



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

Office of P-12 Education

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TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
Directors of Facilities

FROM: Charles A. Szuberla, Jr.

SUBJECT: The Value of Water

We ask for your assistance with educating students about a very important issue: the value of water. The value of our water is often taken for granted and overlooked.

Clean water is essential to our everyday lives! Public drinking water systems provide us with water for drinking, cooking, cleaning, and fighting fires. Public wastewater systems transport and treat our waste and keep it from polluting the environment and our drinking water. Without these two systems, our communities would not be able to function and our schools would not be able to operate.

The majority of New York's drinking water and wastewater systems are quite old, deteriorating, and in need of major repairs. In addition, the workforce that operates these systems is aging and by 2020, 30% are expected to retire, as indicated in a recent national report. To help ensure long-term sustainability of our drinking water and wastewater systems, we must all understand its importance and the funding necessary to maintain quality service that is protective of our health.

The enclosed **Value of Water** brochure is a great tool to get students interested in water related subject areas. It can also be used as an information source in career exploration for this industry. This brochure was created by a committee (the Water and Wastewater Education and Outreach Committee) comprised of stakeholders including State and local government agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency, professional associations, engineering firms, water operators, and training providers.

Additional teacher resources/curricula can be found on the Environmental Protection Agency's website at <http://www.epa.gov/students/teachers.html#epawater>.

We welcome you to review the brochure and get involved. We are all responsible for the protection of our limited resources. In order to protect the public health and safeguard our environment, we must recognize the very important role of our water and wastewater systems and promote their value. The health of our community, our children, and their children depend on it! Your assistance can play a huge role in this effort.

Thank you for your attention.