



# NEWS & NOTES

A PUBLICATION OF THE MWRA ADVISORY BOARD  
FEBRUARY 2008

## DEP APPROVES \$540 MILLION FOR CY08 STATE REVOLVING FUND

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) released its CY2008 Intended Use Plan (IUP) for the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan program. The SRF provides low interest loans to Massachusetts communities to finance wastewater and drinking water projects. For CY2008, DEP approved over \$540 million in projects on the IUP. In the Clean Water SRF, which addresses wastewater projects, the DEP approved 18 new planning projects, 39 newly ranked construction projects, one MassDEP priority project, plus ten carryover projects, totaling over \$400 million. The DEP received over \$1.14 billion in requests for Clean Water SRF funding. For the Drinking Water SRF, the DEP approved \$140 million for 24 new construction projects, ten multi-year carryover projects, and two planning projects. The cumulative requests were over \$759 million for drinking water projects. On the federal level, President Bush's proposed FY09 budget would allocate \$842 million to the Drinking Water SRF and \$555 million to the Clean Water SRF; these national numbers are lower than the cumulative needs of the Massachusetts alone. Clearly, the needs of the Commonwealth outpace the availability of dollars. It is critical to find a way to put water and sewer infrastructures back on the radar screen as a priority.

## MWRA RELEASES PROPOSED FY09 BUDGET & ASSESSMENTS

The Authority released its Proposed FY09 Current Expense Budget (CEB), calling for a combined rate increase of 5.9% to reach the Rate Revenue Requirement of \$548.6 million, an increase of \$30.8 million. The Advisory Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed budget prior to the April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting in Wellesley and will present its *Comments & Recommendations* on the Proposed CEB at the May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting in Canton. MWRA will hold a hearing on the Proposed Budget on April 8<sup>th</sup> at City Hall in Boston.

The community assessments can be found on the MWRA website: <http://www.mwra.com/finance/rates.htm>

## ADVISORY BOARD ANNOUNCES LEGISLATORS OF THE YEAR

The Advisory Board is pleased to announce its 2007 Legislators of the Year: Senator Anthony Petrucci of East Boston and Representative Rachel Kaprielian of Watertown. Senator Petrucci is Vice-Chair of the MWRA Caucus and Representative Kaprielian is the Floor Division Leader (First Division). Both Legislators have been strong advocates for ratepayer relief on Beacon Hill over the years. The Legislator of the Year award will be presented at the March Advisory Board meeting at the State House.

## EPA REJECTS ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP) make up a portion of a recent fine issued to the Authority by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Advisory Board advocated that the MWRA Board of Directors include \$100,000 to purchase cameras for communities in order to inspect local sewer lines. EPA has rejected this as an eligible project, stating that communities should already be TV-inspecting their systems, therefore SEP funds could not be used for this purpose. The Advisory Board strongly disagrees with this position. Joseph Favaloro, Executive Director of the Advisory Board, spoke to EPA Regional Administrator Robert Varney and has met with his staff twice since their decision with no success in convincing them to change their mind and accept this project, which will directly benefit communities. In a letter to the MWRA Board of Directors, Mr. Favaloro indicated that the indefensible fine and subsequent SEPs are not about righting an environmental wrong or ensuring environmental justice; rather, they are about one thing only, which is extracting a "pound of flesh" from the MWRA and its ratepayers.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**MARCH 12:** MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS / 10 AM – CHARLESTOWN

**MARCH 13:** EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / 8:30 AM – BOSTON

**\*PLEASE NOTE THE DAY OF WEEK CHANGE\***

**MARCH 20:** ADVISORY BOARD / 11:30 AM - STATE HOUSE, BOSTON

*If you have any questions regarding topics raised in this newsletter or any other MWRA issue, please contact:*  
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