YOUR FUTURE

Turning on the tap or flushing the toilet is as simple as turning a knob or pushing a handle. What you don't see is the vast infrastructure—800,000 miles of water pipe and 600,000 miles of sewer line—that takes over from there. Every community is literally built on top of this infrastructure and wouldn't be possible without it. These systems have worked silently for years, in some cases more than a century, without major interruptions, but now they need your attention. Your investment is needed to keep infrastructure functional for current and future generations.

Did you know?

- The United States has a remarkable infrastructure system that has silently and reliably provided safe drinking water, wastewater collection and treatment, and stormwater and floodwater management for many years.
- Much of the U.S. water infrastructure was built nearly a century ago. It is aging and crumbling at a significant rate but investment is lagging and we are fast approaching a critical point. In some cases, our pipes and plants are literally falling apart.
- The U. S. Government Accountability Office estimates that water and wastewater utilities are not generating enough revenue from user rates to cover the full cost of their service.[1] As a result, we are starting to experience the effects of chronically postponed maintenance from funding shortfalls.
- U.S. cities are spending more dollars on water and wastewater each year, but the investment needs far outweigh local governments' abilities to keep up with aging infrastructure. Americans will likely face increased service disruptions, increased water main breaks, and greater impacts on local economies and threats to public health.[2]
- In 2006, U.S. infrastructure was number six on the World Economic Forum's ranking of best national infrastructure systems. By 2012, we had fallen to number 16![3]
- More than $180 billion is needed to repair or replace U.S. water, wastewater and stormwater systems. Investing in water infrastructure will produce healthier communities, reduce water pollution, and directly generate nearly 1.9 million jobs. An additional 800,000 jobs will come from increased economic activity in related sectors.[4]

Why should you care about water?

Our communities and our lives are built on water. In addition to protecting our health and the environment, we need clean water for a healthy and growing economy. Clean water and wastewater services support a $50 billion per year recreation industry, $300 billion in coastal tourism, $45 billion in commercial fishing and shell fishing industries and hundreds of billions of dollars a year in basic manufacturing.[5] Without water, we don't have a future.

Small actions can make a BIG difference.

- Invest in your water infrastructure.
- Don't take water for granted. The water we have now is all that we will ever have. Use it wisely.
- Think before you flush. Everything you send down the pipe ends up at your local wastewater treatment plant. We are all part of the water cycle. We all live downstream.
- Educate yourself. Take a tour of your local water and wastewater treatment plant to learn what happens to the water that you drink and use.
- Read and understand your water and wastewater bill.
- Stay informed about the water quality issues facing your community by contacting your local municipality and attending public meetings.

You need water. Water needs you.

Indispensable to jobs, the economy, our health and our communities, water runs through our lives in many ways. Everyone uses water and everyone is responsible for it.

We must all work together to keep our water clean and healthy. To do that, we each need to learn to value water. **To learn more, visit www.WatersWorthIt.org.**

BE AS GOOD TO WATER AS WATER'S BEEN TO YOU.

WATER'S WORTH IT™

www.WatersWorthIt.org

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