

New Jersey's Water Infrastructure

An Informational Session and Public Hearing sponsored by the Clean Water Council of New Jersey

Tuesday, October 23, 2007, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
NJ Department of Environmental Protection - Public Hearing Room
401 East State Street, Trenton, New Jersey

PURPOSE OF THE HEARING

The Clean Water Council of New Jersey seeks public testimony on an issue critical to both environmental protection and economic vitality – water infrastructure objectives, needs, financing and management. Water supply, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure are all being considered. The Council has formulated eight questions for public consideration and response. Based upon the testimony at this hearing, the Council will develop a set of recommendations for the NJDEP Commissioner. Therefore, the members seek comments from interested persons so that they can recommend improvements to New Jersey's approach to water infrastructure issues.

AGENDA

Lisa Jackson, NJDEP Commissioner, has been invited to present her perspective regarding water infrastructure. Two informational presentations will then be provided, on national and New Jersey perspectives regarding water infrastructure issues. These presentations will be followed by a panel discussion among representatives of various interest groups. Thereafter the general public will have the opportunity to testify. All testimony will be recorded. A detailed agenda will be posted on the Clean Water Council of New Jersey website found at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/cleanwatercouncil> prior to the hearing.

HOW TO TESTIFY

The Council will provide 5 to 10 minutes per oral presentation, depending on the number of people who register. The Council encourages the submittal of detailed written comments on disk or CD as well as paper, to augment your testimony. Written comments will be accepted until November 16, 2007, and can be sent to the Clean Water Council of New Jersey, c/o DEP - Division of Water Quality, 401 East State Street, P.O. Box 425, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0425 or by fax at (609) 341-4518. If submitting on disk or CD, the preferred format is Microsoft Word 6.0 or above. Macintosh formats should not be used.

For more information, please contact Stanley Cach at stanley.cach@dep.state.nj.us or (609) 292-8961. To reserve a time period to testify in person, please contact Gerry Skrajewski at geraldine.skrajewski@dep.state.nj.us or (609) 292-8961.

BACKGROUND

Under New Jersey law, the Clean Water Council of New Jersey is required to hold a public hearing once a year regarding water pollution related issues and report its recommendations to the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection.

This year, the Council is focusing on water infrastructure in New Jersey, addressing all three types of water infrastructure – water supply, wastewater and stormwater. Water infrastructure provides major benefits to society and to the environment, but also imposes both societal and environmental costs. Both insufficient and excessive infrastructure can be problematic. Inadequate infrastructure maintenance and asset management can impose costs on later generations and users. Infrastructure choices affect environmental resource availability, environmental quality, growth patterns, public health and public finances. New Jersey needs to explore the benefits and services of infrastructure that it wants as a society; the maintenance and management of existing infrastructure; infrastructure choices and issues for new growth; and infrastructure choices and issues regarding urban/suburban/town center redevelopment potential. "Infrastructure" can be public or private, centralized or decentralized. Based on the choices made, society must address issues of adequate resources; implications of infrastructure management for other issues (e.g., energy utilization, smart growth, economic viability); and institutional capacity.



The Clean Water Council of New Jersey

Public Hearings

The Clean Water Council of New Jersey requests that those testifying focus on the following questions, which all relate to water supply, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure:

1 Water Infrastructure Objectives

What social, economic, environmental benefits do we want from New Jersey's water infrastructure, now and into the future, and what desired benefits are we not seeing now? What emerging issues should be addressed? Is New Jersey's water infrastructure adequate to support desired growth, including urban revitalization? If not, what improvements are needed and where? What are the risks to New Jersey's future of not achieving or maintaining these benefits?

2 Critical Information

What critical information do we need, but don't have, to understand the status, trends, benefits and costs of water infrastructure performance and asset management?

3 Infrastructure Impacts

What impact is our existing infrastructure situation having upon energy utilization, smart growth, and economic viability? What impact is our infrastructure having upon water quality, water resources and public health?

4 Infrastructure Standards

What performance or service standards are appropriate for water infrastructure? Will meeting these standards require significant changes in how we approach or perceive infrastructure needs?

5 Infrastructure Management

How do we ensure proper asset management over time, so that present practices are cost effective and do not impose unsupportable burdens on future users or generations? What future costs are associated with delayed decision making on infrastructure repairs?

6 Infrastructure Needs

What are the greatest current or projected shortfalls in water infrastructure capacity and benefits, and why? If improvements are required to existing infrastructure, what are the costs and how can they be financed?

7 Infrastructure Priorities

Competition for funding is inevitable. What water infrastructure priorities should exist, and why?

8 Paying for Infrastructure

What are the most appropriate, equitable and viable methods for funding water infrastructure needs? How should the public's willingness to pay and ability to pay be addressed? Are the funding mechanisms appropriate to the infrastructure agencies we have, and if not what other options should be considered?



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Public Hearings