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New Jersey American Water Elevates Infrastructure Conversation and Mobilizes Action During Infrastructure Week

VOORHEES, N.J.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- In support of Infrastructure Week 2018, [New Jersey American Water](#) is adding its voice to local advocacy conversations and taking steps to help customers better understand the toll that aging infrastructure is taking. Being held this year from May 14-21, [Infrastructure Week](#) is a national week of events, media coverage, education and issue advocacy designed to elevate infrastructure as a critical issue impacting the economy, society, security and future.

Central to the conversation is remedying America's water and wastewater systems, which in 2017 received a D and D+ respectively in the American Society of Civil Engineers 2017 infrastructure report card. In the 2016 report card for New Jersey, the water and wastewater systems received a C and D, respectively. To combat this, New Jersey American Water has invested more than \$350 million on [system upgrades](#) statewide to improve service reliability, water quality and flows for fire protection.

"New Jersey American Water successfully owns, operates and maintains approximately 8,900 miles of water infrastructure and wastewater pipes in 191 communities," said Deborah Degillio, president of New Jersey American Water. "We can't afford to jeopardize our customers' quality of life by allowing our communities' infrastructure to fall into disrepair. From replacing water mains, pipelines and hydrants, and the installation of advanced metering technology to help reduce water leaks, to enhanced treatment capabilities improving efficiency and reliability, the investments we make into our systems ensure that we continue to meet customer needs in the communities that rely on us."

Last year the company replaced and rehabilitated more than 75 miles of aging pipe and installed more than 20 miles of new main to serve additional areas. Other investments include improvements to five water treatment facilities; replacement or upgrades to dozens of wells, pumping stations and other critical facilities; replacing 728 fire hydrants and 11,000 valves; and upgrades to booster and lift stations in sewer systems.

Degillio emphasizes that while water infrastructure is in dire need nationwide, progress has been made since the first Infrastructure Week was observed six years ago.

"According to the Value of Water Campaign, more Americans currently support investing in infrastructure than nearly any other issue," said Degillio. "Elected officials and business and community leaders are beginning to recognize that the infrastructure investment gap cannot be solved by incremental or stop-gap solutions and are looking to advancing truly transformative projects that lead to sustainable solutions."

Degillio cites the Water Quality Accountability Act, which was passed in N.J. last year and aims to raise the level of investment and accountability of every water provider in the state, as a local example of a proactive take on infrastructure. "There is a lot of positive momentum right now that can be leveraged to help our communities realize the positive benefits of infrastructure that is on the path back to health," she said.

But there is still a way to go to closing the national investment gap of \$82 billion per year to bring water and wastewater systems up to par. "Closing this gap has the potential of generating more than \$220 billion in annual economic activity and could create 1.3 million jobs," Degillio said. "The longer Americans wait to address infrastructure issues, the bigger the gap gets, and the greater are the benefits that never get realized. The theme of Infrastructure Week really does say it all: Americans are waiting, the future won't; it's time to build."

About New Jersey American Water

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water, is the largest investor-owned water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to approximately 2.7 million people. More information can be found at www.newjerseyamwater.com.

About American Water

With a history dating back to 1886, American Water is the largest and most geographically diverse U.S. publicly traded water and wastewater utility company. The company employs more than 6,900 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater and other related services to an estimated 15 million people in 46 states and Ontario, Canada. American Water provides safe, clean, affordable and reliable water services to our customers to make sure we keep their lives flowing.

About Infrastructure Week

Infrastructure Week, a non-profit organization, convenes a national week of education and advocacy that brings together American businesses, workers, elected leaders, and everyday citizens around one message in 2018: *Americans are waiting. The future won't. It's #TimeToBuild.* Each year during IWeek, leaders and citizens around America highlight the state of our nation's infrastructure - roads, bridges, rail, ports, airports, water and sewer systems, the energy grid, telecoms, and more - and the projects, technologies, and policies necessary to make America competitive, prosperous, and safe. More information can be found at: <http://infrastructureweek.org/>.

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