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New Report Shows Cost-Saving Tools for City Water Projects

Washington, DC (April 22, 2013) - Today, the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) released a report that shows how efficient procurement practices can reduce public infrastructure costs allowing local government to contain costs and reduce the need to increase consumer rates. Prepared by the USCM Mayors Water Council, the report titled Municipal Procurement Process Improvements Yield Cost-Effective Public Benefits, focuses on the short-comings of traditional procurement practices, and uses procurement of public water and wastewater pipes to illustrate the benefits of applying life-cycle analysis to identify pipe materials that offer cost savings and extend the useful design performance of the system.

The new economic reality of local government finances, where expenditures exceed revenues, has led many cities to seek out greater efficiencies so that public works can deliver the public benefit value of government enterprise, by creating the physical infrastructure necessary for economic success and increased quality of life in their cities.

“Public water and wastewater pipes are essential in delivering safe, adequate and affordable public water services, and we hope that our report will provide solutions for local leaders to find more cost-effective and efficient ways to manage their water systems, despite challenging economic times,” said U.S. Conference of Mayors CEO & Executive Director Tom Cochran. “There could be nearly 3 million miles of buried pipe across the country and it is costly to buy, install and operate. But we’re still proud that despite budget constraints, our country has some of the safest drinking water in the world.”

The aging underground pipe systems in North America experience over 300,000 water main breaks each year, costing the economy some $50 billion in lost water, energy costs and repair and replacement. There is much room for materials cost improvement in this sector.

Several cities are noted in the report (Pleasanton, CA; Indianapolis, IN, Schenectady, NY) for their efforts to open the local procurement process to find efficiencies by challenging traditional materials selection criteria.

The United States Conference of Mayors continues to serve its member cities with information and best practices designed to advance the state-of-the-science in municipal government. The Mayors Water Council (MWC) provides a forum for Mayors to share knowledge on how to provide safe, adequate and affordable water and wastewater infrastructure and services in America’s principal cities in the 21st Century.

To view the full report, please visit: http://www.usmayors.org/publications/media/2013/0422-water-procurementWP.pdf

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The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,295 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/usmayors; or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.