

# Clean Water

Construction Grants Program News

Fall 1975

## *A Message from Russell E. Train*

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 set in motion a comprehensive program to clean up the Nation's waters. Since the law was enacted, much progress has been made toward cleaner water, thanks to the cooperative efforts of Federal, State and local governments, of industries, and of concerned citizens. But much remains to be done.

One of our country's major environmental problems is municipal sewage. It is estimated that raw or inadequately treated sewage from 107 million people still flows into our waterways. And out of a population of approximately 210 million, only 53 million people are served by systems that provide secondary treatment or better.

To safeguard public health and welfare, we must do an increasingly better job of controlling pollution from municipal sewage, as well as other sources. We can no longer afford to allow the free use of our waterways as a dumping ground for our wastes. Even as industry and agriculture can no longer dispose of their water wastes in the old way, neither can towns and cities expect to dispose of sewage as they have in the past.

Recognizing that many local governments could not afford to build needed treatment facilities without financial assistance, Congress dramatically increased Federal aid to help local governments meet the requirements of the 1972 Act. The 1972 Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments made available \$18 billion in Federal construction grants to local governments for sewage treatment. As of August 31, 1975, \$7.1 billion has been obligated. EPA intends to obligate the remaining \$10.9 billion by September 30, 1977.

If your community has a water pollution problem and if it has not yet gotten involved in the construction grant program to help remedy that problem, I urge it to do so. The result will be cleaner, safer, and healthful water for all to enjoy.

With this first issue of *Clean Water*, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency begins a new effort to help local governments and others interested in municipal wastewater treatment keep abreast of latest developments in the construction grant program. We hope you will find this newsletter informative and helpful.

## *Announcement, Pledge, and Appeal*

*By John T. Rhett*

As the national program manager of the construction grant program administered by EPA, I want to launch this first issue of our *Clean Water* newsletter with an announcement, a pledge, and an appeal.

**First the announcement.** We have the money to give away. To be specific, we have \$10.9 billion to give to local governments between September 1, 1975 and September 30, 1977, to help them build sewage treatment facilities.

**Now the pledge.** We at EPA are determined to obligate that money to local governments as expeditiously as possible. That means we are determined to cut red tape and to speed up our review and approval of grant applications. To that end, we recently boosted our program manpower substantially and made several improvements in program administration.

**Now the appeal.** To expedite the construction grant program, we at EPA need the help of local and State governments, and of the architects, engineers and contractors who design and build treatment projects. For no matter how well we at EPA streamline our operation and no matter how many

Continued on next page

### ***Boxscore Under PL 92-500***

Construction grant funds

allotted:	\$18 Billion
Already obligated:	\$ 7.1 Billion
Funds available:	\$10.9 Billion (as of August 31, 1975)

## Announcement

people we assign to the grant program, the hard fact is this: We cannot approve inadequate or incomplete grant applications. The requirements of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and of State law must be met.

State and EPA personnel can help local governments and their consultants. But how well the local government completes its grant application and takes other necessary actions before and during the grant process will largely determine if we can make the grant and how fast we can do so.

This newsletter is not the forum for a listing of Federal requirements. But I do want to provide some guidance based on past experience in processing grant applications.

- We cannot approve a grant unless the applicant demonstrates that the project is environmentally, socially and institutionally acceptable. That means that environmental considerations must be part of the project from its conception and that the environmental assessment must be used as a basic decision-making tool before, not after, a choice is made. And that also means that the public must be involved in the formulation of the proposed project and then in implementation of the project. Environmental and social impacts of proposed projects must be properly considered.

### Clean Water Fall 1975

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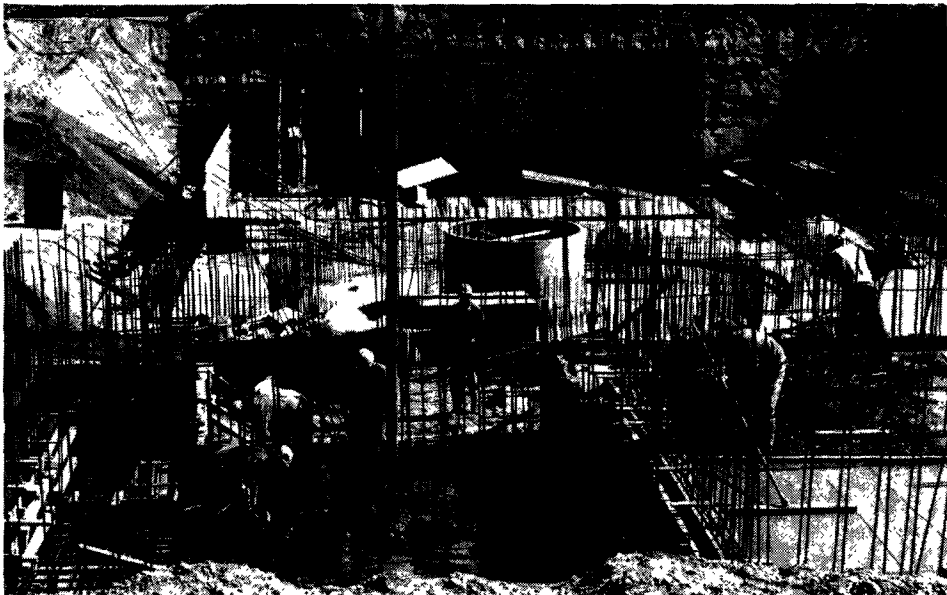
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*EPA's construction grants program is assisting communities throughout the country to build wastewater treatment plants for cleaner water. The city of Fairbanks, Alaska and EPA Region X are working together to build a wastewater treatment facility. Above construction workers place concrete for the facility's effluent pump station. In the background, are the sludge thickener and the influent lift station. Below, Blue Plains will provide advanced wastewater treatment to serve the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. In the foreground, the plant's new aeration tanks are seen under construction.*



- We can only approve a grant if the applicant demonstrates that the secondary and indirect impacts of the project have been fully considered and evaluated. This is closely related to the environmental assessment.

- We can only approve a grant if the applicant demonstrates that alternatives to the proposed project have been fully considered and evaluated.

- We can only approve a grant if the applicant demonstrates that the proposed project is cost-effective. In other words, will the proposed project provide the necessary water cleanup at the lowest possible price, considering all factors and in comparison with alterna-

tive approaches?

- We can only approve a grant if the applicant demonstrates that proper provisions have been made to assure fiscal integrity. In other words, what steps will be taken to prevent fraud and other irregularities?

- We can only approve a grant if the applicant demonstrates that sludge will be disposed of properly.

- We can only approve a grant if the applicant demonstrates that all users of the proposed project will pay their proper and proportional share of the cost. In other words, has a user charge system been devised?

- We can only approve a grant if the

applicant demonstrates that the proposed project will be operated and maintained effectively. In other words, what provisions have been made to recruit and train operators and to assure continuing proper operation of the plant?

Delays in meeting the requirements cited above have retarded the processing of too many construction grant applications. This has affected the construction of needed treatment plants, and as a result, the attainment of cleaner water.

And let us not forget that cleaner water is the name of the game. As Congress said in the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, the objective of the law is "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation's waters."

We at EPA stand ready to help local governments do their share to meet that objective by constructing efficient and environmentally-sound treatment facilities. Of the \$18 billion provided by Congress for grants, we have \$10.9 billion remaining to award for municipal treatment facilities.

Congress provided those funds to help local governments meet their obligations under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act—first, to meet the secondary treatment requirement, and then to meet the requirement for more advanced treatment of municipal wastewater.

We can help local governments comply with those requirements. But to do so, we need your help. I therefore appeal to all local government officials to help us help you obtain your community's fair share of the \$10.9 billion. You can do so by paying particular attention to the issues listed above when your community makes plans to apply for a 75 percent Federal grant for sewage treatment facilities.

Finally, I want to close with an invitation. Through this newsletter, we intend to try to keep you up to date on the program, to let you know what we are doing, to discuss progress, and to discuss problems. But we also want to hear from you, the readers. We invite you—indeed, urge you—to send us your comments on what you read in the newsletter, on what you think should be in the newsletter, and on any and all aspects of the construction grant program. We cannot promise to print your letters. But we do promise to read them and to give them our full consideration.

## ***The 1972 Law and Municipal Polluters***

The 1972 amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act did much more than provide \$18 billion for grants to communities to build sewage treatment facilities. Those amendments also set in motion a comprehensive program to prevent, reduce and eliminate water pollution.

The law proclaimed two general goals:

First, wherever possible by July 1, 1983, water that is clean enough for swimming and other recreational uses, and clean enough for the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife.

Second, no discharges of pollutants into the Nation's waters by 1985.

To move toward achievement of those national goals, the law set out a series of actions that must be taken by Federal, State and local governments, and by industries. The law also established a system of national effluent limitations for both municipal and industrial polluters. (An effluent limitation is simply the maximum amount of a pollutant that may be discharged into a water body in a specified time period.) The law established new planning requirements for State and local governments. It also established a new permit system for discharges into the Nation's waters, replacing the 1899 Refuse Act permit system that had applied only to industrial dischargers.

Under the new permit system, no discharge of any pollutant from any point source is allowed without a permit from EPA or from a State with an EPA-approved permit program. Publicly-owned sewage treatment plants and municipally-controlled discharge points—as well as industrial dischargers—must obtain permits. If a polluter cannot meet the permit requirements immediately, a compliance schedule sets out a timetable for taking specific steps toward compliance. (As of June 30, 1975, 16,664 permits had been issued to municipalities.)

What does all this—planning, effluent limits, permits—mean to local governments? It means this:

- All publicly-owned sewage treatment plants in operation on July 1, 1977—whether or not built with the aid of a Federal grant, and no matter when built—must provide a minimum of secondary treatment. (Secondary treatment generally removes 85 percent of suspended solids and organic matter that deplete the oxygen content of water.) There's one exception to this requirement: A treatment plant being built with the help of a Federal grant that was approved before June 30, 1974 must provide secondary treatment within four years, but no later than June 30, 1978.

- Also by July 1, 1977, all sewage treatment plants must apply whatever additional or more stringent limits of discharges EPA or a State may establish to meet water quality standards, treatment standards, or compliance schedules.

- All publicly-owned waste treatment plants—whether or not built with the aid of a Federal grant, and no matter when built—must use "best practicable" treatment by July 1, 1983. ("Best practicable" treatment means more than secondary treatment; it may involve additional chemical or biological treatment of the effluent from a secondary treatment plant, or land disposal of the effluent to achieve further purification.)

- Areawide waste treatment management plans must be established by July 1976 in urban industrial areas that have substantial water pollution problems.

- In order to be eligible for a Federal construction grant, after July 1976 a waste treatment plant in one of those urban industrial areas must be part of, and in conformity with, the areawide plan, if one exists.

- Dumping sludge from sewage treatment plants directly into water bodies or on land where it may affect water quality is prohibited except under a permit issued by EPA or a State with an EPA-approved permit program.

These actions are strong but necessary if we are to eliminate a major national problem, water pollution.

## The Construction Grants Program: Some History, Some Statistics

The period following World War II brought rapid population growth and development of urban and suburban areas in the United States. It also brought increasing water pollution. It soon became evident that most communities could not afford to build sewage treatment facilities fast enough to keep pace with the increasing volume of wastes. Out of this evolved a Federal program to help communities plan and build treatment systems:

1948—Congress authorized appropriated loans for river basin studies and municipal facilities planning.

1956—Congress authorized \$50 million a year in construction grants, with the Federal share set at a maximum of 30 percent and up to \$250,000 per grant.

1966—Congress raised the Federal share to a maximum of 55 percent and removed the dollar ceiling on grants, thereby opening the program to cities of all sizes. Appropriations for grant funds rose steadily in the late 1960's,

authorized to reimburse State and local governments for projects started during the 1966-72 period when adequate Federal funding was not available.

That, in brief, is the history of the evolution of the grant program. Now some statistics:

- Between 1956 and enactment of the 1972 law, almost 14,000 sewage treatment projects were awarded \$5.2 billion in Federal grants for facilities costing about \$14 billion.

- As of June 30, 1975, \$13.4 billion in Federal grants had been obligated to publicly-owned treatment projects. Of that total, \$6 billion has already been paid out. The remainder will be paid as the projects progress. (See Table 1.)

- As of June 30, 1975, \$1.9 billion had been appropriated and obligated to reimburse State and local governments for projects started in the 1966-72 period.

- Of the \$18 billion authorized for grants in 1972, \$6.6 billion—or 37 percent—had been obligated as of June

Table 1

### CONSTRUCTION GRANT OBLIGATIONS & EXPENDITURES (\$ in Millions)

Fiscal Year	Net Obligations Yearly	Net Obligations Cumulative	Expenditures Yearly	Expenditures Cumulative
57-66	....	\$668.5	....	\$450.0
67	\$131.1	799.6	\$84.5	534.5
68	191.1	990.7	122.1	656.6
69	200.7	1191.4	134.5	791.1
70	424.5	1616.9	176.4	967.5
71	1151.6	2767.5	478.4	1445.9
72	859.8	3627.3	413.4	1859.3
73	2988.6	6615.9	684.4	2543.7
74	2633.3	9249.2	1552.5	4096.2
75	4133.2	13382.4	1938.9	6035.1 <sup>2</sup>
76 As of 7-31-75	216.9	13599.3	Not available	Not available

<sup>1</sup> Includes \$1735.4 obligated under PL 93-207

<sup>2</sup> Includes \$1096.1 expended under PL 93-207

reaching \$1 billion in fiscal year 1971.

1972—Congress authorized \$18 billion for grants for municipal treatment facilities. The Federal share was increased to 75 percent of the cost of the project. An additional \$2.6 billion was

30, 1975. (See Table 2.) \$1.6 billion was obligated in fiscal year 1973, \$1.4 billion in fiscal 1974, and \$3.6 billion in fiscal 1975.

- An estimated \$5.2 billion will be obligated in fiscal 1976 (July 1, 1975-

Table 2

### Status of Construction Grant Funds As of July 31, 1975

#### FY 1975 FUNDS

Region	Allotments State	Unobligated Beginning of Month	Obligations Month to Date	Unoblig. Balance
1	CT 69,542,900 MA 90,215,900 ME 26,227,000 NH 35,072,950 RI 20,864,000 VT 11,800,800	48,205,456 52,015,274 7,531,560 12,092,838 13,192,425 8,944,314	930,845 124,682	48,205, 51,084, 7,531, 12,092, 13,192, 8,819,
2	NJ 254,656,200 NY 490,654,200 PR 40,832,900 VI 3,130,900	139,926,684 361,509,013 35,528,107 2,721,650	28,170,770 511,688	111,755, 358,854, 35,016, 2,721,
3	DC 38,233,800 DE 21,815,300 MD 54,128,100 PA 222,744,100 VA 98,672,400 WV 37,735,700	8,467,920 22,612,635 165,606,570 25,373,357 29,886,560	678,220	8,467, 22,612, 165,606, 24,695, 29,886,
4	AL 33,785,150 FL 164,496,400 GA 76,153,000 KY 65,183,600 MS 22,346,700 NC 70,494,200 SC 55,922,000 TN 48,371,800	15,581,527 76,505,797 66,413,172 38,429,848 14,022,190 59,549,914 53,200,478 31,481,389	307,915 2,478,801	15,273, 76,505, 63,934, 38,429, 13,912, 59,407, 52,983, 31,411,
5	IL 252,311,700 IN 63,678,100 MI 188,637,400 MN 64,247,300 OH 193,378,700 WI 52,360,400	148,295,433 59,734,508 99,867,289 5,948,212 168,151,733 37,558,455	408,450 14,626,050 3,375 18,825 14,878,725 187,875	147,886,5 45,108, 99,863,5 5,929, 153,273, 37,370,5
6	AR 23,860,100 LA 35,551,850 NM 10,670,500 OK 46,997,400 TX 106,900,250	17,918,320 33,200,869 9,964,236 39,482,073 57,962,997	9,250,724 5,524,153 2,722,605 477,707 24,716,642	8,667,5 27,676,7 7,241,6 39,004,3 33,246,3
7	IA 39,364,800 KS 40,192,500 MO 74,546,400 NB 20,894,000	26,676,165 32,521,338 46,285,977 6,471,016	(—782,283) 418,900 4,965,967 39,220	27,458,4 32,102,4 41,320,0 6,431,7
8	CO 30,930,900 MT 7,534,600 ND 6,876,100 SD 7,308,800 UT 16,579,600 WY 4,049,450	9,868,546 1,327,610 1,631,958 5,345,565 2,320,150 1,212,646	1,327,610 (—103,436) 13,050 1,948,050 15,825	9,868,5 1,735,3 5,332,5 372, 1,196,8
9	AZ 17,695,750 CA 457,420,100 GU 2,172,000 HI 41,140,000 NV 18,695,000 PI 524,300 SA 576,700	354,730,582 17,248,652 300 576,700	54,325,430	300,405,1 17,248,6 3 576,7
10	AK 15,059,100 ID 7,898,400 OR 34,136,700 WA 64,730,500	— 502,543 10,485,630 10,902,727	(—26,575) (—84,018) (—118,909) 103,082	26,5 586.5 10,604,5 10,799,6
TOTAL 4,000,000,000		2,494,990,908	171,254,411	2,323,736,4

June 30, 1976).

- An estimated \$6.2 billion will be obligated in fiscal 1977 (July 1, 1976-September 30, 1977).

- More than 5,300 municipal treatment projects are underway. When

## ***Some Questions and Answers, and The Grant Process in Outline***

### **Who is eligible for a Federal construction grant?**

Municipalities, intermunicipal agencies, States, or interstate agencies.

The law defines a municipality as "a city, town, borough, county, parish, district, or other public body created by or pursuant to State law and having jurisdiction over disposal of sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes, and an Indian tribe or an authorized Indian tribal organization." An approved areawide planning agency may also receive a grant.

### **What will the construction grant pay for?**

A grant will pay 75 percent of the total cost of the project, including: preliminary planning, studies, and other early preparatory work; design plans and specifications; construction of the treatment facilities.

Projects eligible for grants are: new treatment plants; expansion or improvement of existing plants; interceptor and outfall sewer lines; pumping, power and other equipment needed to operate the system. Under certain conditions, grants may also be made for sewage collection systems and projects to control pollution from combined sewers (storm and sanitary), and for land application of wastewater.

### **What does a local government do first to get a grant?**

The first thing a local government has to do is get its proposed project on the "priority list" prepared by the State, which is responsible for planning a statewide approach to water pollution control and which ranks projects in order of their importance and submits the list to EPA for approval. Factors considered in determining a project's priority include population affected, severity of the pollution problem, need to preserve high-quality water, nation-

al priorities, and the availability of funds, including the 25 percent non-Federal share.

### **When is the Federal grant paid if the project is approved?**

Federal payments are made to the local government as all or parts of three distinct steps are completed. Step 1 is the planning phase. This includes preliminary studies and other preparatory work. Step 2 is the design phase, in which detailed plans and specifications are prepared. Step 3 is the construction phase.

### **How long does the process take?**

That depends on many things, including the completeness of a grant application and how thoroughly the applicant has met grant requirements. In many cases, the preconstruction period—from the time of conception of the project to the beginning of construction—has been taking from 1-2½ years. EPA's goal is to cut that to 9-18 months. Actual construction of the project may take 1-5 years, depending on the nature of the project.

### **What's involved in a municipal waste treatment project under the grant program?**

A great deal. Consider some stages in a typical project:

#### ***Preapplication Stage***

1. Need for project determined; State places project on priority list.
2. Applicant (city, county, town, etc.) selects consultant. (Some cities do in-house planning and design, without a consultant.)
3. Applicant and consultant have preapplication conference with State and EPA.
4. Applicant and consultant consider alternatives, environmental and other impacts. Applicant seeks public involvement and may hold public

meeting or hearing. Applicant makes decision.

#### ***Facilities Planning Stage***

5. Application for Step 1 grant submitted to State and EPA for review and approval.
6. Consultant prepares facilities plan.
7. EPA and State review and approve facilities plan.
8. EPA prepares environmental impact statement if necessary, or announces none is needed. Public hearing may be held.

#### ***Design Stage***

9. Consultant prepares materials for Step 2 grant agreement, submits it to State and EPA for review and approval.
10. Consultant prepares plans and specifications.
11. EPA and State review and approve project plans and specifications.

#### ***Construction Stage***

12. Consultant prepares material for Step 3 grant, submits it to State and EPA for approval.
13. Grantee advertises for construction bids, selects responsive low bidder, submits all bids to State and EPA for approval, and upon approval grantee awards contract.
14. Project is constructed.
15. EPA and State conduct final inspection.
16. EPA conducts final audit and makes final payment.

#### ***Operation and Maintenance Stage***

17. Plant operated and maintained for life of project.
  18. State and EPA conduct operation and maintenance, permit compliance inspections.
  19. Municipality collects user charges industrial cost recovery payments.
- That, in outline, is how the process unfolds.

completed, total cost of those projects will be about \$15 billion in Federal and non-Federal funds. About 90 percent of the projects funded under the pre-1972 program are well along in construction.

- Some 1,600 projects funded under the 1972 law are in the first stage of planning.
- Total investment in municipal treatment projects under the 1972 law will be \$24 billion, \$18 billion in Federal

funds and \$6 billion in State and local funds.

- Grand total, old and current construction grant program: \$39 billion in Federal, State and local funds invested in cleaner water.

## Need Help?

For guidance, assistance and details on how to apply for a construction grant, local governments are urged to contact grant program specialists in

EPA regional offices and State water pollution control agencies. Addresses and telephone numbers follow.

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## What Is 'Cost-Effectiveness'?

When EPA reviews a construction grant application, one of the most important elements considered is the "cost-effectiveness" of the proposed project.

A "cost-effective" project, in brief, is one that will achieve the needed degree of water pollution control at the least cost in money, in environmental impact, and in other non-monetary costs. Whether the goal is secondary treatment to meet the effluent standard, or more stringent controls to meet higher water quality standards, the applicant should consider alternative approaches and costs.

For secondary treatment, for example, an applicant should evaluate ways to combine waste treatment systems to realize economies of scale, to reuse or sell wastewater to reduce operating expenses, to reduce total waste flow (including correcting excess infiltration) instead of increasing plant capacity, and to improve operations and maintenance instead of expanding facilities.

If it's necessary to go beyond secondary treatment to meet water quality standards, cost-effectiveness means that the applicant should evaluate all available advanced treatment technologies and land application.

Cost-effectiveness also applies to sludge handling. Should the sludge be disposed of, or recycled as soil conditioner and fertilizer? The economic and environmental costs and benefits of all alternatives have to be evaluated.

Plant size is another factor. Flow rates and growth projections should be carefully checked. Still another consideration is phased construction: Should the project be built in steps, over various time periods, or is it more cost-effective to construct the entire project initially?

Those are some of the factors involved in determining cost-effectiveness. For further information, see the EPA's new "Guide to the Selection of Cost Effective Wastewater Treatment Systems," published July 1975; also EPA's "Costs of Wastewater Treatment by Land Application," issued June 1975.

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# Changes in Grant Program Debated at Public Hearings

What changes, if any, are needed in the construction grant program? To get the views of concerned groups and individuals on possible amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act affecting the construction grants program, EPA held public hearings in June in Atlanta, Kansas City, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.

The hearings focused on five major issues that have surfaced since the Act was last amended in 1972:

1. Should the Federal share of construction grants be reduced from the present 75 percent to 55 percent?

2. Should the Federal government limit the amount of reserve capacity—the growth-inducing potential, in essence—of facilities eligible for construction grants?

3. Should the types of projects eligible for construction grants be restricted?

4. Should the 1977 deadline for secondary treatment by municipalities be extended and by how long?

5. Should a greater portion of the management of the construction grant program be delegated to the States?

The following is a summary of the issues and the comments of those who participated in the public hearings:

## Issue 1: A Lower Federal Share?

The 1972 amendments authorized \$18 billion in 75 percent construction grants. But a survey of the States indicated that \$350 billion is needed to meet the cost of eligible facilities as defined in the Act—or \$262.5 billion in 75 percent grants.

Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Administrator John R. Quarles, Jr., stated at the hearings: "The magnitude of the indicated need is well beyond the capability of the Federal budget to fund with 75 percent grants in any reasonable future time."

Reducing the Federal grant to 55 percent, Quarles said, would "permit the limited funding available to go further in assisting needed projects" and would "encourage greater accountability for cost-effective design and project management on the part of the grantee by virtue of the grantee's greater investment in the project."

*State and local government wit-*

*nesses at the hearings opposed reducing the Federal share. They maintained that such a cut would be a retreat by the Federal government from its commitment to water pollution control. According to these witnesses State and local governments cannot afford to fund a greater share of treatment facilities. They maintained that reducing the share would have no impact on cost effectiveness. They said construction needs are high because of high Federal requirements; therefore the Federal commitment must be high. And they noted that stability is needed in the program and that a cut in the Federal share would produce instability.*

*Industry and professional witnesses also opposed reducing the Federal share, for similar reasons. They emphasized the economic benefits of the program, such as more jobs, and said the program would slow down if the Federal share is reduced.*

*Environmental organization witnesses expressed a wide range of views, from opposing any reduction to accepting a somewhat lower Federal share.*

## Issue 2: Limit Reserve Capacity?

Quarles noted that limiting reserve capacity could "permit limited Federal funds to go further in funding the backlog of projects for treating existing flows" and could result in "more careful sizing and design of capacity so that excessive growth-related reserve capacity is not financed with Federal funds."

*State and local government witnesses urged that the program be kept as is. They supported case by case cost-effective analysis to determine reserve capacity. They said a change would put too much of burden on local governments, would be administratively complex, and would work against cost-effective design. There was wide support for phased construction. In San Francisco, there was some support for building treatment plants with 10 years of growth capacity and sewers with 20 years of reserve capacity.*

*Industry and professional witnesses opposed restricting reserve capacity and opposed limiting the program to backlog projects.*

*Environmental organization wit-*

*nesses supported limiting reserve capacity. They cited studies that show that "over-design" is a problem and can bring adverse secondary impacts.*

## Issue 3: Restrict Types of Projects Eligible?

Quarles explained that limiting eligibility could "reduce the Federal burden" and could allow the Federal government to focus its grants on "projects that are most essential to meet the water quality goals" of the Act.

*State and local government witnesses were mostly opposed to any change in the type of project eligible for grants. Some said they could support elimination of collector sewers, but they recommended that be done administratively by EPA, not by amending the law. They cited the general financial need of State and local governments. And they noted that some collector sewers are needed for public health reasons.*

*Industry and professional witnesses opposed any change in types of projects eligible for grants. They said it would be unfair and inequitable to impose such limits. They said engineers strive for cost-effective projects and that limiting eligibility of some facilities would limit cost effectiveness.*

*Environmental organization witnesses made limited comments on this issue. Generally, they took no strong position.*

## Issue 4: Extend 1977 Deadline?

It is estimated that 9,000 communities serving 60 percent of the 1977 population will not be able to comply with the 1977 secondary treatment requirement. Quarles noted that the \$18 billion "is not sufficient to cover the 1977 needs." He also added that communities funded with Federal grants by 1977 "will not all be able to complete construction by 1977." Because of this, in his opinion, "the obvious solution is to extend the deadline either on a case by case basis or by an overall extension of the compliance date."

There was universal support for extending the deadline, generally on a case by case basis, based on good-faith efforts and availability of funds. There was general support for 1983 as a maximum deadline.



## ***Staff Boosted, Other Changes Made To Expedite Grant Program***

The staff of EPA's construction grant program will be boosted to 1,007 people this year, Administrator Russell E. Train announced recently.

There were 545 positions in the grant and auditing program in fiscal year 1975. That was increased to 707 for fiscal 1976 by shifting personnel within EPA. An additional 50 people in EPA are now being shifted to the program and 250 new positions have been created.

Train said the great majority of new people hired will be assigned to EPA's ten regional offices.

The staff increase was one of several changes made recently to improve the administration and effectiveness of the construction grant program. The changes were recommended by a special EPA task force report and other studies that identified bottlenecks and problems, including inadequate staffing.

Other actions recently taken to strengthen program administration and expedite the flow of Federal funds into construction grants include:

- Increased use of preapplication conferences to make sure the grant process and requirements are clearly explained to applicants.
- Greater use of the "project manager" concept, under which one EPA regional office staff member will handle a grant application from the preapplication conference stage through completion of the project.

- Development of a national system to track project progress from the time a project is placed on a State priority list.

- Development of simplified guidelines for various aspects of the program.

- Clarification of internal responsibilities to improve coordination and eliminate duplicative reviews.

- A step-up in interim inspections and audits by regional office staff members.

- Increased emphasis on program management by the EPA national program manager.

- Greater delegation of authority to States willing and able to administer the grant program to the extent permitted by law.

- Development of special teams to visit regional offices and assess implication of the many recommendations made by the EPA special task force.

Another recent development is the creation of a national construction grant public information program.

Under the accelerated public education effort, a new reference manual was issued in August; it contains regulations, guidelines, and related technical publications. A more extensive construction grants manual is now being prepared. Also in production is a new film, for general audiences, on the grant program. And a quarterly newsletter (this is the first issue) was created.

A major effort is being made to

identify the many people involved or interested in the construction grant program and to add their names to a mailing list for program publications. Planning is also underway to develop new publications, both general and technical in nature.

(Note to the reader: If you did not receive your own copy of this newsletter in the mail, and if you wish to be added to the mailing list, fill out and send in the mailing list application enclosed with this newsletter.)

## ***Jobs and Clean Water: Did You Know That . . .***

. . . The waste treatment plant construction program is now the largest public works program in the United States, surpassing highway building.

. . . The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that about 25,000 on-site, year-long jobs are generated for each \$1 billion worth of sewage treatment facility construction. That includes jobs for pipelayers, operating engineers, laborers, administrative and clerical personnel.

. . . It's estimated that 20,000-25,000 additional jobs are generated off-site to plan and design the facilities and to produce and transport materials and equipment for each \$1 billion.

. . . Each \$1 billion thus produces an average of 45,000 year-long jobs.

. . . In fiscal year 1974, total spending (Federal, State and local) for treatment facilities was about \$2.3 billion. That translates into some 103,500 year-long jobs.

. . . The \$18 billion for construction grants provided by the 1972 law will, under the present 75 percent grant formula, produce \$6 billion more in State and local investments in treatment facilities, for a total of \$24 billion. That translates into 1,080,000 year-long jobs over the life of the grant program.

. . . While not quantifiable, the additional economic stimulus, the "multiplier effect," of a program that creates more than one million jobs, is just as real as its goal to make the Nation's waters cleaner and safer.

Industry witnesses urged extensions of deadlines for industrial plants that send compatible wastes to public plants for treatment.

### **Issue 5: Delegate More Responsibility to States?**

Legislation supported by EPA has already been introduced to allow States to certify grant applications and to limit EPA's role largely to overall policy-making and to auditing and monitoring grant activities performed by the States. EPA would retain responsibility for environmental impact statements on individual projects.

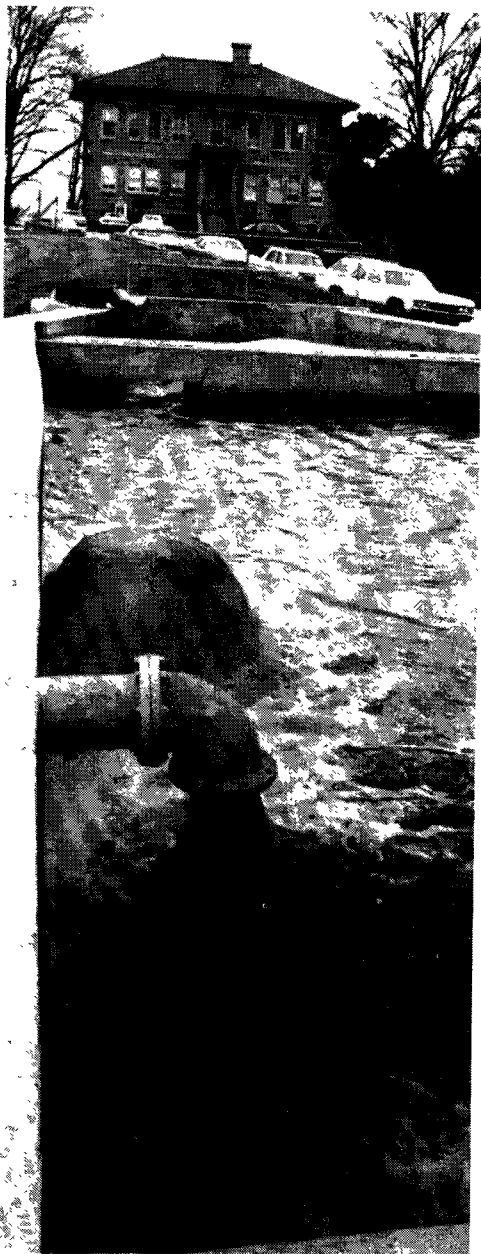
There was strong support for giving the States more responsibility—but only with the understanding that States need more money and personnel

to do the job. Some witnesses cautioned that the program could be slowed down if greater responsibility is delegated to States and urged safeguards.

Except for Issue 5, EPA has not yet taken a position on these issues. The agency is now considering the views expressed at the public hearings to determine what other amendments, if any, to recommend to Congress.

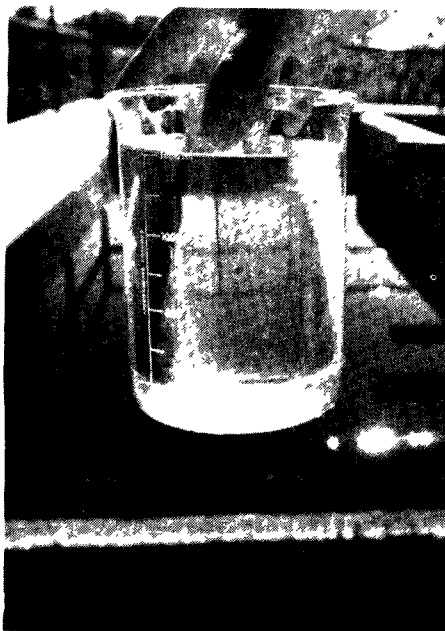
Some 650 people, in total, attended the four public hearings. About 110 witnesses were heard and written comments were submitted by about 40 others.

(For further information on the five issues, see background papers published in the May 28, 1975 *Federal Register*.)



***The Beginning:  
Influent station,  
Baltimore, Maryland.***

***The End : Clean Water.***



## ***Treatment Plant-Drinking Water Link Studied***

EPA is studying discharges from municipal wastewater treatment plants as a possible source of contamination of drinking water. The studies are part of EPA's investigations under the 1974 Safe Drinking Water Act, which directs EPA to identify the sources, nature, and extent of contamination of the Nation's drinking water.

Other possible sources being investigated include industrial effluents, chlorination processes, and runoff from farm land.

EPA recently submitted its first report to Congress under the 1974 law. The report includes preliminary find-

ings of a national survey which found small quantities of organics in all 80 drinking water systems tested. The report provides details on EPA's drinking water program and includes the proposed national drinking water standards issued in April. A sequel report will be made to Congress in December 1975 and will contain recommendations for future actions to control drinking water contaminants.

The report entitled, "Preliminary Assessment of Suspected Carcinogens in Drinking Water," is available from the National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, Va. 22161.

## ***Environmental Factors Slighted Says Report***

Environmental considerations are not getting proper attention in local government planning for construction of wastewater treatment facilities, according to a report issued recently by EPA.

Prepared for EPA by Teknekron, Inc. of Washington, D.C., the report cited inadequate local agency staff resources and/or environmental orientation. It said environmental concerns are subordinated to technical and economic considerations.

The report also noted that local governments too often hold public hearings "in a manner which discourages effective public participation." And the report noted that local government planners too often ignore information presented by outsiders in their decision-making.

The report, "Use of Environmental Analysis on Wastewater Facilities by Local Government," is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Price: \$2.70.

## ***It Can Be Done***

"The result of all this Federal, State, city, and individual action is a river that has come back from the depths of oily, foul despair to a river in which the Department of Natural Resources can now plant trout and salmon—as it has done during each of the last two years. Catches of these fish have startled some oldtime anglers who daily line the river's shores, and the good word is now making the rounds—fishing is getting better on the Detroit River! And by the end of next year, when even tougher restrictions against pollution go into effect, what's better now will change to best. The Detroit River is on its way to being a clean stream once again."

—From "Return of the River,"  
Michigan Natural Resources  
magazine.