



*Your Water. Your Health. Our Priority.*<sup>SM</sup>

## *Straight Talk On* Drinking Water Infrastructure

*As a society, we rely on safe and abundant water supply. According to recent statistics compiled by the U.S. Geological Survey, the United States uses 408 billion gallons of water each day. And whether it is for simple things like washing the car and taking a shower, or more serious ones like fighting fires and growing crops, we would be hard pressed if our water infrastructure was not able to deliver to us our most valuable natural resource. The drinking water industry is committed to working with all levels of government and with the public to reinforce or repair the country's water infrastructure as it ages.*

### **Consider the following:**

- The American drinking water infrastructure network spans **over 700,000 miles**, more than four times longer than the National Highway System.
- In many municipalities, the water infrastructure system contains pipes laid more than a century ago. The **natural effects of time and the elements** can require the pipes to be repaired or replaced.
- The water industry consistently delivers the some of the **highest quality drinking water in the world**, but an investment is needed to ensure that this is always the case.
- The American Water Works Association estimates water utilities will have to invest \$300 billion over the next 20 years to replace aging pipes. The cost of pipes for new developments, security upgrades, advanced treatment methods and other needs may raise that bill to \$500 billion.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and others estimate that water and wastewater infrastructure repair costs may be as much as **\$745 billion to \$1 trillion over the next 20 years**.
- The cost of water infrastructure replacement far exceeds the financial capabilities of local water utilities and **requires a strong commitment** from not only utilities, but rate-payers and government as well.
- The drinking water industry has **consistently and aggressively worked with local, state, and federal government agencies** to call attention to the needs of the nation's water infrastructure.
- The need to fortify our nation's water infrastructure has become even more relevant since September 11, 2001, as utilities have placed considerable energies and have made significant investment in protecting water supplies from possible security threats.

*While the cost of repairs to our nation's water infrastructure is significant, the price of inaction is simply not worth the risk to public health, security, and economic vitality of our nation.*