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Drinking Water/Wastewater: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Announces Compendium Surveying Utility Customer Assistance Programs

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") Office of Wastewater Management announced the availability of a "compendium" which is described as:

... an effort by EPA's Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center (WIRFC) to document how drinking water and wastewater utilities are implementing customer assistance programs to provide better access to essential drinking water delivery and wastewater management services.

EPA cites as collaborators and partners in the project:

- American Water Works Association
- Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
- National Association of Clean Water Agencies
- National Association of Water Companies
- Water Environment Federation
- Water Research Foundation

The compendium notes the challenges that drinking water and wastewater utilities face in view of the costs associated with providing these services and the inability of some of their customers to afford such services. It cites a number of utilities that have developed household affordability programs focusing on the individual customer's ability to pay for drinking water and wastewater services.

The compendium describes different programs that utilities have initiated and notes:

... some sophisticated and some common sense, to ensure that all customers receive services and, at the same time, allow the community to benefit from a more sustainable and resilient utility.

Case studies address areas or organizations such as:

- California
- Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
- Orange Water and Sewer Authority
- San Antonio Water System
- Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

A link to the compendium can be found here https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-04/documents/dw-ww_utilities_cap_combined_508-front2.pdf.

