Trends in Water and Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure](#) estimates the annual expenses to households and businesses due to future unreliable water and wastewater services at \$21 billion.

Water for Jobs

In order to ensure that Congress and the President make funding water and wastewater infrastructure a top priority, the Water Environment Federation (WEF) created a [partnership](#) that includes the American Public Works Association and American Water Works Association among others. Together, they initiated the campaign "[Water for Jobs: Water Puts America to Work](#)".

The Water for Jobs campaign sends the message that:

- Investment in water/wastewater infrastructure means jobs for Americans. Those of us in the industry understand that water and wastewater rehabilitation, replacement and upgrade projects put lots of people to work—engineers, surveyors, geotech firms, contractors, inspectors, and equipment vendors.
- Investment in infrastructure ensures we have safe and reliable water and sewer systems to attract and keep industries and businesses.
- Spending on water and wastewater utilities encourages research into new technologies and makes our country more competitive globally.
- Keeping our water and sewer systems sound is critical to protect the public health and the environment.

According to the Water for Jobs overview, "each public dollar invested in public infrastructure increases private long-term Gross Domestic Product output by \$6.35."

The Water for Jobs campaign is non-partisan, focusing on cooperation and leadership to find solutions to the funding gap between our water infrastructure needs and projected costs. The campaign reaches out to the public through [articles](#) and social media (@Waters4WEF). They are also keeping contact with all new and existing members of Congress, especially the Appropriations and Transportation and Infrastructure Committees.

Thanks to Water for Jobs, both the Democratic Platform (Moving America Forward, pp. 34, 40-41 and 49) and the Republican Platform (We Believe in America, pp. 1 and 5) reference the importance of water/wastewater infrastructure to the America's economy.

Moving Forward

The election is finally over. All of us in the water/wastewater business need to help educate our decision makers and elected officials—local, state and federal—about the importance of our infrastructure. Ask them to make water investment a top priority, not only for the economy, but for the public health and the environment. Visit the Water for Jobs website to find out how you can [act now](#).
