



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

Wastewater Funding: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Releases Survey Estimating \$271 Billion Needed to Maintain/Improve United States Wastewater Infrastructure

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") released a January 2016 report titled *Clean Watersheds Needs Survey – 2012 Report and Data* ("Report") which estimates the capital investment necessary for public owned treatment works ("POTW") to address water quality objectives of the Clean Water Act.

The *Report* states that the total capital wastewater and stormwater treatment and collection needs for the United States are \$271 billion as of January 1, 2012.

The \$271 billion includes capital needs for public owned wastewater pipes and treatment facilities (\$197.8 billion), combined sewer overflow correction (\$48 billion), stormwater management (\$19.2 billion), and recycled wastewater treatment distribution (\$6.1 billion).

The *Report* also notes:

While this Report might capture needs over a period of up to 20 years, nearly all needs it includes are for projects that will be completed within 5 years (i.e., 2012-2017). States do not generally have documentation for needs over a 20-year time frame. Forty percent of CWNS 2012 needs are documented using capital improvement plans (CIPs). CIPs include only projects that can be accomplished within the municipalities' budgets and within a specified number of years (typically 3-5 years).

EPA states that the *Report* is a collaborative effort between the states, District of Columbia, U.S. territories and EPA.

From November 9 through December 2011, the *Report* National Work Group is stated to have provided input on CWNS methods. The states collected data on more than 27,000 wastewater facilities and water quality projects from January through December 2012.

A link to the *Report* can be found here <http://www.epa.gov/cwns>.