



## UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region 1

5 Post Office Square, Suite 100  
Boston, MA 02109-3912

### Re: Keeping Your Buried Water Infrastructure in Good Condition to Ensure the Health of Your Community

Dear Town/City Manager:

Municipal officials have seen great benefit from programs that assess the condition of their infrastructure assets and from developing sustainable user rates based on keeping those assets in good condition. These programs preserve the value of the billions of dollars' worth of water and wastewater assets that have been constructed with federal, state, and municipal investments over more than forty years. These investments across the nation have improved the quality of our water - our lakes, rivers and streams. Our water pollution control programs have been extremely successful in restoring our nation's waters and we should all be proud of what we have accomplished.

One of the greatest challenges we face is sustaining our investment. So much of the process of wastewater collection and treatment takes place out of sight, as much of our infrastructure is underground and out of public view. Many of Connecticut's sewer systems are approaching or have exceeded their life expectancy. As our valuable infrastructure begins to show its age, it becomes critically important to engage in preventive maintenance activities and to conduct capital planning activities. The enclosed brochure spells out the tasks and provides some insight into programs to ensure sustainability of your underground infrastructure.

The costs of infrastructure maintenance and repair can be high, but these costs will only continue to mount as aging infrastructures continue to erode. With the average cost to replace a major sewer line at one million dollars per mile, wastewater collection and treatment facilities can be the most expensive infrastructure for many communities. When these systems fail due to age or maintenance issues, fines can add to the cost of repair or replacement. **We hope that you will take a proactive approach to addressing and improving your community's wastewater collection system by providing adequate funding during this upcoming budget cycle.** Please see the attached brochure for further information and links to our webpages.

In Connecticut, assistance is available through the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's ("CTDEEP") Clean Water Fund which provides grants and loans to municipalities for the planning, design, and construction of necessary wastewater infrastructure projects. Special reserves exist for the upgrading and rehabilitation of conveyance systems and to address infiltration & inflow reduction projects to remove extraneous flows. These funds are available on a "first come-first served" basis.

CTDEEP and EPA will continue to reach out to local officials to stress the importance and value of properly maintaining wastewater infrastructure. Viable and reliable infrastructure is also critical to the local economy. While your community's wastewater needs may not be a glamorous topic, we trust that the sentiment among the local officials and citizenry of Connecticut is one of support for this basic need of public health and clean waterways.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Studlien".

Susan Studlien, Director  
Office of Environmental Stewardship  
U.S. EPA - New England Region

CC: CTDEEP