Inside the Indiana Statehouse: The Legislative Focus on Water

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State Budget

• Appropriation of $40M ($20M in each of the 2 budget years) for the Water Infrastructure Assistance Fund
  • Ongoing effort to fund water projects through the IFA State Revolving Fund
  • Program was initiated after the 2018 Water Infrastructure Task Force
  • Keeping the continuity was important even in a stimulus year

• $100M appropriation ($50M/year over 2 years) from American Rescue Plan (stimulus)

• $60M appropriation ($30M/year for 2 years) from ARP
SB348 (Sen. Koch, Rep. Soliday) established a wastewater task force to look at investment and service to underserved areas.

The task force will examine:

- Standards/best practices for the maintenance and life cycle management of wastewater systems
- Adequacy of present sources of funding for the maintenance and life cycle management of systems
- Current level of regulation of wastewater management systems,
- Economic development impacts of improved wastewater infrastructure
- Difficulties in connecting unserved properties to sanitary sewer systems
- Available financing options
- Appropriateness of and circumstances for allowing municipalities or municipally owned utilities to sell water or wastewater services outside their corporate boundaries.
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The task force shall develop a long-term plan for addressing wastewater needs including:

- Outcomes that must be achieved in order to overcome challenges facing Indiana's local wastewater infrastructure
- The benchmarks and timelines that must be met in order to achieve these outcomes.
- Metrics to be used in assessing the current status of wastewater management systems and in tracking the progress made toward accomplishing all goals, benchmarks, and recommended standards.
- Funding and financing mechanisms that should be used to achieve necessary improvements in wastewater management systems, including the appropriate level of regulatory oversight to ensure that proper investment in wastewater infrastructure assets occurs on a regular and sustained lifecycle.
- A determination of who should bear the financial burden
What’s going on now?

**Wastewater task force is underway**

- First meeting has been held
- Four more meetings planned through October
- Working closely with the co-chairs and their staff on format
- Looking at what data is missing, what is needed to move forward
- Need to answer the question of what is achievable, realistic
- Once taskforce wraps up, have to sell the solution

**IFA awards are underway**

**Much activity on federal front**
What’s next?

- Are there administrative solutions that can be implemented?
- Is missing data readily available or is time needed?
- Will legislation be needed in the upcoming session? Or in 2023?
- Can a pilot program be implemented to test ideas?
- What are the challenges?
  - Big price tag
  - What is the “real” need?
  - Capacity to do work
  - Turf battles
  - Who pays?
Factors impacting 2022 legislative session:
• Short session, non-budget year
• Redistricting takes effect – how will that impact legislative seats
• Upcoming legislative retirements
• Other legislative issues requiring attention
• Federal issues taking precedent
What’s next?

Remain engaged in the legislative process.

We’ve had significant success in the water area since 2018, but there is so much to do.

Tell the story of the remaining needs.