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#### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

*Water & Wastes Digest* is published exclusively for the 85,000+ decision makers in the municipal and industrial water, wastewater and water pollution industries. These individuals actively design, specify, buy, operate and maintain the equipment, chemicals and services used for water treatment. Editorial content in this audited publication highlights new products and technologies concerning the supply, collection, treatment and distribution of drinking water; the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater; and hazardous waste pollution control. A product directory is included in the annual June Buyer's Guide.

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# From Blue to Green

As we slowly shake off the events of the past year and prepare to take a step into 2010, it is typical to take time for reflection. This year marks the beginning of a new year, as well as the end of a decade—and what a decade ...

The past 10 years have been quite a roller coaster ride for the water and wastewater industry.

The ability of membranes to deliver alternative sources of safe drinking water to people all over the world and the drastic reduction in the costs to refurbish, construct and operate membrane facilities have made membrane technology one of the cornerstones of the water and wastewater treatment industry.

In the last decade, water reclamation and reuse have become the new efforts implemented to ease the global water crisis. The development of these practices has allowed the reuse of treated wastewater for beneficial purposes such as agricultural and landscape irrigation, industrial processes and much more.

The industry also has seen a continued development of new standards and more stringent laws. Industrial facilities sending their waste to municipal treatment plants, for example, now must meet certain minimum standards to ensure that the wastes have been pretreated adequately.

Another milestone in the last 10 years has been the nationwide implementation of storm water management programs. Storm water runoff programs have been developed to prevent and properly manage flows over impervious surfaces that pick up pollutants along the way and wash them into rivers and streams.

While these are just some of the countless accomplishments for the water and wastewater industry over the last decade, weathering one of the worst economic collapses in history certainly has required a huge effort.

The economic environment of the last two years has led to a significant shortfall of affordable funding for cities, towns and districts that must complete critical infrastructure improvements in order to maintain compliance with federal and state regulations and standards. Grant funds dedicated solely to water and wastewater project assistance are pretty much nonexistent, not to mention that some utilities have difficulty servicing debt on even low- or no-interest loans.

Despite lack of funding, water and wastewater municipalities still are responsible for providing safe drinking water and properly treating wastewater. The absence of federal assistance to comply with imposed laws has been especially hard on small and rural systems that do not have the ability to ask their customers to take on additional financial burdens. Unfortunately, funding challenges will continue to loom in the near future as the state of water infrastructure continues to decline.

As we turn the page and begin writing the history of a new decade, no one can predict what's to come for certain, but it is highly likely that water and wastewater practices will take a "green" approach. The continued development of water- and energy-efficient technologies, as well as potential funding opportunities, will result in more sustainable projects at water and wastewater facilities.

I am hopeful that the transition of the water industry from blue to green will present numerous opportunities to help build a healthier, more prosperous and sustainable future.



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## COMING UP NEXT MONTH...

- Water Conservation
- Contaminants
- Pipe & Distribution Systems
- SCADA
- Leak Detection Technology
- Disinfection Technology
- Meter Source Special Section
- Sludge Treatment

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