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WEF HIGHLIGHTS

June 2005 • Vol. 42 No. 5

News for Members of the Water Environment Federation

First Scientist Rises to U.S. EPA Helm

Stephen Johnson, the George W. Bush administration's pick to lead the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is the first scientist and career EPA employee to rise to the top of the agency. Industry organizations and environmentalists alike applauded his nomination. The U.S. Senate confirmed Johnson's appointment in late April following questions raised over a controversial pesticide research program in Florida and the administration's air pollution proposals.

Trained as a biologist and pathologist, Johnson stepped in as EPA's acting



administrator in January when then-administrator **Michael Leavitt** left to

head the Department of Health and Human Services. During his 24 years at EPA, Johnson has held several leadership positions. Most recently, he was assistant administrator of EPA's Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances, which is responsible for implementing the nation's pesticide, toxic substances, and pollution prevention laws.

In nominating Johnson as EPA's administrator, Bush called Johnson a talented scientist and innovative prob-

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Zabinski Named WEF Vice President

Adam Zabinski has been named the 2005-2006 vice president of the Water Environment Federation (WEF; Alexandria, Va.).

A wastewater treatment professional with more than 30 years of experience, Zabinski is first deputy commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Environmental Facilities (White Plains, N.Y.), where he has



been employed for 27 years. The department is responsible for 13 sewer districts, three water districts, and the solid waste and recycling programs for Westchester County.

Zabinski began his career as a sanitary engineer at Onondaga County, New York. He has a B.S. in civil engineering from Columbia University (New York City) and an M.S. in sanitary engineering from Cornell University (Ithaca, N.Y.). He is a licensed professional engineer and a Grade 4A Certified Wastewater Operator in New York State.

A Federation member since 1976, Zabinski was a member of the House of Delegates from 2003 to 2005, and is currently chair of the Membership Committee, vice-chair of the Committee Leadership Council Management Focus Area, and a member of the Utility Management and Long-range Planning Committees.

Zabinski also is an active member of the New York Water Environment Association (NYWEA). He has been a member of NYWEA's Board of

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Infrastructure Investment: A Different Kind of Social Security

In about 45 years, the world will hit another high watermark: It will contain roughly 9 billion inhabitants competing for a diminishing pool of natural resources, including water. The year 2050 won't simply be noted for its population peak, however; it will also be noted for the turning of a tide. For the first time in the planet's history, the number of people on Earth will begin to decline.

The decline will not be evident everywhere. In sub-Saharan Africa it won't be noticed at all, because that population will continue growing at an alarming rate — far in excess of the area's ability to support such growth. The same will be true in parts of the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. And wherever the population is still growing, so will poverty and political unrest, because these areas also lack the economic and political institutions to participate in the global economy.

These demographic events will have immense, unavoidable implications for the water community — even in the United States — because at about that time we will be facing another challenge: social security. This challenge has to do with what the United Nations calls the personal support ratio — the number of people it takes to support someone 65 years old or older. Right now, the U.S. ratio is a comfortable 5-to-1, but it is about to change for the worse. Just read the near-daily articles on the future of social security, and you get a pretty clear picture of what is coming.

The picture isn't universally discouraging, however. Even if the birth rate doesn't increase (which is unlikely in post-industrial economies), the United States and Canada have a history of relatively open and free immigration — especially compared to Europe or Japan

Infrastructure investment is not about today but about tomorrow — a tomorrow that many of us may not see, but our children most certainly will.

— and this is where we will get the human resources needed to support our aging population and keep the U.S. economy vibrant and growing. The United States is the only modern society expected to be on the list of the world's ten most populous countries in 50 years. Immigration is why.

But in order to attract and sustain large numbers of valuable immigrants, we must have the infrastructure ready to support them when they arrive. Expecting them to spend a generation or more with substandard public health and social services (as many of our grandparents did) will not work.

Infrastructure investment is not about today but about tomorrow — a tomorrow that many of us may not see, but our children most certainly will. Its implications go far beyond our local communities. Our economic and social security and way of life are at stake. We need to prepare for that future today — and that is a strong argument for significant federal investment in water and sanitation infrastructure.

Arguing that people shouldn't be forced to pay for expensive infrastructure upgrades won't work so long as people are willing to pay more for cable television than for clean water and safe sanitation services. Nor will suggesting

that the federal government divert resources from other critical programs to help communities that have made bad choices or are unwilling to sacrifice in their own interests. But as an issue of national economic and social security, water infrastructure investment is a

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Member Spotlight ▶ Christopher Clark



Christopher Clark is Utilities director for the City of Sidney, Ohio. He is responsible for 32 employees in five divisions: Water Treatment and Distribution, Wastewater Collection and Treatment, Stormwater Management, Water Metering, and Utility Billing. He holds a State of Ohio Wastewater Class IV License, a State of Ohio Water Class III License, and an Ohio Water Environment Association (WEA) Wastewater Analyst II Certificate.

Clark teaches a wastewater treatment class at Muskingum Area Technical College (Zanesville, Ohio). As a member of the Ohio WEA Operator Training Committee, he also has been teaching Wastewater Class II and Wastewater Class III for the past 12 years.

When did you become a member of WEF?

1986

Why did you become a member of WEF?

The Water Environment Federation was a professional organization for wastewater personnel and was a good resource for material.

How did you get involved in the water quality field?

In high school, I had the opportunity to work at a wastewater treatment plant in Van Wert, Ohio. The wastewater superintendent gave me the opportunity to work with the laboratory technician, and it sparked a huge interest in me. After high school, I attended Muskingum Area Technical College in Zanesville, Ohio, which has a highly recognized Water & Wastewater Program under the tutelage of Dr. John R. Marks.

Why are you still in the water quality field?

I enjoy the water and wastewater treatment profession and find it challenging on a daily basis. The co-workers, the public, and the regulatory agencies are a pleasure to work with, and I don't think that there is a better profession to work in.

How has WEF affected your professional career?

I have obtained so much valuable information from WEF materials and meeting different people at the WEF and state conferences. WEF is a college of information and helps you stay in focus with regulatory issues as well as new technology.

What was one of your most challenging water quality issues and why?

I believe that the most challenging issue is to stay current with regulatory issues and technological changes. The City recently completed an upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant and used some of the newer technology as part of the upgrade. I am also finding the total maximum daily load (TMDL) process and nutrient trading issues as up-and-coming challenges.

What project are you most proud of and why?

I would say that developing water and sewer models for the City has been the most time-consuming task, has a great amount of interest, and the great

est potential to positively affect the City's operations.

What changes over the years do you feel have had the most effect on the field?

Technology changes! Definitely changes in technology have had the greatest effect in the field. When I first started in this business, computers were not around. Now everything is computer-generated or -operated.

Technological advances in sludge treatment processes also have advanced a great deal.

Where do you see the future of the industry heading?

The future of our industry is partnerships with POTWs, regulatory agencies, agriculture, and the public to further refine pollutant loadings to the receiving streams. This is directly related to nutrient trading issues.

What role do you see WEF having in the future of the industry?

Educating the public on how to create these partnerships, and working together for a common goal.

What advice do you have for up and coming water quality professionals?

If you are challenge-driven, then this is the profession for you. Stay focused and stay sharp, or the industry will pass you by.

WEF Wants You!

Do you know a WEF member who is an "unsung hero" and whose efforts have made a difference in the field? Please send your nomination and three reasons you think the member should be profiled to Staci-Jill Sands at ssands@wef.org.

WEF Adopts Position Statement on Sustainable Infrastructure

The Water Environment Federation (WEF; Alexandria, Va.) Board of Trustees has approved a new position statement on infrastructure management and funding. The statement, *Sustainable Infrastructure for Clean and Safe Water*, replaces two existing position statements and is consistent with the Federation's Policy Statement on Water Quality. The statement puts the question of federal funding in the context of an overall strategy for infrastructure sustainability that includes better asset and utility management, adoption of full-cost pricing to the maximum extent possible, and more efforts to involve the public and the private sector. It also calls for better use of existing federal assistance.

"We believe the position statement represents not just a consensus within WEF, but a growing consensus within the larger water and wastewater community about the best way to address the infrastructure investment gap," said **Steve Wordelman**, chair of WEF's Government Affairs Committee (GAC) and president of Jones and Henry Engineers in Toledo, Ohio.

The GAC Legislative and Policy Subcommittee, chaired by **Edward Wagner**, vice president in the New York office of CH2M Hill (Denver, CO), established a workgroup to produce the new position statement in late 2004. A preliminary draft was distributed to the GAC at WEFTEC®.04. The draft was subsequently revised and distributed to the GAC, Utility Management Committee, and Infrastructure Task Force for comment.

Most commenters said WEF should strongly support more federal funding but should not support an infrastructure trust fund. So, the final statement supports a "significant and continuing federal investment" in water infrastructure through the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs, notes the need for consistent and reliable SRF funding,

and describes criteria for any dedicated SRF revenue source. The statement also recommends the use of innovative financing techniques, such as extended loan terms, loan forgiveness, and grants, to help communities that lack the rate base to support conventional or SRF financing costs.

To see the full text of the position

statement, access www.wef.org on the World Wide Web. Copies will be distributed to members of Congress, WEF Member Associations, and other stakeholders.

WEF Directors-at-Large Nominated

Kevin Marsh and **Leslie Samels** have been nominated for Director-at-Large positions in the Water Environment Federation (WEF; Alexandria, Va.) House of Delegates.

Marsh, a graduate of the University of Delaware (Newark), is vice president of sales and marketing at Marsh-McBirney Inc. (Frederick, Md.) and has been a part of the water industry for 16 years. He currently is chair of WEF's Manufacturers and Representatives Committee and a member of LRPC, the WEFTEC Structure Task Force, and the Infrastructure Task Force. He is also a member of the American Water Works Association (Denver) and serves on its Manufacturers/Associates Council.

Samels has a B.S. and an M.S. in environmental engineering from the University of Florida (Gainesville). She currently works in the Charlotte, N.C., office of CDM (Cambridge) working on wastewater design projects. She has been an active member of WEF since 1999 via the University of Florida's student chapter. Samels currently is vice-chair of WEF's Students and Young Professionals Committee, chair of WEF's Student Design Competition Committee and a member of WEF's Utility Management Symposium Committee. She also is active in the North Carolina Member Association, serving as co-chair of its Students and Young Professionals



Committee and a member of its Membership Committee and Program Committee.

WERF: Wastewater Treatment Removes EDCs

Primary and secondary wastewater treatment, followed by disinfection, removes more than 90% of the most common endocrine-disrupting compounds (EDCs), according to a Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF; Alexandria, Va.) report. EDCs, also known as hormonally active agents or endocrine modulators, are natural and anthropomorphic compounds that may interfere with normal endocrine system function in humans or animals.

The report, *Endocrine Disrupting Compounds and Implications for Wastewater Treatment*, summarizes the latest research on EDCs and provides an easily accessible primer on the endocrine system, the nature and sources of EDCs, their fate in wastewater treatment, and their potential

effects on human health and the environment. According to the report, no studies to date have effectively linked low concentrations of EDCs in wastewater to adverse human health effects. In addition, the report notes, no U.S. studies have effectively tied changes in fish populations to wastewater treatment plant discharges.

A four-page fact sheet for the public is also available. The fact sheet, which is in Q&A format, answers common questions concerning EDCs. A technical brief provides detailed information on fact sheet's conclusions and lists references and sources for more information. Based on information from about three dozen publications, both documents were prepared in response to concerns over the potential for EDCs to enter the environment via treated

wastewater discharges and land-applied biosolids.

For more information, contact WERF at (703) 684-2470 or access www.werf.org online. To download the free fact sheet, access www.werf.org/pdf/04WEM6a.pdf.

WEF Creates New Award to Honor Public Officials

The Water Environment Federation (WEF; Alexandria, Va.) Board of Trustees has approved a new award to recognize public officials who have made an outstanding contribution to improving the water environment. The award will be presented to an elected or appointed public official that has made a documented, significant contribution in the areas of legislation, public policy, government service, or another area of public prominence at the local, state, or federal level. The award will be presented for the first time at WEFTEC®.05 in Washington, D.C.

Although several Member Associations (MAs) have awards specifically created for public officials, this is the first time WEF has established such an award. In the past, members of Congress and other government officials were given Honorary Memberships instead. Recipients of this honor have included former **Sens. John Chafee**

(R-R.I.; 1999) and **George Mitchell** (D-Maine; 1991), former EPA Administrator **William Ruckelshaus** (1989), former Vice President and New York **Gov. Nelson Rockefeller** (1974), and former **Rep. John Blatnick** (D-Minn.; 1972).

WEF members, MAs, and Committees are invited to submit nominations for this award. The deadline for nominations is June 30. Nominations should consist of a nomination letter, a one-page biography of the nominee, a list of specific reasons for the nomination (two pages maximum), and any other supporting materials that relate to the award criteria.

For more information or to submit a nomination, contact **Tracy Hardwick**, WEF awards program manager, at thardwick@wef.org or (703) 684-2400, ext. 7781.

Operations Challenge Update

Registration begins June 1, for the Operations Challenge competition at WEFTEC.05, in Washington, D.C. If you would like to request a Rules & Regulations booklet, send an email to opchallenge@wef.org. Registration forms can be found at www.weftec.org.

This year's demonstration of excellence in wastewater operations will feature the new Godwin Pump Maintenance event. Operations Challenge '04 was won by the Virginia Water Environment Association's Fluid Dynamics, a collaboration of the city of Franklin, Va., and Operation Management International's Dupont Spruance facility.

Be part of a continuing tradition by making trophies for Operations Challenge. Combine your creative and professional skills by designing and assembling these awards that acknowledge excellence in wastewater operations. Trophy Coordinator Dale Burrow needs volunteers for the Safety, Maintenance, Laboratory, and Collections prizes. For more information contact Burrow at (972) 263-2251, or Steve Harrison at (703) 684-2400, x7715, or sharrison@wef.org.

New EPA Administrator *continued from page 1*

lem-solver. Furthermore, as the first scientist to lead EPA, “he will use that background to set clear, rational standards for environmental quality and to place sound scientific analysis at the heart of all major decisions,” Bush said.

“The fact that he is a scientist and somebody who knows agency programs very well — having worked there for a long time — is a positive thing,” said **Tim Williams**, director of government affairs at the Water Environment Federation (WEF; Alexandria, Va.).

“Even though he doesn’t have a personal history with [EPA’s] water program, folks from that program who know him speak highly of him and his interest in the water program.”

“Having someone with [Johnson’s] background who is familiar with the various offices and scientific processes that EPA engages in is definitely positive and hopefully will create a situation where both sound science and sound

economic analysis are balanced in a way that makes for improved rulemaking,” said **Adam Krantz**, managing director of government and public affairs for the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA; Washington, D.C.; formerly known as the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies).

Confirmation Holdups

Johnson’s Senate confirmation was stalled by several Democratic senators who questioned a small, but controversial, program sponsored by EPA and the American Chemistry Council (ACC; Arlington, Va.) researching children’s exposure to pesticides in Florida.

Known as the Children’s Health Environmental Exposure Research Study, the program “was designed to fill critical data gaps in our understanding of how children may be exposed to pesticides (such as bug spray) and chemicals currently used in households,”

Johnson noted. The program offered parents in Duval County, Fla., a \$970 payment if they allowed EPA researchers to measure the effects of pesticides on selected children less than a year old.

Because of questions concerning the study design, Johnson suspended the study in the fall, pending an independent review. However, he canceled the study April 8 before the review was completed.

“Many misrepresentations about the study have been made,” Johnson said in announcing his decision. “EPA senior scientists have briefed me on the impact these misrepresentations have had on the ability to proceed with the study,” and so “I have concluded that the study cannot go forward, regardless of the outcome of the independent review.”

Johnson also faced tough grilling over EPA’s cap-and-trade regulations published in March to cut mercury

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emissions from power plants, as well as over the Bush administration's Clear Skies Initiative. **Sen. Thomas Carper** (D-Del.) moved to block Johnson's nomination, pending scientific reviews of legislative alternatives to the Clear Skies Initiative. The Senate later voted, however, to remove the procedural roadblock and confirm Johnson as EPA's new administrator.

Widespread Support

Despite the controversy raised during his Senate confirmation hearings, groups ranging from industry to environmental organizations voiced support for Johnson to head EPA.

"This is a spectacularly good appointment, and we're glad President Bush has nominated such a dedicated and accomplished career environmental professional who is known for his intellectual rigor, knowledge of environmental issues, and his fairness," said **Ken Cook**, president of the Environmental Working Group (Washington, D.C.). "It is our hope that with Mr. Johnson's appointment comes the assurance that he will be able to perform his job fully without any of the interference described in former EPA Administrator **Christie Todd Whitman's** newly published book, *It's My Party, Too: The Battle for the Heart of the GOP and the Future of America*."

Similarly, the ACC called Johnson "an excellent choice for an agency grappling with complex, scientific issues from clean air to chemical testing."

"Johnson has a long-standing commitment to the pursuit of high-quality scientific information and peer review as the basis for EPA decision making, and we think that bodes well for the management of the agency," said **Tom Reilly**, ACC's president.

Looking for Leadership

WEF and NACWA hope Johnson addresses two particular issues during his leadership: water infrastructure and wet weather flows, according to Williams and Krantz.

EPA's 2002 Clean Water and

Drinking Water Infrastructure Gap Analysis projected spending shortfalls ranging from \$331 billion to \$450 billion over 20 years between needed investments and current levels of spending for wastewater and drinking water. Nevertheless, funding for the clean water State Revolving Fund (SRF) would fall from \$1.1 billion to \$730 million under EPA's budget request for fiscal year 2006. Drinking water SRF funding would remain about the same at \$850 million.

EPA is advocating other approaches to reduce the spending gap as well, including better management and efficiency measures by utilities, full-cost pricing for services, and the use of the watershed approach. But "funding is part of that too, and WEF is disappointed, along with all the other water organizations, in terms of the federal budget," Williams said. "We hope that Stephen Johnson will be an advocate for the clean water SRF within the Bush administration."

On the wet weather front, EPA policies and regulations related to sanitary sewer overflows and the blending policy that would allow wastewater treatment

to be bypassed during heavy rains have been stalled for several years, Williams noted. "There's a whole complex of initiatives related to wet weather and how wet weather flows are regulated that we really need some leadership from EPA on," he said.

One of the obstacles to EPA finalizing rules and policies oftentimes "has to do with the time it takes to develop a consensus within EPA between different program offices and regional offices," such as the agency's Office of Water and Office of Enforcement and Compliance, for example, Williams added. "That's where administrator-level involvement and leadership are needed to develop consensus or make a decision to move forward one way or another, and that's what we'll be counting on him to do."

In assuming the leadership position, Johnson vowed to promote and maintain "the utilization of sound science while using collaborative, innovative approaches to solving environmental problems."

— **Kris Christen** is a freelance writer in Knoxville, Tenn.

U.S. EPA Committed to Utilities, Grumbles Says

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is committed to helping utilities succeed, said **Benjamin Grumbles**, assistant administrator of EPA's Office of Water, and one way is by bringing better science back into the permitting process. He was the keynote address speaker at the 2005 National Clean Water Policy Forum in Washington, D.C., May 3-4.

The agency also will be focused on economics, Grumbles noted. "Cost-benefit analysis and the process of coming up with affordable, practical, and implementable rules and requirements will continue to be a priority for the Office of Water," he said. Basically, EPA is committed to focusing on results, he said, noting that "the whole point is results — that's what the public, your rate payers, and your constituencies expect, and that's what EPA wants to help you focus on."

The 2005 Policy Forum was co-sponsored by the Water Environment Federation (WEF; Alexandria, Va.) and the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA; Washington, D.C.; formerly the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies). The goal of this year's Forum was to combine the best of WEF's Washington Briefing and AMSA's National Policy Forum, said **Lynn Orphan**, 2004-2005 WEF president.

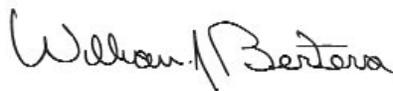
From the Director *continued from page 2*

compelling and current matter.

Interestingly, few estimates of water and wastewater infrastructure needs for the next 20 years take into account the immigration levels needed to sustain our economy and quality of life. So water infrastructure will need even more investment than currently projected, and that is something to command our attention.

The water community needs to think bigger. Our arguments for federal infrastructure investment — and there are compelling arguments to be made — need to be articulated in terms that match our national goals and needs.

They need to account not just for local needs and priorities, but for our place in the world, our responsibilities, and our future. They need to be couched within the context of a national water policy that looks at our needs not only nationally, but globally. Everything rests on infrastructure. Everything. And without that bedrock, there is no future.



Bill Bertera
WEF Executive Director

Zabinski Named WEF Vice President *continued from page 1*

Directors; served as its vice president, president-elect, and president; and was its representative in WEF's House of Delegates. He currently is a member of its Scholarship and Humanitarian Assistance Committees.

In addition, Zabinski is a member of

the Pacific Northwest Clean Water Association, the WEF Quarter Century Operators Club, the NYWEA Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers, and the Golden Manhole Society. He is also a recipient of the the Arthur Sidney Bedell Award.

Calling All Treatment Works!

Operations Forum, a special section of *WE&T* magazine, is looking for a few good treatment facilities. The *Forum's* Profile section provides an up-close look at water and wastewater treatment plants, collection systems, and outstanding operations and maintenance personnel. The *Forum* currently is seeking new entries, so here's your chance to brag about the features, approaches, and people that make your facility exceptional.

For more information or to request a questionnaire, contact Steve Spicer, *Operations Forum* editor, at (703) 684-2463 or sspicer@wef.org.

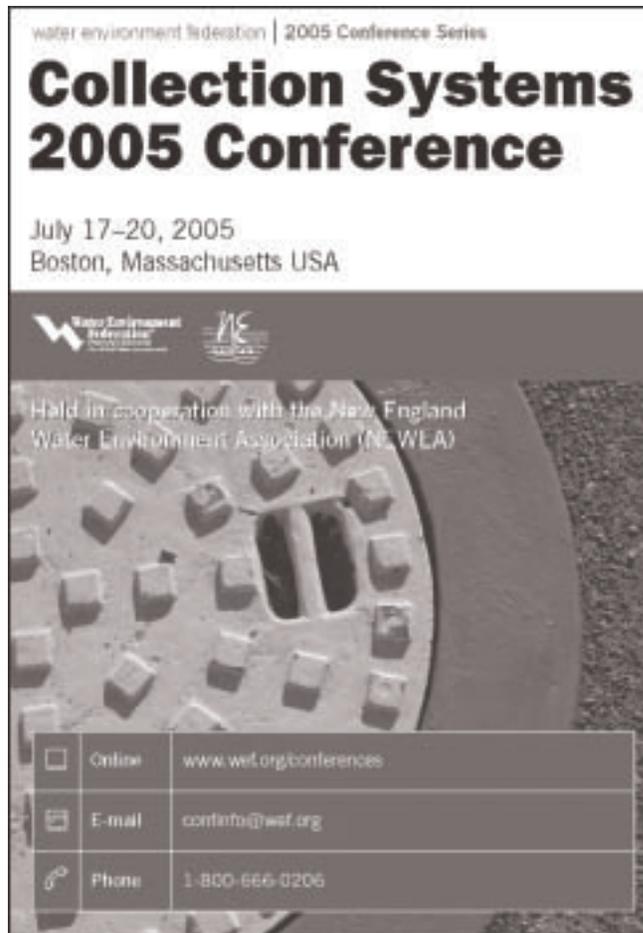


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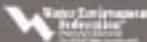
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