

A banner for World Water Week 2021. The background is a photograph of a blue ocean with white-capped waves under a clear blue sky. The text "WORLD WATER WEEK" is centered in the upper half in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font with a thin black outline. Below it, "2021" is also centered in the same font style. In the lower half, the hashtag "#OCSWORLDWATERWEEK2021" is centered in a smaller, white, bold, sans-serif font with a thin black outline.

WORLD WATER WEEK 2021

#OCSWORLDWATERWEEK2021

World Water Week 2021: Building Resilience Faster



Sara Aminzadeh

Vice President of
Partnerships, US Water
Alliance (**Moderator**)



Scott Barringer

Deputy Assistant
Administrator for USDA, Rural
Development, Rural Utilities
Service, Water and
Environmental Programs



April A. Ballou

General Counsel and VP of
State Regulatory Affairs,
National Association of Water
Companies



**Oluwole A. (OJ)
McFoy**

General
Manager, Buffalo Sewer
Authority



Christina Clark

Program Manger, Low
Income Household Water
Assistance Program



CAPT David Harvey

Deputy Director, Division of
Sanitation Facilities Construction,
Indian Health Services and
Commissioned Officer of the US
Public Health Service



Mary Watts

Senior Advisor,
Low Income
Household
Water
Assistance
Program, Office
of Community
Services(**Host**)



Rural Utilities Service Water and Environmental Programs – World Water Week, August 27 2021



Rural Development

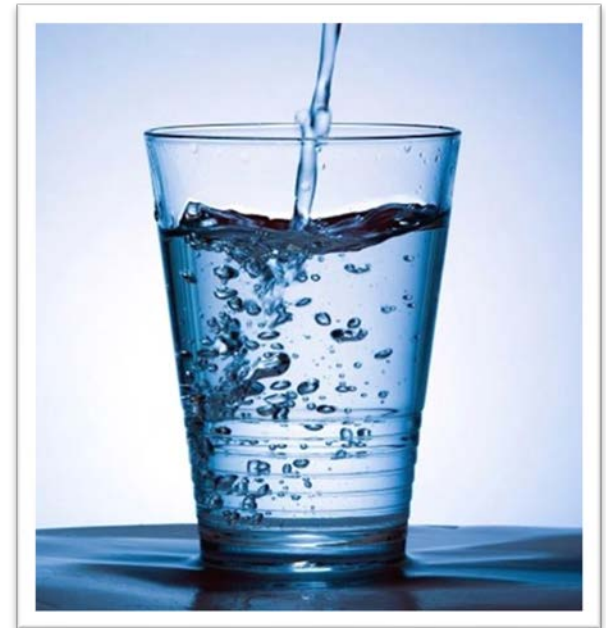
Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) Overview

- WEP finances water, waste systems to provide affordable services to rural areas with populations of 10,000 or less. The Guaranteed Loan Program now serves communities of up to 50,000. **During FY 2020, WEP invested \$2.09 billion in rural communities benefiting over 2.1 million rural residents.**
- WEP can finance the acquisition, construction or improvement of:
 - Drinking water: sourcing, treatment, storage and distribution
 - Wastewater: collection, transmission, treatment, and disposal
 - Solid waste: collection, disposal and closure
 - Storm water: collection, conveyance and disposal
- The Engineering and Environmental Staff (EES) Division provides support to all Rural Utilities Service programs.
- WEP is administered in partnership with 47 Rural Development State Offices and hundreds of field offices throughout rural America.



Congressional and Other Set-Aside Funds for Special Programs and Populations

- In addition to the Direct and the Guaranteed Programs, WEP has set-aside grants and special emphasis programs, such as:
- Capital Infrastructure Set-Asides:
 - Colonia Grants
 - Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants (ECWAG)
 - Native American Grants
 - Rural and Native Alaskan Villages
 - Rural Economic Area Partnership Grants (REAP)
 - Strategic and Economic Community Development Loans and Grants (SECD)
 - Supplemental Funding, such as Disaster Support Funding
- Technical Assistance Programs:
 - Predevelopment Planning Grants (PPG)
 - Revolving Funds Program Grants (RFP)
 - Rural Decentralized Water System Grants (DWS)
 - Solid Waste Management Grants (SWMG)
 - Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities & Households (SEARCH)
 - Technical Assistance and Training Grants (TAT)



WEP's Performance/Impact

FY's 2012-2020

- **2,040** counties served in all 50 states and 7 territories
- **17,902,257** rural residents received new or improved water and waste disposal service
- **6,630,466** households and businesses benefited by improved service
- **Average** annual household income of population served = **\$35,989**
- Rural communities served:
 - 83% 5,000 or less population
 - 68% 2,500 or less population
 - 53% 1,500 or less population
 - 43% 1,000 or less population
- **\$15.72 billion** invested to build new or improved infrastructure
 - 67% loan; 33% grant -- 24% leveraged with other funding sources (\$3.83 billion)
- **\$126.62 Million** in Guaranteed Loans with private lenders
- **\$266.29 million** in technical assistance funds provided to rural communities
 - 474,156 technical assistance visits



WORLD WATER WEEK

Voices from the Field:
A Virtual Roundtable with
Water Stakeholders and Advocates

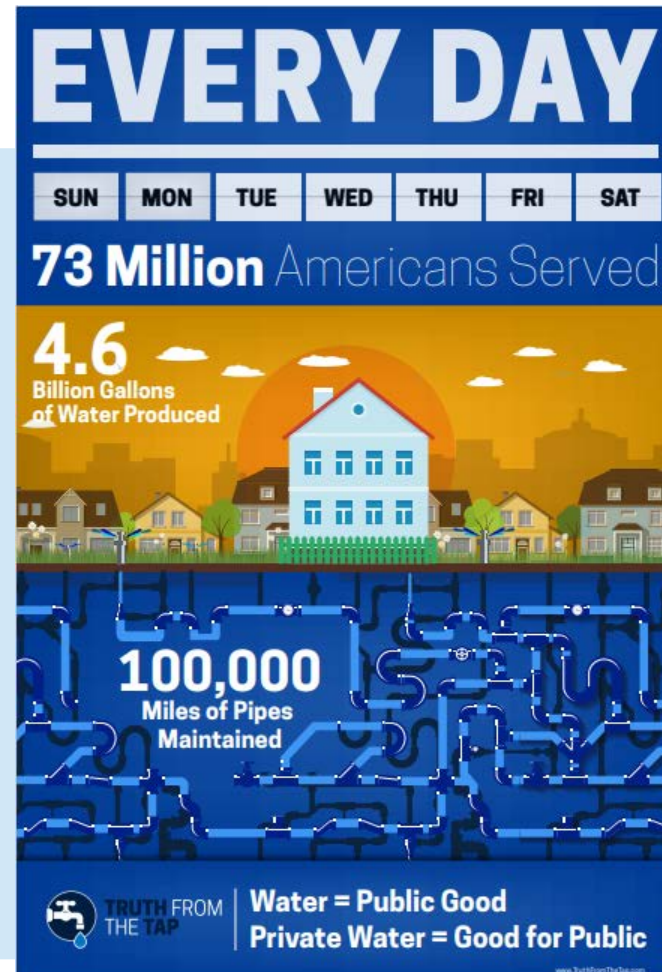
April Ballou
General Counsel & VP of State Regulatory Affairs
National Association of Water Companies
August 27, 2021



NAWC BY THE NUMBERS

WATER COMPANIES IN THE U.S. AT A GLANCE

100,000 MILES OF WATER
PIPES MAINTAINED
200 YEARS OF OPERATING IN
COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE U.S.
73 MILLION AMERICANS
SERVED
4.6 BILLION GALLONS
EVERY DAY
1.7 TRILLION GALLONS
EVERY YEAR



WATER: A NECESSITY OF LIFE

- **Water is the only utility service that is physically ingested**
 - Water quality cannot be compromised
- **Key role in society: health, sanitation, fire protection**
 - Requires high level of reliability
- **Increasing challenges**
 - Cyber and physical security threats
 - Decreasing supply
 - Aging infrastructure
 - Increasingly stringent quality standards
 - Industry fragmentation



5 PRINCIPLES OF WATER EQUITY

NAWC members are committed to water equity and work to achieve this goal by adhering to the following 5 principles.

1. Everyone should have access to water that is **safe, reliable** and **affordable**.
2. Focus on the customer.
3. Never compromise on providing safe and reliable water.
4. Invest in communities by investing infrastructure.
5. Develop partnerships and encourage water system consolidation.

#2 FOCUS ON THE CUSTOMER

- ✓ All NAWC members voluntarily suspended customer disconnections for nonpayment on March 15, 2020
 - Utilities worked with state public utility commissions and state governors to determine when to end the moratoria
- ✓ Customer Assistance Programs (CAP)
 - Programs vary across the country and across systems
 - Designed to meet the needs of individual communities
 - Many NAWC members created new CAP programs during COVID
- ✓ Increased Outreach & Communication
 - Customer experience instead of customer service

Examples of Assistance Programs

- Grants
- Payment plans
- Monthly credits
- Budget Billing

#3 NEVER COMPROMISE ON SAFE & RELIABLE WATER



Texas A&M University and Georgetown University SDWA Analysis

- ▶ **Finding:** Utilities owned by water companies are 24% less likely to have a health violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act than municipal systems.
- ▶ **Conclusion:** It's politically difficult for local officials to approve rate hikes for municipal systems and generate the revenue necessary for upgrades and maintenance. Therefore, public utilities are more likely to miss or delay crucial investments, and cause more violations of federal safe drinking water standards.

Based on EPA Data, 2010-2013

American Water Intelligence SDWA Analysis

- ▶ **Finding:** NAWC members had 0.09 EPA enforcement actions per 1 million customers. All other water system operators had 30.03 EPA enforcement actions per 1 million customers.

Based on EPA Data, 2001-2011

AMERICA'S WATER COMPANIES

>> 10 LARGEST
U.S. water companies
invested almost
\$3.7 BILLION
in their water systems
in 2019.



>> TOTAL FEDERAL INVESTMENT
This is more than the
in water infrastructure in
2019 through the State
Revolving Fund programs
(\$2.76 billion)

>> \$1 TRILLION
needed over the next
25 YEARS
for drinking water
infrastructure.



INVESTING TODAY. BUILDING FOR TOMORROW.

WATER COMPANIES: INVESTING IN AMERICA'S WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The ten largest NAWC members
invested a collective \$3 billion into
their water systems in 2018.

Water rates are a reflection of water utility investment and deferred or insufficient investment can have dire consequences. Each year, NAWC member companies are investing more money into their water systems than the entire federal appropriation for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds.

#4 Invest in Communities by Investing in Infrastructure

#5 DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS & ENCOURAGE WATER SYSTEM CONSOLIDATION

U.S. Natural Gas Utilities



U.S. Electric Utilities



U.S. Water Utilities

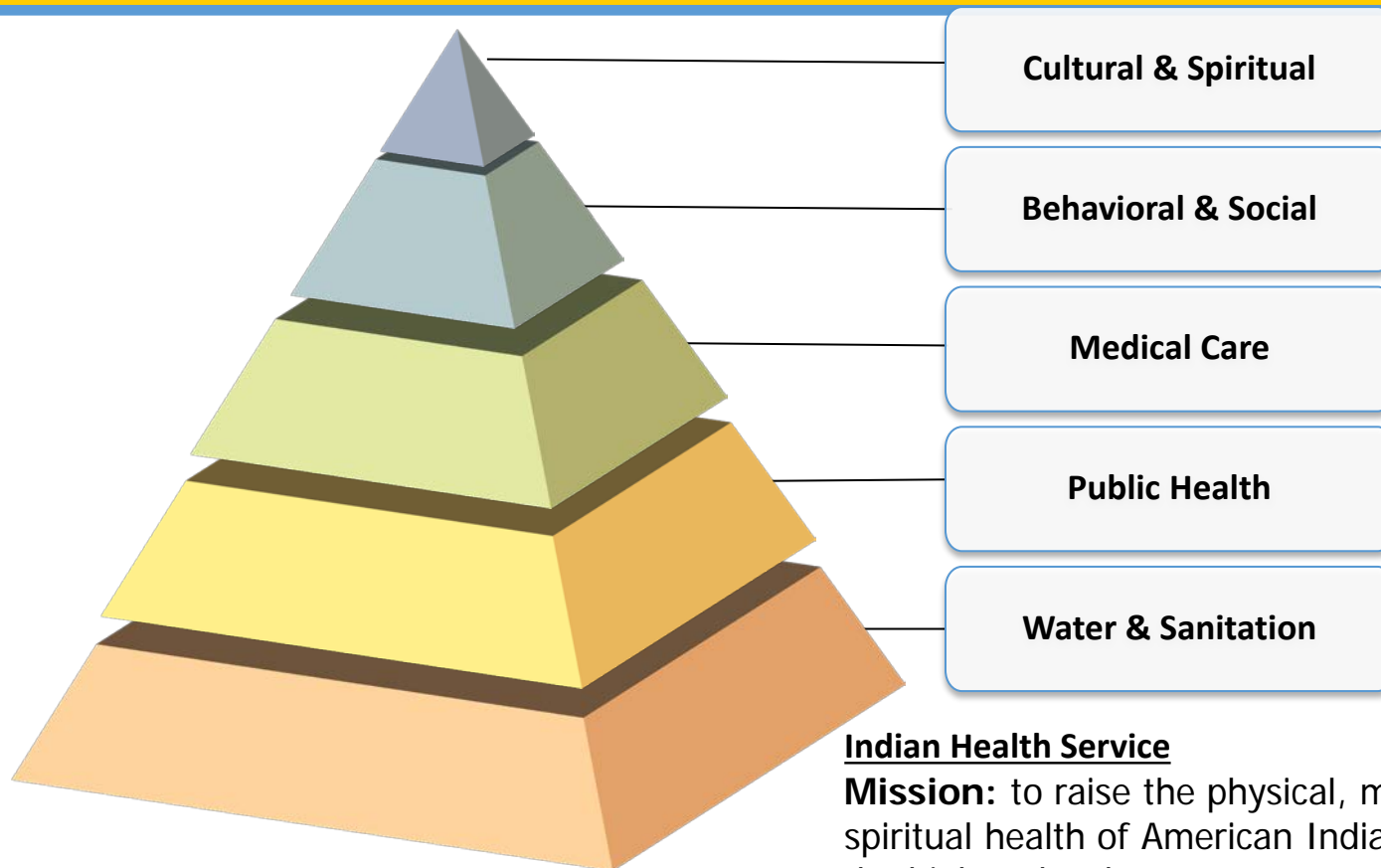


There are
~52,000
water
systems in
the U.S.,
compared
to 3,200
electric
distribution
systems



Indian Health Service Overview of the Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction

IHS – The Mission



Indian Health Service

Mission: to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level

Vision: healthy communities and quality health care systems through strong partnerships and culturally responsive practices

IHS – The Work

In partnership with Tribes, the Indian Health Service provides the following services:

1. Develop annually inventory sanitation deficiencies in Indian and Alaska Native communities.
2. Provide professional engineering design and construction services for water and waste disposal facilities.
3. Fund water supply and waste disposal facilities.
4. Lead collaboration with other agencies in the development of multi-agency funded projects
5. Provide technical consultation and training to improve the operation and maintenance of Tribally owned water supply and waste disposal systems.
6. Advocate for Tribes during the development of policies, regulations, and programs.
7. Assist Tribes with sanitation facility emergencies.



IHS – The Work

Facilities

Water

- Private/Individual Well
- Cistern
- Point of Use Treatment
- Transmission/Source
- Community Treatment
- Washateria
- Community Storage
- Distribution System
- O&M Equipment

Sewer

- On-site Waste Water Treatment
- Community Sewage Collection System
- Community Sewage Treatment
- O&M Equipment

Solid Waste

- Landfill/transfer station
- Open dump closure
- O&M Equipment

Planning

- Engineering Services
- Testing Services



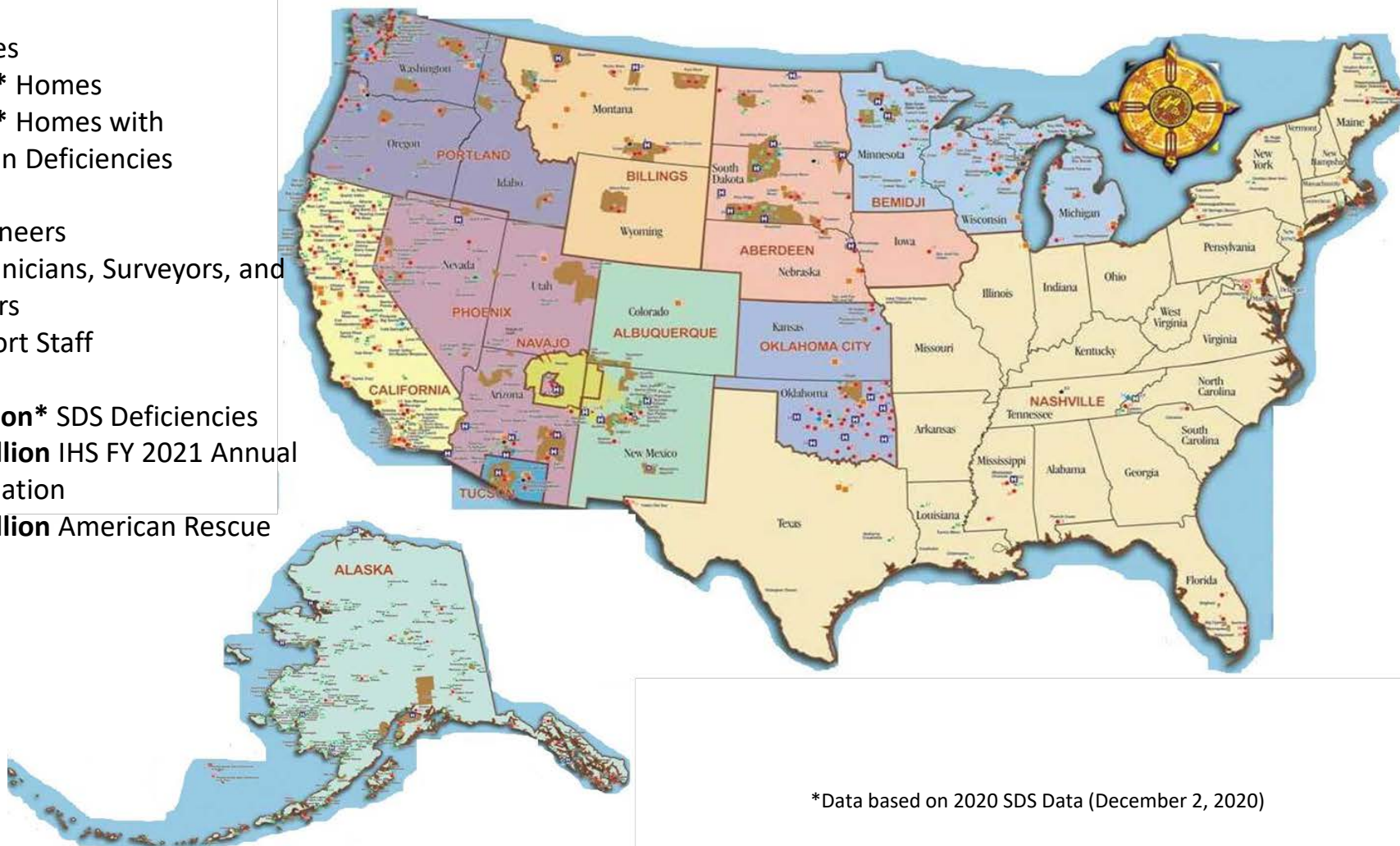


IHS – The Location

583 Tribes
405,500* Homes
112,100* Homes with
Sanitation Deficiencies

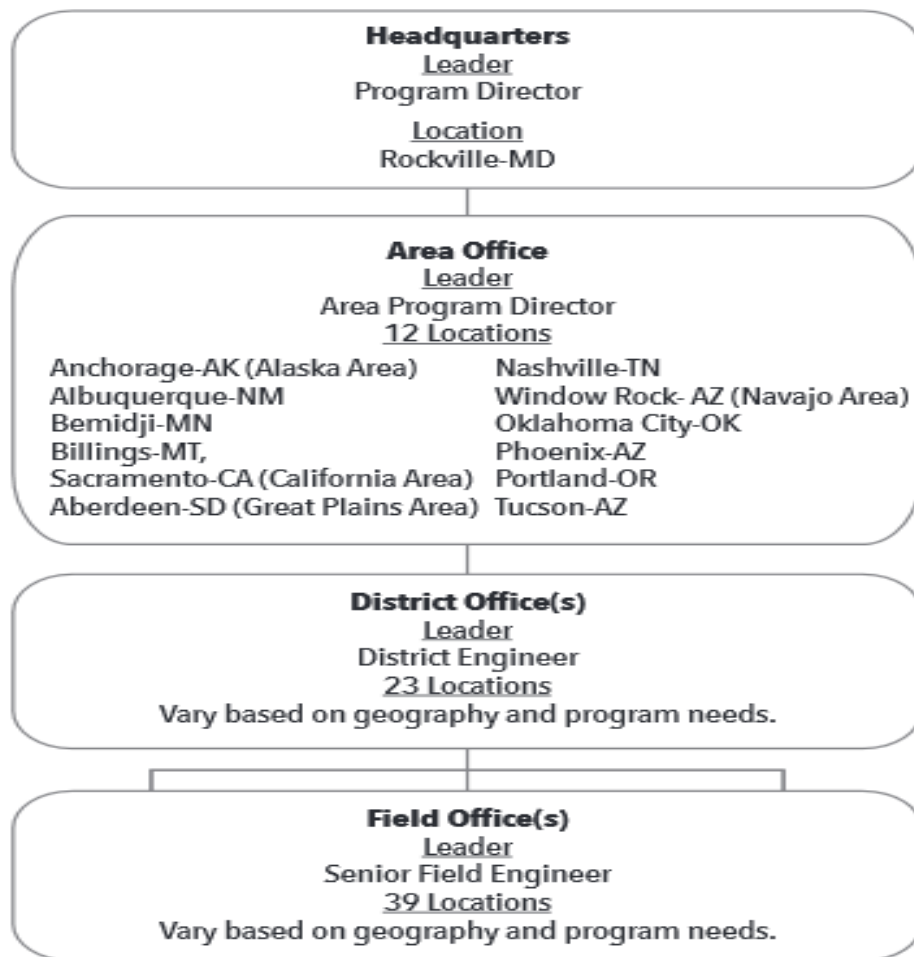
265 Engineers
194 Technicians, Surveyors, and
Inspectors
64 Support Staff

\$3.1 Billion* SDS Deficiencies
\$197 Million IHS FY 2021 Annual
Appropriation
\$167 Million American Rescue
Plan Act



*Data based on 2020 SDS Data (December 2, 2020)

IHS - The Locations





Contact Information



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Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

ADMINISTERED BY THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES (OCS)
WITHIN
THE DEPARTMENT FOR HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE (HHS)
ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (ACF)



LIHWAP Overview

- \$1.1 Billion in emergency relief funding
- Grants awarded to states, territories, tribes and tribal organizations
- Benefits for rate reduction and arrearages for drinking water and wastewater
- Payments made directly to water utility vendors on behalf of low income households
- Modeled after existing policies, procedures, and practices for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)



Priorities for Benefit Payments

- Restore services for households that have been disconnected from public water systems.
- Remove the risk of disconnection for households that are in arrears
- Provide relief for households that are struggling with current bills



LIHWAP Outcomes

- Maintain continuity of water service
- Provide relief for low income families
- Protect health and safety
- Develop a framework for greater collaboration and enhanced relationships between state and tribal governments and water utility providers
- Data collection



Boosting LIHWAP through Partnerships and Leveraging Resources

- State and Tribal governments build partnerships with utility companies
- LIHWAP administrators leverage resources to provide wrap around services including minor repairs and integrated utility support programs
- Partnerships with public and private organizations can provide education around water equity and conservation



World Water Week 2021

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program

BUFFALO
SEWER AUTHORITY

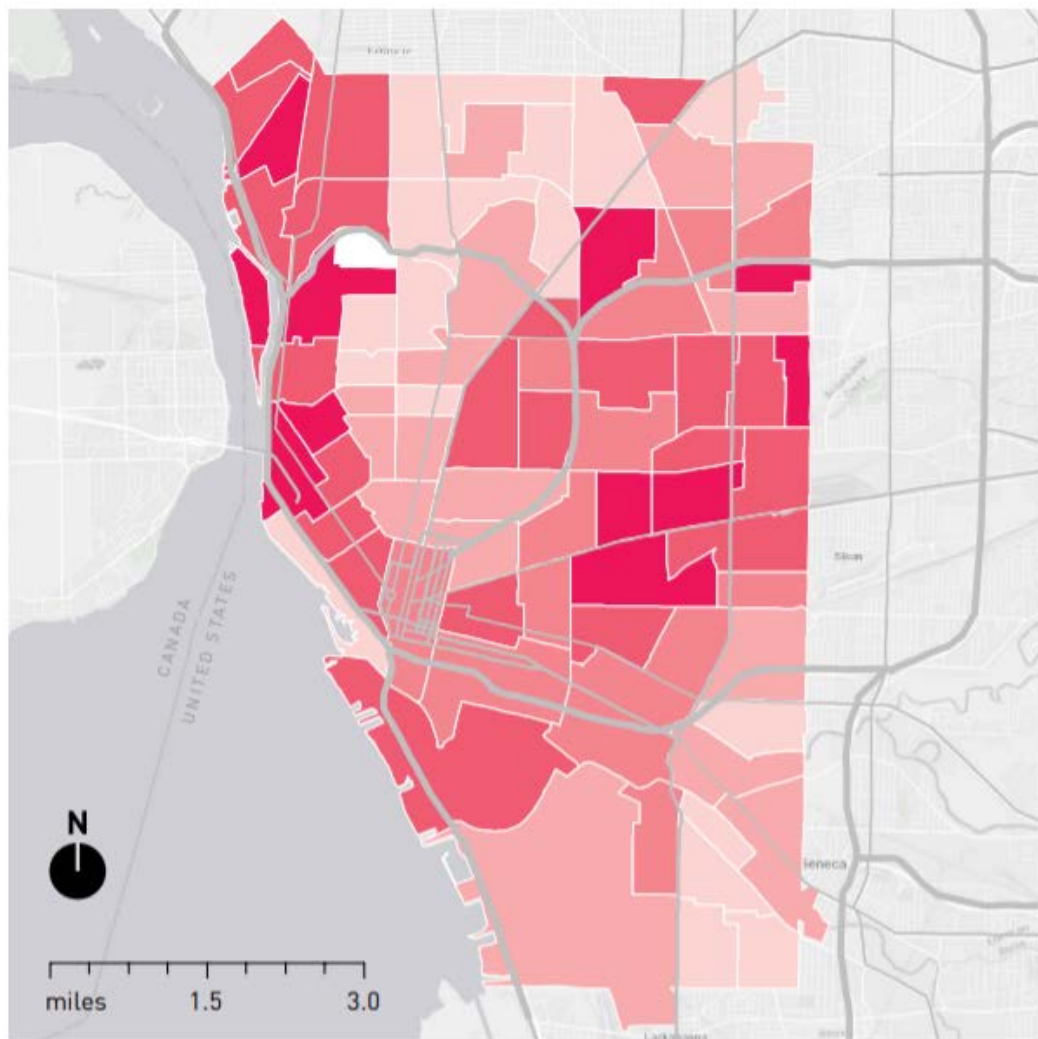


Oluwole "OJ" McFoy, P.E.
General Manager

BUFFALO

SEWER AUTHORITY





Percent Population Below the Poverty Level by Census Tract, 2014

- Less than 17%
- 17% to 28%
- 28% to 37%
- 37% to 42%
- 42% or more



AN EQUITABLE WATER FUTURE Buffalo





WATER QUALITY



INFRASTRUCTURE



WORKFORCE



WATERFRONT

getwaterwisebuffalo.org

~~WE ALL~~ DESERVE AFFORDABLE WATER

BUFFALO
SEWER AUTHORITY

BUFFALO
WATER

CATHOLIC
CHARITIES


Community Foundation
for Greater Buffalo

 **GROUNDWORK**
Buffalo





ROLL

REPLACING OLD LEAD LINES



Socio-economic factors

- Race and ethnicity
- Income
- Education attainment
- Young children
- Older adults
- Owner occupancy
- Limited English speakers
- Unemployment and labor force participation

- Built environment factors:

- Traffic proximity
- Ozone levels
- Particulate matter
- Access to public open space
- Tree canopy cover
- Impervious surface over
- Vacant land
- Residential vacancy rates
- Commercial vacancy rates

GET HELP WITH YOUR WATER BILL



CITY OF BUFFALO WATER AFFORDABILITY PROGRAM

Eligible Buffalo residents can receive a discount
on their water bill between 20% - 60% a year.



Mayor Byron W. Brown

LET'S
GET
WATER
WISE

PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must be a City of Buffalo resident
- Must reside at the property on the account
- Must provide proof of income and residency

ELIGIBILITY:

Eligibility is based on household income relative to federal low-income guidelines.

Household income eligibility for Residential Affordable Water Program as of 2019:

1	\$41,850	5	\$64,450	● FAMILY SIZE
2	\$47,800	6	\$69,350	● MAX INCOME
3	\$53,800	7	\$74,100	
4	\$59,750	8	\$78,800	

Households are automatically eligible if any member receives:

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Public Assistance
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or Food Stamps)
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) benefits

See back for details →→

Implementing the Buffalo Reform Agenda

CITY OF BUFFALO WATER AMNESTY PROGRAM EXTENDED TO JUNE 30, 2021

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CALL 716.847.1065**



**PLEASE SEE DETAILS
ON THE BACK**

World Water Week 2021: Building Resilience Faster



Thank You!

For more information:

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Voices from the Field: A Virtual Roundtable with Water and Wastewater Stakeholders and Tribal Advocates

August 28, 2021



About the Alliance



One Water



One Future

Alliance Work to Increase Quality Water and Wastewater Availability, Affordability and Access

- **Addressing Water Stress, Legacies of Inequities & Vulnerable Communities**
- **An Equitable Water Future**
 - **Water Equity Network**
- **Recovering Stronger**
 - **Federal Policy Blueprint**
 - **Preventing Water Shutoffs for Low-income Households**

Water Stress

Water stress **occurs when individuals and communities face difficulty in accessing water services.** It can include inadequate access to drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater services for everyday needs, whether due to lack of infrastructure, difficulty paying for services, or poor water quality.

Water stress encompasses water-related climate impacts such as floods, droughts, and rising sea levels. Facilities like wastewater treatment plants can cause stress to residential communities in the surrounding areas. Water stress also affects people that rely on water for their livelihood, such as farming communities.



An Equitable Water Future



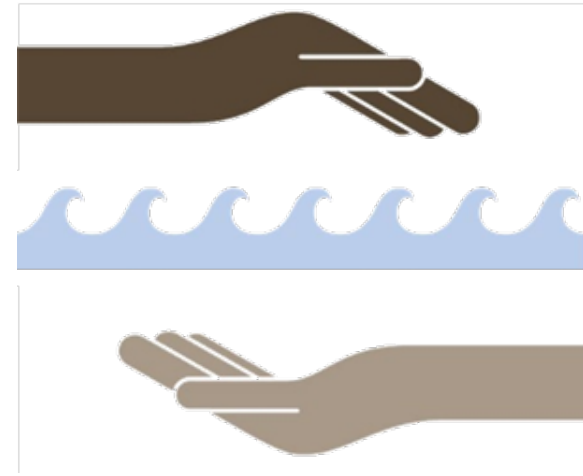
PILLAR ONE

Ensure all people have access to clean, safe, affordable water service



PILLAR TWO

Maximize community and economic benefits of water infrastructure investment



PILLAR THREE

Foster community resilience in the face of a changing climate

Water Equity Network



US Water
Alliance

www.uswateralliance.org



Recovering
Stronger



Recovering Stronger: Transforming Water Management Post COVID-19

Five Interlocking Solutions

Solution #1: Price Water to Reflect its True Value and the Cost of Service.

Solution #2: Provide Affordable, Universal Access to Water.

Solution #3: Catalyze Utility Partnerships and Consolidation.

Solution #4: Deploy Smart Water Operations at Scale.

Solution #5: Use Water as a Pathway to Address the Climate Crisis.

Federal Policy Blueprint Policy Proposals



Make Water More Stable



Make Water Safer



Make Water More Affordable and Accessible



Make Water Smarter



Make Water More Resilient



Take a Whole-of-Government Approach to Federal Water Management

Administration's interest and investment in water infrastructure could spur unprecedented progress





Recovering
Stronger

Preventing Water Shutoffs for Low-Income Households

Addressing Customer Debt in the Context of COVID-19: Guidance for Water and Wastewater Utilities

Overview

Water utilities are facing a dramatic rise in unpaid accounts. At the height of the pandemic, [customers in a dozen large cities owed more than \\$1 billion](#) to their water utilities. Many customers are still experiencing financial stress due to COVID-19 and widespread unemployment, making it harder for them to pay their utility bills. At the same time, utilities lost revenue over the past year as commercial water usage declined. Customers may also face additional fines such as late fees and reconnection fees that can make their bills more unaffordable. Beyond utility bills, individuals may be paying off traffic fines, court fees, and other penalties. Utilities need new tools and funding mechanisms to address the levels of debt related to COVID-19. They need strategies to ensure that low-income ratepayers can manage their bills and are not overwhelmed by debt. This fact sheet highlights promising strategies

Opportunities for action

Offering debt forgiveness tied to payment plans: Offering debt forgiveness as part of a payment plan arrangement allows customers to make smaller, regular payments that they can afford while easing the burden of arrears.

- The **City of Chicago's** [Utility Billing Relief Program](#) offers a discount to low-income customers that enroll in a payment plan for their water and sewer bills. Their debt does not accumulate fees while they are enrolled in the payment plan, and they are protected from shutoffs. After a year without overdue bills, past debt is forgiven. The program operates in partnership with the Community & Economic Development Association of Cook County, which also operates LIHEAP in Chicago.
- Customers enrolled in **Philadelphia Water's** [Tiered](#)

Six Steps for Balancing Affordability and Financial Resilience



Initial Insights on Balancing Affordability and Financial Resilience

Utilities are committed to supporting communities dealing with financial stress and finding more compassionate approaches. The Covid crisis has highlighted the fact that water shutoffs are not an effective tool for utilities or communities.

Utilities need federal support to forgive debt and help customers get back on track and paying bills they can afford.

Strict eligibility criteria on federal funding makes things harder for utilities by making it difficult for people to receive the funding and pay off their bills. Making it as easy as possible to get the money to people in need benefits utilities.

Offering debt forgiveness is a crucial first step to recovery. It's also important to have ongoing assistance so that people don't get back into debt immediately.

One Water, One Future.

For more information:

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