

# Memorandum

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**To:** Board of Governors Nebraska Section AWWA

**From:** Jerry Obrist, Chairman, Section WUC

**Subject:** Report of Section Water Utility Council for 2007

**Date:** November 7, 2007

The Nebraska Section Water Utility Council monitors a number of pertinent bills in the Nebraska Legislature. We also are involved in providing input and monitoring the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act, Water Security, and monitoring the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) with respect to Wireless Radio Spectrum.

A detailed listing of the legislative bills that affected the water industry in Nebraska was published in the Summer 2007, *Wise Water Words*.

LB 135, which was killed, provided for confidentiality of certain municipal records. This legislation was killed by the media attorney. This bill will be rewritten and reintroduced in January 08.

On a national scale, several items were accomplished:

- In April 2007, AWWA sponsored a Water Issues Fly-in to Washington D.C. to review water issues currently before Congress. Visits were made to the Nebraska delegation to ask for their support on:
- Investing in Water Infrastructure
- Drinking Water Appropriations
- Farm Bill

A summary report of the Fly-In was published in the summer 2007 *Wise Water Words*.

- New issues are as follows:
  - a. Bush Administration will seek Chemical Security Authority over Water;
  - b. Chemical Security Survey by AWWA has been sent out to gather information from Utilities; and
  - c. A 'Water Tax' via a National Trust Fund may be an upcoming issue.

See attachment for details.

Major SDWA issues under review are changes in The Distribution Rule, The Total Coliform Rule, MCL revisions for triazines, and implementation of LT2SWTR.

We currently are working with the AWWA Telecommunications TAW, through the Critical Infrastructures Industry Coalition (CIIC) on the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) ASpectrum Study@, to identify radio spectrum needs of Critical Infrastructure Industries (CII) such as water, gas, electric, etc., for private internal communications - SCADA. Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) utilizes 900 MHz and 150 MHz spectrum for operation control and monitoring. Narrowbanding, changing from 25 KHz to 12.5 KHz in the 150 MHz and 450 MHz frequency band, is scheduled to occur in the next several years.

Nextel was successful in having the FCC completely revamp the 800 MHz Radio Communications Frequencies. Re-banding of the 800 MHz is in the phased implementation process, with relocation costs estimated at \$3.5 to 4.0 Billion to be born by Nextel.

It has been an honor to serve as chairman of the Water Utility Council for the Nebraska Section. I look forward to serving you in the future.