



# VIEW*S* & VISIONS

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## Supporting an Economy that Runs on Water

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West Virginia American Water

Brian Bruce is President of West Virginia American Water, the largest investor-owned water utility in the state. He is responsible for all aspects of the business, including customer, regulatory and local government relationships and operational and financial performance, and is the principal external contact for American Water in the state.

Prior to his current position, Bruce served as Vice President of Operations and President of New York American Water, respectively, where he oversaw the operations of the company's customer service, production, water quality, environmental management, transmission and distribution, risk management and maintenance departments.

A veteran of the United States Navy, Bruce earned a bachelor's degree in business management from Silver Lake College in Wisconsin and an associate's degree in water and wastewater technology from Bay de Noc Community College in Michigan.

He is an active member of the American Water Works Association and its West Virginia counterpart, and serves on the board of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the West Virginia Business Roundtable, the Charleston Area Alliance and the Charleston Regional Chamber of Commerce.

The details are as clear as the water we drink. Our nation has reached a critical point in the need to invest in deteriorating water and wastewater infrastructure.

Of all our needs, water is the single most important. We need it every day for almost everything we do, and there is no substitute. Water sustains agriculture and, thus, our food chain. Vast quantities of water are used to make the silicon chips that help power our computers and cell phones. Electric power plants depend heavily on water and account for a staggering 39 percent of freshwater withdrawals in the United States. Our economy truly runs on water.

However, for many of us, having access to clean, dependable water and sewer services is a given, not a luxury. The 700,000 mile network of pipes that delivers clean water to Americans is more than four times the length of the National Highway System. A significant percentage of those pipes were laid 80 to 100 years ago and have reached the end of their functional lifespan. But because they are out of sight and out of mind, we take water for granted.

It's no secret that our nation's deteriorating water and wastewater infrastructure is in critical need of repair, mainly due to the fact that our country has underinvested and has not paid what it really costs to maintain a system of pipes and plants that ensures our health and economic stability. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers 2017 Report Card for America's Infrastructure, national drinking water and wastewater systems received grades of D and D+, respectively. Drinking water needs in West Virginia alone are an estimated \$1.16 billion, and wastewater needs total \$3.26 billion. This deteriorating infrastructure impedes West



## WEST VIRGINIA AMERICAN WATER

Virginia's ability to compete in an increasingly global marketplace.

Already, aging wastewater systems discharge billions of gallons of untreated wastewater into our surface waters every year. Leaking and broken pipes waste nearly two trillion gallons of clean drinking water each year. On top of these challenges, we are experiencing more floods and droughts, and constantly monitoring for and enhancing treatment to deal with emerging contaminants.

At West Virginia American Water, we made a clear decision that we can't afford to neglect our infrastructure any longer. Every day, 550,000 West Virginians rely on us to provide their water for basic needs such as drinking, showering, cleaning, cooking and fire protection. Thousands of businesses count on us to keep their doors open and their processes and systems running.

In the past two years alone, we invested \$135 million to improve the water treatment and pipeline systems that serve our customers across West Virginia. We've dramatically accelerated our water main replacement program, from a nearly 1,000-year replacement rate a few years ago to a 100-year replacement rate today. Last spring, we launched an Infrastructure Upgrade Map on our website to promote education and transparency around how we are putting our customers' water bills to work.



*A crew installs a 16-inch water line along Henson Street in South Charleston. The new line is part of a \$1.1 million water infrastructure upgrade project by West Virginia American Water*



*West Virginia American Water invested nine million dollars to build two new water storage tanks in the St. Albans area, adding eight million gallons of water storage to the Kanawha Valley*

In 2017, we replaced nearly 30 miles of aging pipe and spent \$1.5 million to rehabilitate six water storage tanks and bring them up to current industry standards. We invested \$9 million to build two new water storage tanks in the St. Albans area, adding eight million gallons of water storage to our Kanawha Valley system for resiliency in the event of an operational disruption.

Our treatment plants received upgrades to intakes, pumps, filters, instrumentation, SCADA systems, automation controls and chemical feed systems. We improved or replaced multiple booster stations and pressure-reducing stations across our system to maintain proper flows and water pressure across mountainous terrain. As an industry leader in source water protection, we installed a new continuous monitoring system for organic contaminants at our Kanawha Valley treatment plant, conducted a location study for upstream monitors on the Elk River and invested in equipment to better view and evaluate data from online source water monitors at all of our treatment facilities.

We continue to extend our systems to rural, unserved areas of West Virginia through public-private partnerships. These partnerships have proven to be viable solutions for leveraging government funds together with private capital to bring clean water and sanitation services to areas that are extremely expensive and difficult to serve due to our state's mountainous terrain and low population density. We also continue to expand our footprint as a wastewater service provider and are positioned to help meet the growing needs of struggling wastewater systems across West Virginia.

West Virginia American Water has operated in the Mountain State since its first water system was built in Huntington in 1886. We see these water and wastewater system challenges as an opportunity, because with our continued investments, we continue to put West Virginians to work, protect public health, improve quality of life and support the many exciting economic development opportunities West Virginia faces in the months and years to come. W