



For immediate release
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Contact: Bonnifer Ballard, Executive Director
517-292-2912 bballard@mi-water.org

In order to ensure future generations of Michiganders have safe drinking water, the Michigan Section of American Water Works Association (MI/AWWA) endorses the recommendations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency contained in a 226-page report released Oct. 24 entitled, *“Review of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Drinking Water Program”* and urges the governor’s office to take steps to implement them.

In a letter to Gov. Rick Snyder Oct. 30, MI/AWWA urged the state to increase funding and staffing for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), specifically to improve management and electronic data reporting. The EPA’s report noted that MDEQ’s ability to fully implement applicable drinking water regulations has “been impacted” by limited staffing and resources.

“We concur with EPA’s assessment,” wrote **Christine Spitzley**, MI/AWWA board chair, “and we urge you to put in place initiatives and funding to address the recommendations as part of the 2018 budget.” MI/AWWA served on the governor’s 21st Century Infrastructure Commission, which made similar recommendations and contends they are critical to the MDEQ’s ability to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act.

“We applaud the governor’s vision to holistically assess the state’s infrastructure and evaluate State of Michigan programs to ensure safe, reliable and affordable water systems,” Spitzley explains. “With more than 1,300 community drinking water systems and more than 9,000 non-community systems that we

rely on every day for our families and businesses, we need the MDEQ to have the staff and financial resources to oversee them.”

“Our ultimate goal is water infrastructure that we can rely on for public health and safety,” explains **Bonnifer Ballard**, MI/AWWA executive director. “To achieve that, we need not only state support and oversight, but also appropriate investment into systems and facilities that need upgrades before they exceed their functional life spans. We need to proactively manage our water infrastructure, rather than wait for failures to occur.”

Michigan Section of American Water Works Association is a vital community of nearly 1,700 water professionals in Michigan leading the advancement of water knowledge and improving the value and quality of water in our lives. AWWA is the largest nonprofit, scientific and educational association dedicated to managing and treating water, the world’s most important resource.

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