Crystal Clear? State Efforts to Improve Water Planning

Wednesday, Aug. 10
9:15 – 10:30 a.m.
Room: W185bc

Water makes news, whether it’s the algae bloom on Lake Erie, storm water runoff, lead poisonings in Flint, suits against upstream counties. States are working to bring together the agriculture industry, urban areas and clean water advocates to address efforts to maintain healthy water resources, and consider future demand and supply of this important resource.

Speakers (in alphabetical order):

John Covington is a senior financial analyst with the US EPA Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center. Prior to that he spent most of his career working with both the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Programs. For seven and half years he was the Executive Director of the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority, the EPA grantee for both programs. During his tenue he was directly involved in the state’s first leverage bond issue, supervised the complete rewrite of Kentucky's Water Resource Information System (a geo database of all existing and proposed water infrastructure in the Commonwealth) that is successfully used to generate the priority list for both State Revolving Fund programs and oversaw the program's growth to over $1 billion in net assets. John served a term on the Council of Infrastructure Financing Authority's board. Prior to being Executive Director John served as the Authority's Treasure and as a financial analyst. This required him to work with SRF borrowers, review loan applications and present projects for approval. John received a Bachelor of Arts from Centre College of Kentucky in government and history and a Bachelor of Science from Western Kentucky University in accounting.

Greg DiLoreto, P.E., P.L.S., D. WRE, is the Chair of the ASCE 2017 Report Card for America’s Infrastructure, a leading indicator of the health of America’s infrastructure due for release next March. A past president of ASCE and the former CEO of the Tualatin Valley Water District in metropolitan Portland, Oregon, Greg is frequently called on by the national media, Congress, and international organizations to provide insight into the pressing infrastructure and water issues facing the country. An industry veteran and engineering professional for over 30 years, Greg continues to be a strategic leader on infrastructure and sustainability on behalf of ASCE’s 150,000 civil engineers around the world.
Chris Kolb served as a state representative, as a member of the Ann Arbor City Council and in the environmental management field before becoming president of the Michigan Environmental Council in 2009. Kolb was one of the Legislature’s most consistent and vigorous defenders of clean water, clean air and public health during his six years in the State House. In 2015 he was appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder to co-chair the Flint Water Advisory Task Force, which investigated that city’s drinking water crisis, found state-appointed emergency managers and the Department of Environmental Quality chiefly responsible and provided recommendations to prevent similar disasters statewide.

Session Moderator:

Tom Curtis. After graduating from college with high honors and being elected to the national scholastic honorary Phi Beta Kappa, Tom Curtis served in the Army for two years, including a tour as a platoon leader in Vietnam. Following the Army, Tom earned his MPA degree at West Virginia University. He then worked for several years on the personal staff of two governors of West Virginia.

In 1978 Tom took a job at the National Governors’ Association in Washington DC. There he led the environment and natural resources group, leading policy development and serving as the governors’ representative to Capitol Hill. After the 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, Tom’s contributions to the bill were recognized on the floor of the House of Representatives by the Chairman of the authorizing committee and he was invited to the White House signing ceremony.

In 2000, Tom assumed the position of Deputy Executive Director and head of the Washington DC Office for the American Water Works Association, the largest organization in the world devoted to safe and affordable drinking water. As the number three staff leader in the Association he had responsibility for working closely with water utilities of all sizes and all types of ownership. He and his staff represented water utilities in the development of numerous EPA drinking water regulations, and he led the development of numerous substantive reports on drinking water issues. Among the reports developed under Tom’s leadership are Dawn of the Replacement Era, 2001; Avoiding Rate Shock, 2004; Buried No Longer: Confronting America’s Water Infrastructure Challenge, 2012; The Buried No Longer Pipe Replacement Modeling Tool, 2013; and Thinking Outside the Bill: A Utility Manager’s Guide to Assisting Low Income Customers, 2014.

In July 2015 Tom retired to enjoy his hobbies and his children and three grandchildren.