



**Water & Wastes Digest**  
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#### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

*WATER & WASTES DIGEST* is published exclusively for the 90,000+ decision makers in the municipal and industrial water, wastewater and water pollution industries. These individuals actively design, specify, buy, operate and maintain the equipment, chemicals and services used for water treatment. Editorial content in this audited publication highlights new products and literature concerning the supply, collection, treatment and distribution of drinking water; the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater; and hazardous waste pollution control. Regular Product Emphasis and High-Tech Focus sections feature major equipment and systems. A product directory is included in the annual June *Buyer's Guide*.

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## EDITORIAL letter

# Building Public Awareness

2008 rolls in with a declining housing market, scraping-by economy and—let's face it—likely continuing acquisitions on the water market front. While the water and wastewater industry will keep dueling even in uncertain economic times, at least the direction is clear: 2008 is all about sustainability.

New environmental regulations addressing energy use, infrastructure and resource management, and water and wastewater quality will continue to force municipalities to implement new energy- and water-efficient technologies. And while industry professionals clearly understand the value of implementing innovative and sustainable designs, the general public is quick to question why and how their tax dollars are spent.

I recently came across an interesting program called "Climate Change and the City's Infrastructure," a panel discussion broadcasted on Chicago Access Network Television. The event was organized by the Chicago Architectural Foundation and cosponsored by the City of Chicago Department of Environment. The panel featured various Chicago leaders, including representatives from the Department of Water and the Department of Transportation, who discussed global climate change initiatives and their impact on Chicago's future infrastructure.

It is interesting to point out that although this was a ticketed event held in the middle of November 2007, it was later televised and thus made available to the public. It is this type of initiative that creates awareness and informs the public about cities' current environmental efforts and their benefits.

I think being a part of this industry sometimes prevents us from understanding why people question or even oppose new projects that can improve their quality of life. To bring the public on board for new projects, including the ones that could potentially result in higher water and sewer bills, we must make an effort to educate them.

Let's take Chicago, for example. As any other city with combined storm and sanitary sewer systems, which occasionally trigger neighborhood floods, Chicago residents are very sensitive about information on the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan, better known as the "Deep Tunnel" project of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

The completion of this entire project, along with local municipal sewer upgrades and connections, will greatly reduce pollution and flooding problems in Cook County's 375-sq-mile combined sewer area, which serves more than three million people. With a project of this scope, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago has made a great effort to educate residents about the Deep Tunnel project stages and its effects on the community.

While large-scale projects receive extensive media coverage, smaller projects barely make waves. As industry professionals, I urge you to make it our goal this year to continue giving large projects the attention they deserve but also build much-needed public awareness about small- and medium-size projects.



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## COMING UP NEXT MONTH...

- Contaminant Removal
- SCADA
- Meters
- Sludge Dewatering
- Water/Wastewater Software
- Plant Profile