

# News Release

**NACWA**  
A Clear Commitment to America's Waters

For Immediate Release: February 5, 2007

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## NACWA Disappointed in Fiscal Year 2008 Proposal to Cut Clean Water SRF

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) is disappointed in the Bush administration's fiscal year 2008 budget request for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The administration seeks only \$687.5 million for the clean water state revolving fund (SRF), one of the most successful water pollution control programs enacted. While NACWA is not surprised by this request, as it is the same as what the administration sought in fiscal 2007, it continues the downward trend in the federal government's commitment to clean water. In fact, the proposed amount is half the historical funding level of \$1.35 billion last seen in fiscal year 2004.

Meanwhile, the nation's clean water agencies continue their struggle to meet increasing challenges placed on aging wastewater infrastructure from population growth, strict Clean Water Act requirements, and even the rising cost of construction materials and labor. EPA itself along with the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and the Water Infrastructure Network (WIN) estimate the funding gap between what is spent and what the nation's clean water utilities need at \$400-\$500 billion over the next 20 years.

"It is unconscionable to expect the nation's clean water utilities to keep up with the soaring costs of maintaining and expanding their infrastructure while the federal government moves farther and farther away from their financial commitment to clean water," NACWA Executive Director Ken Kirk said. "The cuts to the SRF are moving the nation backwards in terms of meeting the fishable, swimmable goals of the Clean Water Act."

NACWA will work assiduously with Congress in the coming year on legislation introduced in the House both to reauthorize the SRF (H.R. 720) and to provide grants to address sewer overflows (H.R. 569) as well as to ensure a viable, long-term, dedicated revenue source to bridge the clean water funding gap. The Association continues to believe a trust fund, similar to what is available for highways and airports, is the best option.

EPA continues to push for alternatives to actual funds, including the call for "full-cost pricing." Already, more than 95 percent of the cost of operating and maintaining clean water utilities is born at the local level. Many utilities are already raising their rates by large amounts, putting a financial strain on some low-income communities who simply cannot afford to pay more.

*NACWA represents the interests of nearly 300 of the nation's publicly owned wastewater treatment works, serving the majority of the sewered population in the United States, collectively treating and reclaiming over 18 billion gallons of wastewater every day.*