



GENERAL UPDATES & UPCOMING EVENTS

WATER RESOURCES GENERAL

Water Infrastructure Presentation to COG Board

On June 11th, Tanya Spano and panelists Adam Krantz (National Association of Clean Water Agencies), William Hicks (Fairfax County), and Christopher Pomeroy (AquaLaw) highlighted the strides and challenges facing wastewater and stormwater infrastructure.

Summary

Wastewater agencies are reducing nutrient loads despite growth and making investments in environmental sustainability. Stormwater agencies are quickly ramping up green infrastructure practices. Both face challenges of system maintenance and rate affordability. Both face additional challenges due to changing climate and weather patterns. There is a need for local governments to have a more flexible approach in order to balance multiple water quality priorities. **Board members were interested in getting more complete cost data for all of the regions' water infrastructure needs - which staff is developing.**

Details

The speakers noted that wastewater treatment plants have made strides to reduce nutrient loads despite the growth in the region, as well as innovations to reduce energy use and reuse efforts. While there have been many investment made at the plants, investments in the maintenance of the infrastructure outside of the plants such as pipelines have often been less intensive or deferred. Unfortunately, aging pipe infrastructure is in need of continuous replacement at a time of decreasing revenue. And, as per capita water usage declines, revenue declines - as rates are based on usage. So new rate structures and funding resources are needed.

Local governments are largely focused on managing urban stormwater as the next water resources frontier, with challenges that include strict permit requirements, regulatory uncertainty, pressures to do more, high and evolving program costs, as well as increasing storm intensities which challenge Best Management Practices (BMPs) already in place. In addition, in an effort to retrofit old stormwater management systems and areas without stormwater controls, an increasing number of green infrastructure practices are being implemented. Some of which is being put on private lands, which changes the dynamics of inspection/maintenance and assuredness about BMP effectiveness. The scale and complexity of such diverse systems is significant, and it was noted that even green infrastructure needs maintenance.

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Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)

CEEPC met on May 28 and heard presentations on the progress the region has made towards climate & energy targets. The region is doing well toward meeting its goals on: greenhouse gas reduction plans, energy improvement plans, energy audits and incentives for energy efficiency and clean energy. The areas in need of the most improvement are: vulnerability assessments, developing resiliency strategies, and implementing complete and green streets policies. At the next CEEPC meeting on July 23, attendees will hear a report out from the NASA-led 'Building a Climate Resilient National Capital Region' workshops held this year.

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Green Purchasing Database

COG has created a database of existing contracts from local jurisdictions, school districts and drinking water and wastewater entities. There are over 80 contracts included thus far. Most contracts are for green office products, recycling, and cleaning products. Several contracts contain a rider clause allowing other participants to use that contract. DC Water, Loudoun Water, Alexandria Renew, WSSC, UOSA, and PWCSA participate in COG's cooperative purchasing program. For more details or to view a copy of the database, contact Maia Davis, below.

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Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)

ACPAC launched a **Climate & Energy Leadership Award** program to recognize and encourage public agencies, non-governmental organizations and stakeholders in their efforts to achieve local and regional climate and energy goals in the [Climate and Energy Action Plan](#). Sixteen applications were received. Judging will occur this summer and winners will be announced this fall.

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CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM

Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee's Bay and Local Water Quality Forum

The Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee will be holding its annual *Chesapeake Bay and Local Water Quality Forum* with EPA and the States at COG on **July 18th**. It will be a timely discussion about water infrastructure challenges and opportunities, Bay TMDL progress, and the new Bay Agreement. Expected invitees include Jeff Corbin and Nicholas DiPasquale from EPA; Bob Summers, Maryland Secretary of the Environment; James Davis-Martin, Chesapeake Bay Coordinator, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality; and a representative from the District Department of the Environment.

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WAMU Community Dialogue on "The Chesapeake Bay Watershed - What Will 'Clean' Mean?"

On June 18th, Cathy Drzyzgula, CBPC member and Tanya Spano, COG Regional Water Quality Management Chief, participated in an informal off-the-record panel discussion with members of WAMU's Community Council and reporters regarding the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and restoration efforts. The intent was to provide background to the WAMU staff on the efforts already underway to address the Bay TMDL, the progress made, and coming challenges, and to identify potential stories that WAMU staff might pursue. Additional panelists were: Doug Siglin, Executive Director of the Anacostia River Legacy Initiative, Federal City Council; Jeff Corbin, Senior Advisor, Chesapeake Bay & Anacostia River, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and Professor Tom Fisher, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Research, Horn Point Laboratory. They noted the need for all parties to continue to work together to find effective, cost-effective and sustainable solutions - and to get buy-in from those customers/rate payers that ultimately have to pay for this work.

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Bay Agreement

The new [Bay Agreement](#) was signed by the Bay States at the CBP Executive Council Meeting on June 16, 2014. The new agreement includes a Toxics and Climate Resiliency Goal. States have 90 days to delineate more detailed approaches for the Agreement, and Goal Implementation Teams will be developing two-year management strategies for each of the goals. The Agreement will be part of the discussion with the CBPC members at the July 18 Bay and Local Water Quality Forum.

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STORMWATER

Construction Begun on First Street Tunnel

On June 27, DC Water, Bloomingdale & LeDroit Park residents, and the Mayors' Task Force Celebrated the groundbreaking for First Street Tunnel to hold stormwater underneath the streets, and a celebration of two other flood mitigation measures already in operation. The First Street Tunnel is a 20 1/2-foot diameter tunnel under First Street, NW. The Authority will construct this tunnel to hold eight million gallons of wastewater and stormwater during heavy rain events, using a temporary pumping station to carry flow into the Northeast Boundary sewer after the storm passes. Completion is projected for spring 2016. Link for more information:

http://www.dcwater.com/news/listings/press_release660.cfm

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Green Streets Best Practices Workshop

Focus: Overcoming Implementation Challenges and Maximizing Benefits

Date: Monday July 28, 12:30-4:30pm with networking lunch 11:30-12:30pm

Location: COG Training Center

Description:

As part of its policy to encourage members to implement green streets projects, the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) will sponsor this workshop at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) to bring together transportation staff and their colleagues in environmental programs to discuss:

- How implementation challenges are being overcome around the region and across the country
- Highway, urban, and residential green street success stories
- Technical, financial, and regulatory hurdles to project implementation

Please register [here](#).

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DRINKING WATER

Drought and Water Supply

The June 2014 drought stage is 'Normal' indicating that the Potomac River Basin is currently free of drought. There is a below [normal probability of releases](#) from the Washington Metropolitan area's back-up water supply reservoirs for the 2014 summer and fall seasons. Stream flows measured at [Point of Rocks](#) and [Little Falls](#) are above median levels. Most of the [groundwater monitoring wells](#) report normal to high levels. [Precipitation levels](#) in the Potomac River Basin were above normal in May by 0.8 inches. Please visit [COG's water supply and drought monitoring](#) website if you need additional information.

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Community Engagement Campaign

The region's water utilities are developing short videos with 'Do Not Flush' messages. If you have examples of effective or humorous YouTube videos, and/or would like to be a part of the CEC subcommittee brainstorming conference call on **July 14**, please contact Heidi Bonnaffon.

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OTHER NEWS

Resources Published

[The National Climate Assessment](http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/), released May 6th, confirms that climate change is affecting Americans in every region of the U.S. and key sectors of the national economy, including infrastructure. Heat waves, heavy downpours, and sea level rise pose growing challenges to many aspects of life in the Northeast. In the Southeast, decreased water availability is an additional challenge. Flooding may intensify in many US regions. The report finds that existing plans for adapting to and mitigating climate change are currently insufficient if the United States wants to avoid the far-reaching consequences of climate change. The report is presented in a user-friendly online format at this link: (<http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>)

Eleven Lessons Learned from Fairfax County's Flood Response Program

Recognizing a repeated pattern of weather events that cause severe flooding, Virginia's Fairfax County developed a flood response plan and implemented an Automated Flood Warning System. Engineers with Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services' Stormwater Management Business Area worked closely with the county's Office of Emergency Management, fire and rescue, and police in developing the response plan. This cycle of planning, response, and review has evolved over time, making the flood response program a living entity. (<http://stormwater.wef.org/2014/06/eleven-lessons-learned-fairfax-countys-flood-response-program/>)

Upcoming WRTC & CBPC Meetings & Events

July 18th - CBPC Bay & Local Water Quality Forum with EPA & the States

July 23rd - CEEPC Meeting

July 28th - Green Streets Best Practices Workshop (COG Training Center, 11:30am-4:30pm)

September 11th - WRTC Meeting

September 19th - CBPC Business Meeting & Tour of Blue Plains WWTP