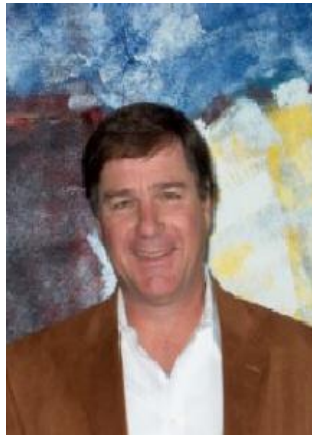


**A Message from the Chairmen
(From the Fall 2006 Mayors Water Council Newsletter)**



Mayor Martin Chavez
Albuquerque, NM



Mayor Dan Coody
Fayetteville, AR

The Mayors Water Council convened two meetings in June of 2006. One meeting was in conjunction with The U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, the other was held in Biloxi, Mississippi. The central theme for the meetings was the impact of climate change on local water resources and emergency planning for natural disasters such as hurricanes, storms and flooding. Articles in this edition of the Mayors Water Council Newsletter provide some of the important information presented at the meetings.

The Las Vegas meeting dealt with climate change impacts on water resources and water supply/conservation. The 2005 National City Water Survey identified emergency planning for hurricanes, storms and floods as a high priority water resource issue that cities are facing. Brad Udall, Director of the western Water Assessment at the University of Colorado, an expert in the area of climate change impacts on the environment, shared information with the Mayors concerning how new patterns of drought, storms and flooding are being driven by the current warming trend we are experiencing in North America. This type of information helps us anticipate what should be done to adapt our cities to successfully cope with the changing weather patterns. Ken Albright, Director of Groundwater Resources for the Southern Nevada Water Authority, explained the Best Practices employed to secure an adequate and affordable water supply for the City of Las Vegas and the surrounding metropolitan area that is situated in a desert. Not surprisingly, water conservation measures dealing mostly with outdoors water use is a critical component of their supply plan now and in the future.

The second meeting, held in Biloxi, Mississippi, was hosted by Mayor A.J. Holloway. Biloxi is situated 15 miles east of Gulfport- land fall location of the 2005 Hurricane Katrina. We saw, first-hand, the extent of the devastation caused by Katrina's storm surge, wind and flooding. Local officials from the cities of Biloxi and Hattiesburg provided detailed information on the damage and the recovery effort. The magnitude of the destruction of public infrastructure and private property was astounding. Water supply was knocked out as lift stations were inundated by water. Local managers used portable generators to get the water running within a few days.

The wastewater collection systems were heavily damaged by the storm surge and the receding wave. Pipes were broken and clogged, and are still being assessed for replacement or rehabilitation. We also learned that many rate payers evacuated and some have not returned. This has hampered the city's ability to meet bond repayment obligations. The recovery effort appears to require a long-term commitment.

Also in this edition of the MWC Newsletter we are pleased to include a feature story written by Port St. Lucie (FL) Mayor Bob Minsky and his assistants about water infrastructure development in a growing urban center. Mayor Minsky provides a sobering view of the work involved with rapid urbanization and the need to provide water and wastewater services while also protecting natural resources and the environmental quality of Port St. Lucie. Mayor Minsky explains how the city was able to strike a workable balance between residential development, investment in water infrastructure and environmental protection.