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ACPPA's Mueller Featured in "Hard Facts" Podcast



ACPPA President Richard Mueller was recently featured in the fourth installment of the Portland Cement Association's new "Hard Facts" podcast, a series that examines the intersection of federal policy and the cement industry through interviews with members of Congress, executive branch officials and industry leaders.

In the episode, Mueller introduces concrete pressure pipe (CPP), describes how federal construction funding impacts pipe producers, discusses innovative new CPP applications and makes the case for increased federal infrastructure investment.

Other recent "Hard Facts" episodes have featured Sens. John Barrasso (R-Wy.) and Tom Carper (D-Del.), Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sustainability Hub Executive Director Jeremy Gregory and PCA President Mike Ireland.

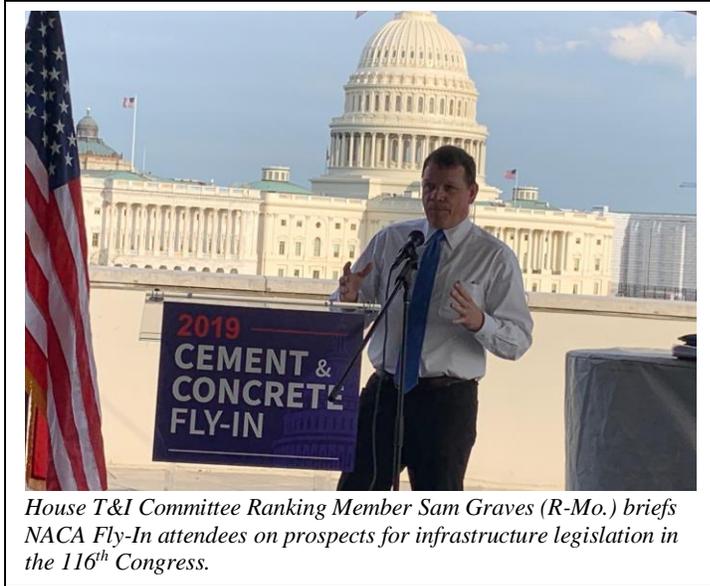
To listen to Mueller's interview (which starts at 1:40), [click here](#). To access all episodes of "Hard Facts", go to <https://www.cement.org/newsroom/hard-facts-podcast>.

ACPPA, NACA Allies Head to the Hill as Infrastructure Debate Enters Key Phase

On April 9 and 10, ACPPA Lobbyist Christian Klein joined more than 100 executives from leading construction industry associations and firms for a two-day congressional lobbying blitz aimed at moving the needle on infrastructure legislation.

The annual North American Concrete Alliance (NACA) Washington Fly-In, organized by the Portland Cement Association (PCA)-led coalition, is an opportunity for industry leaders to come to Washington, D.C. to learn more about policy issues impacting the industry and become personally involved in the coalition's advocacy.

The two-day conference was exhausting, but extremely productive. Attendees heard presentations by, and participated in meetings with, a bevy of high-ranking executive branch officials, including U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler, U.S. Department of Transportation Under Secretary for Policy Derek Kan and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chairman Neil Chatterjee. Numerous members of Congress, including House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Ranking Member Sam Graves (R-Mo.) also spoke at the event.



As part of the Fly-In, ACPPA's Klein moderated a panel discussion about the concrete and cement industry skills gap with House Higher Education & Workforce Investment Subcommittee Ranking Member Lloyd Smucker (R-Penn.), Special Assistant to the President James Redstone, PCI Founding Director and President/CEO Tanya Komar and others. Panelists discussed recent executive and legislative branch efforts to address the skilled worker shortage, opportunities in the current Congress and industry best practices to recruit, retain and train the industry's 21st century workforce.

Over the course of the conference, NACA lobbying teams (including one led by Klein)

participated in more than 160 Capitol Hill meetings to urge action on infrastructure legislation, discuss industry efforts to mitigate the environmental consequences of cement production and educate policymakers about the importance of resilient construction.

What Did We Learn?

ACPPA and its allies are still aggregating the intelligence gathered during the meetings, but at first blush, the news is mixed. There's near universal support on the Hill for infrastructure investment, but there's also a lot of finger pointing. Democrats blame the White House for not leading more aggressively and administration officials say the same thing about Congress. Highway reauthorization and the biennial Water Resources Development Act are considered must-do bills for the current Congress. However, hopes for a much more aggressive and comprehensive transportation investment bill and a gas tax increase to restore the Highway Trust Fund's long-term solvency have faded somewhat in recent months.

As *Actionline* went to press, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) had just completed a high-profile meeting with President Trump discussing infrastructure legislation. [Media reports on the progress made in the meeting](#) indicate the president and Democratic leaders agreed on the need to invest \$2 billion to repair and upgrade the nation's infrastructure. The bipartisan agreement is not official but allows both sides to begin discussing ways to pay for more investment (conventional wisdom is that a gas tax increase won't happen unless the president is out in front on the issue). However, Sen. Schumer is apparently also firm in his position that Democrats won't consider raising the gas tax unless the president agrees to roll back some of the 2017 tax cuts, something to which Trump and his fellow Republicans are unlikely to agree.

Stay tuned for updates as ACPPA and its NACA allies continue our advocacy and lawmakers work to broker a deal. 

EPA's Wheeler Makes Water Top Priority at House Budget Hearing

Just a minute into his prepared testimony before the House Energy & Commerce (E&C) Committee on April 10, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler reiterated [a theme he's sounded in recent months](#), telling committee members that "water issues, from drinking water to marine litter to infrastructure, are the largest and most immediate environmental and public health issues affecting the world right now."

"Right now, over two billion people worldwide lack access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation, leading to anywhere from one to three million deaths every year," Wheeler said. "And those most likely to die from a lack of safe drinking water are young children. According to the United Nations, nearly a thousand children die every day due to preventable water and sanitation-related diseases. We believe that these children deserve our immediate attention, and we are elevating our work with our federal partners, like USAID, to improve global water security."

Wheeler pointed to progress in the United States in recent decades as evidence that solutions to the global crisis are within reach. "Here in the U.S., we have made tremendous progress on this front. In the 1970s, more than 40 percent of our nation's drinking water systems failed to meet even the most basic health standards," Wheeler said. "Today, over 92 percent of community water systems meet all health-based standards, all the time."

Wheeler pointed out, however, that America's water infrastructure is far from perfect. We still face challenges," Wheeler said. "Our nation's children are particularly vulnerable to the health impacts of unsafe drinking water, especially lead exposure."

The EPA administrator touted the new [Federal Action Plan to Reduce Childhood Lead Exposures and Associated Health Impacts](#), which EPA has undertaken in coordination with other federal agencies. He said the president's FY 2020 budget proposes \$50 million to establish a new Healthy Schools Grant Program. He also said EPA is updating the Lead and Copper rule for the first time in over two decades, with the goal of ensuring that the most corrosive pipes in the most at-risk communities are addressed first. "These communities can't afford to wait five, ten, or twenty years to have their lead pipes replaced. EPA staff is currently monitoring and mapping the location of the highest-risk lead pipes so we can focus our work on the most impacted areas of the country first," Wheeler said.

Wheeler also highlighted the need to invest more in drinking and clear water construction projects. "On infrastructure, we estimate that more than \$700 billion will be needed to upgrade water infrastructure in the U.S. alone over the next 20 years. The President understands that modernizing our nation's aging infrastructure is critical to public health and prosperity. At EPA, this means that we will continue to make investments in water infrastructure that not only safeguard our nation's precious water resources but also create well-paying jobs and ensure taxpayer dollars achieve the maximum return on investment," Wheeler said.

He told lawmakers that the FY 2020 budget includes a 25 percent increase to the [Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act \(WIFIA\)](#) program from last year's request. According to EPA, the \$25 million, including \$20 million in credit subsidy, provided for WIFIA could deliver more than \$2 billion in direct credit assistance, which, when combined with other funding resources, could spur over \$4 billion in total infrastructure investments.

Reporting on the progress of efforts to implement WIFIA, Wheeler said: “To date, EPA has issued eight WIFIA loans totaling more than \$2 billion in federal credit assistance. Not only will these funds improve public health for hundreds of thousands of Americans, it is also estimated these projects will create over 6,000 jobs. This is just the beginning. This past year, we invited an additional 39 projects across the nation to apply for WIFIA loans, which, when approved and combined with other funding sources could help finance over \$10 billion dollars in water infrastructure and create up to 155,000 jobs.”

Wheeler said that President Trump’s budget request also includes approximately \$2 billion in federal dollars towards the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs). According to EPA, the combination of the federal capitalization grants provided over more than twenty years, required state match, loan repayments, and interest that flows back into each state revolving fund have created approximately \$80 billion currently revolving at the state level, which results in additional funding available well beyond the annual federal investment in both SRF programs.

To watch a video of the hearing and read Wheeler’s full testimony, go to <https://energycommerce.house.gov/committee-activity/hearings/hearing-on-the-fiscal-year-2020-epa-budget> 

Pressure Pipe Post

ACPPA's Monthly Source for Industry News

April 2019

To keep members aware of the activities of government and standards organizations, we regularly sweep public databases and publications for the industry-specific terms indicated below. We then provide our members with links to documents identified in the search. Please note that in some cases the URLs may link to subscription-only databases. The purpose of this service is to identify emerging threats and trends as well as opportunities for collective action by ACPPA.

NEWS RESULTS

Drinking Water

Michigan Gets 'F' for Drinking Water at Schools, Report Says

04/30/2019 <https://www.wilx.com/content/news/Report-gives-Michigan-poor-review-on-keeping-lead-out-of-water-at-schools-509255041.html>

An advocacy group has given Michigan an "F" for policies aimed at keeping lead out of drinking water at schools. The report from the Environment Michigan Research and Policy Center says federal requirements to keep lead out are "weak" to "non-existent."

Innovative Online Water Quality Monitoring in Drinking Water Networks

04/11/2019 <https://www.envirotech-online.com/article/water-wastewater/9/scan-messtechnik/innovative-online-water-quality-monitoring-in-drinking-water-networks/2528>

Currently, the quality of drinking water is ensured by means of laboratory samples, which have to be carried out according to the authorities / law (drinking water regulations) by the water companies at specified intervals. The actual drinking water regulation intends for improvements by moving away from regular sampling to a risk assessment-based adaptation of sampling planning.

Environment

Experts: Climate Change Threatens Water Supply

04/24/2019 <https://www.chieftain.com/news/20190424/experts-climate-change-threatens-water-supply>

The message came in three different voices: Climate change and global warming are here, and they will shrink Colorado's rivers and water supply. "We are causing this and we can fix it," said Brad Udall, a senior research scientist at the Colorado Water Institute and Colorado State University.

In Illinois, the Risk of Coal Ash Contamination Rises with Floodwaters

04/12/2019 <https://energynews.us/2019/04/12/midwest/in-illinois-the-risk-of-coal-ash-contamination-rises-with-floodwaters/>

Multiple coal ash impoundments along the Mississippi and its tributaries are located in flood plains, as depicted in interactive maps compiled by the Prairie Rivers Network using flood maps from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

[Indiana] Will Tanners Creek Fly Ash Stay Or Go? Revised Closure Plan Doesn't Satisfy Environmental Watchdog

04/05/2019 <https://www.eaglecountryonline.com/news/local-news/will-tanners-creek-fly-ash-stay-or-go-revised-closure-plan-doesnt-satisfy-environmental-watchdog/>

Revised plans for dealing with coal fly ash landfills at the former Tanners Creek Power Plant site in Lawrenceburg are under review by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

North Carolina Orders Duke Energy to Excavate All Coal Ash

04/02/2019 <https://www.wsocvtv.com/news/south-carolina/copy-of-north-carolina-orders-duke-energy-to-excavate-all-coal-ash/936013771>

The country's largest electric company is being ordered to excavate coal ash from all of its North Carolina power plant sites, slashing the risk of toxic chemicals leaking into water supplies but potentially adding billions of dollars to power bills.

Infrastructure**Trump, Top Democrats Agree on Goal of Crafting \$2 Trillion Infrastructure Plan**

04/30/2019 https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-top-democrats-agree-on-goal-of-crafting-2-trillion-infrastructure-plan/2019/04/30/8deaf204-6b62-11e9-a66d-a82d3f3d96d5_story.html

The two top Democrats in Congress said Tuesday that they had reached an agreement with President Trump to try to craft a \$2 trillion plan aimed at overhauling the nation's ailing roads, bridges, waterways and other infrastructure.

Report Measures Federal Agencies' Stepped Up Role in Water Infrastructure

04/29/2019 <http://www.concreteproducts.com/news/11659-report-measures-federal-agencies-stepped-up-role-in-water-infrastructure.html#.XMif6mhKjIU>

Federal government participation in rehabilitating U.S. water utility infrastructure is taking on even greater importance than in the past as municipalities are challenged to keep pace with the aging of 70,000-plus water & wastewater treatment systems and 3 million miles of underground pipe networks.

Northwest Florida Not Immune to Statewide ‘Sewer Crisis’

04/27/2019 <https://www.thedestinlog.com/news/20190427/northwest-florida-not-immune-to-statewide-sewer-crisis>

Storms, aging pipes, bacon grease and baby wipes are all contributing to the deterioration and failure of Florida’s sewage infrastructure. The fix will take time and billions of dollars.

Designing Water Infrastructure for Climate Uncertainty

04/22/2019 <http://news.mit.edu/2019/mit-research-designing-water-infrastructure-amid-climate-uncertainty-0422>

In Kenya’s second largest city, Mombasa, the demand for water is expected to double by 2035 to an estimated 300,000 cubic meters per day. In Mombasa’s current warm and humid climate, that water comes from a substantial volume of precipitation that may also change significantly as the region warms in the coming decades in line with global climate model projections.

Materials and Technology**ACI Applies ‘Pre-fix’ Method to Mix Cement and Fly Ash in ESG Mixer**

04/30/2019 <https://www.aggregateresearch.com/news/aci-applies-pre-fix-method-to-mix-cement-and-fly-ash-in-esg-mixer/>

The report, Mixing Performance of Energy-Saving Gravity Mixer for Powder Materials, says pre-mixed powder was flattened circular and six samples were taken from symmetric perimeter and then mixed with water in a mortar mixer. Specimens of each sample were made for compressive strength tests.

Race is on to Make Cement from CO2

04/29/2019 https://www.eenews.net/climatewire/stories/1060235853/most_read

In 1824, English bricklayer Joseph Aspdin put the world on more solid footing. He heated a mixture of powdered limestone and clay in his kitchen stove and invented portland cement. It’s the basic ingredient of modern concrete found in roads, buildings, sidewalks and hundreds of other uses.

IBM Developing AI-powered IoT Software to Help Manage Aging Infrastructure

04/26/2019 <https://www.traffictechtoday.com/news/infrastructure/ibm-developing-ai-powered-iot-software-to-help-manage-aging-infrastructure.html>

IBM is collaborating with Danish state-owned infrastructure owner/operator Sund & Bælt (S&B) to develop an AI-powered Internet of Things (IoT) solution designed to help prolong the lifespan of aging bridges, tunnels and highways.

Planning**Virginia Shore Officials Tout Regional Sewer Plans**

04/30/2019 <https://www.delmarvanow.com/story/news/2019/04/30/virginia-shore-officials-tout-regional-sewer-plans/3615142002/>

State and county officials hinted at findings of a recently completed study about regional sewer service on Virginia’s Eastern Shore, despite the results not yet being made public.

Gov. Newsom Directs State Agencies to Prepare Water Resilience Portfolio for California

04/30/2019 <https://www.lakeconews.com/index.php/news/60985-gov-newsom-directs-state-agencies-to-prepare-water-resilience-portfolio-for-california>

As climate change continues to threaten California's water infrastructure and reliability, Gov. Gavin Newsom has signed an executive order directing his administration to think differently and act boldly by developing a comprehensive strategy to build a climate-resilient water system.

[New York] Joint Sewer Board Increasing Sewer Rates by Two Percent

04/29/2019 <http://www.leaderherald.com/news/local-news/2019/04/joint-sewer-board-increasing-sewer-rates-by-two-percent/>

The Gloversville-Johnstown Joint Sewer Board adopted 2019-20 sewer rates for users of the Gloversville-Johnstown Wastewater Treatment Facility Thursday night at Johnstown City Hall.

Council Members' 'Personal Bias' Against Controversial Slate Belt Sewer Plan Called into Question

04/27/2019 <https://www.lehighvalleylive.com/news/2019/04/council-members-personal-bias-against-controversial-slate-belt-sewer-plan-called-into-question.html>

An Upper Mount Bethel Township official has asked the board of supervisors to step in and address the influence of several citizens who have been vocal about their concerns regarding a proposed public sewer plan.

The Cost of Clean Water in Warm Springs

04/10/2019 <https://www.opb.org/news/article/clean-water-warm-springs-tribe-reservation/>

Miles downstream from the towns and irrigation districts of Central Oregon, the Deschutes River becomes tap water for thousands of people in Warm Springs.

The Town that Extended 'Smart Growth' to Its Water

04/05/2019 <https://www.citylab.com/environment/2019/04/westminster-colorado-water-conservation-urban-planning-gis/587500/>

As Western states grapple with drought, Westminster, Colorado, has become a model for its integration of water data into the planning process.

Policy**NACWA: Now Is the Time to Advance Clean Water Infrastructure**

04/15/2019 <https://waterfm.com/nacwa-now-is-the-time-to-advance-clean-water-infrastructure/>

Public clean water sewer and stormwater services are an aspect of everyday life that often goes unnoticed by the hundreds of millions of Americans that depend on them. These essential services provide communities throughout the country, both small and large, the ability to ensure homes, businesses, hospitals, and schools operate safely and efficiently while also protecting public health and the environment and growing their local economies.

Majority of Voters Support Increasing Federal Investment in Water Infrastructure

04/08/2019 <https://www.waterworld.com/articles/2019/04/majority-of-voters-support-increasing-federal-investment-in-water-infrastructure.html>

The Value of Water Campaign released the results from its fourth annual national poll. The poll found continual, significant bipartisan support for water infrastructure investments: 85 percent of American voters support increasing federal water infrastructure investment.

Water: A Rare Area of Bipartisan Agreement

04/04/2019 <https://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2019/04/04/water-a-rare-area-of-bipartisan-agreement-110420.html>

One area of bipartisan agreement is the need for a significant investment in our nation's water infrastructure to modernize the millions of miles of water pipes running across the country. With Water Week in full swing, there is no better time to discuss the importance of federal investment in our nation's water systems.

EPA Announces New WIFIA Funding for Water Infrastructure

04/02/2019 <https://www.contractormag.com/codes/epa-announces-new-wifia-funding-water-infrastructure>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler has announced the availability of funding to provide an estimated \$6 billion in Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loans in 2019.

Projects**[New York] Village Board Plans to Dip into Reserves to Pay for Water Valve**

04/29/2019 https://www.ithaca.com/news/regional_news/village-board-plans-to-dip-into-reserves-to-pay-for/article_a796a1d1-010e-54c4-bd57-3f949045d9e5.html

The Village Board wants to use water budget reserve funds to offset higher-than-anticipated bids for installation of a key Pressure Reducing Valve for the village water system. The board voted April 22 to authorize the use of up to \$250,000 in water fund reserves to pay for installation of the PRV in an enclosed building on Woodworth Road in Fayette.

Tallassee Gets \$2.4 Million Grant for Sewer Overhaul

04/26/2019 https://www.tallassee-tribune.com/news/tallassee-gets-million-grant-for-sewer-overhaul/article_0c15cb08-6880-11e9-84f1-2bb4403444a8.html

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross announced the Economic Development Administration awarded the grant to upgrade Tallassee's sewer collection system and construct a new treatment plant.

County Wants to Speed Up Morro Bay Sewer Project, Sends Review Straight to Coastal Commission

04/25/2019 <https://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/article229679289.html>

The review of the planned — and controversial — \$124.5 million Morro Bay wastewater treatment plant is skipping a key step that could have added a year and significant cost to the project's bottom line.

[Illinois] Aurora Approves Sewer, Water Projects

04/15/2019 <https://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/aurora-beacon-news/news/ct-abn-aurora-water-st-0416-story.html>

Aurora aldermen recently approved several sewer and water improvement projects in the city. A number of the projects are to help long-term flooding issues on the far East Side, in the 8th and 10th wards.

Miami-Dade Gets \$99.7 Million Water Infrastructure Loan from the EPA

04/05/2019 <http://www.sunshinestatenews.com/story/miami-dade-gets-997-million-water-infrastructure-loan-epa>

With EPA's WIFIA loan, Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department will construct deep injection wells at its three wastewater treatment plants to allow for the redirecting of treated wastewater from the ocean outfalls to these wells.

REGULATORY RESULTS**Infrastructure****Environmental Protection Agency | Notice | Proposed Information Collection Request; EPA Application Materials for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act**

04/23/2019 <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/FR-2019-04-23/2019-08158>

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is planning to submit an information collection request (ICR), 'EPA Application Materials for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act' to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act. Before doing so, EPA is soliciting public comments on specific aspects of the proposed information collection as described below. This is a request for approval of a renewal.

Environmental Protection Agency | Notice | Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Applications for Credit Assistance Under the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program

04/05/2019 <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/FR-2019-04-05/2019-06731>

The purpose of this notice of funding availability (NOFA) is to solicit letters of interest (LOIs) from prospective borrowers seeking credit assistance from the EPA. The EPA will evaluate and select proposed projects described in the LOIs using the selection criteria established in statute and regulation, and further described in this NOFA as well as the WIFIA program handbook.

Stormwater**Environmental Protection Agency | Notice | Environmental Financial Advisory Board (EFAB); Request for Nominations of Expert Consultants on Stormwater Funding and Financing**

04/03/2019 <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/FR-2019-04-03/2019-06483>

The EPA invites nominations of qualified candidates to be considered for expert consultants to the Environmental Financial Advisory Board (EFAB). The expert consultants will advise the EFAB workgroup focused on stormwater funding and financing.

LEGISLATIVE RESULTS**Drought****S. 1057 | Introduced by Sen. McSally, Martha (R-Ariz.) | Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan Authorization Act**04/08/2019 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1057>

This bill requires the Department of the Interior to carry out the Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan which was submitted to Congress on March 19, 2019, by Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. Interior must execute the plan without delay and operate applicable Colorado River System reservoirs accordingly.

H.R. 2030 | Introduced by Rep. Grijalva, Raul (D-Ariz.) | Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan Authorization Act04/16/2019 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2030>

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