



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Water Research Foundation Board of Trustees Votes to Commit \$6.4 Million to Its 2012 Research Program

Also Announces 10 Major Research Areas of Focus

DENVER, CO (JANUARY 23, 2012) – At its January 20 meeting, the Water Research Foundation’s Board of Trustees approved \$6.4 million in 2012 funding for the Foundation’s three key research programs. This research budget will be leveraged with partnerships and in-kind support raising the total amount of funds dedicated to drinking water research to approximately \$15 million. The approved funds are allocated to the three programs as follows:

- **The Focus Area Program** (60% of Foundation research budget) identifies a limited number of broadly relevant subscriber issues and solves them with a targeted, multi-year research response. Approximately \$3.84 million has been allocated to this program for 2012. This is the first funding allocated to the program, which was created in early 2011.
- **The Emerging Opportunities Program** (20% of Foundation research budget) enables the Foundation to respond quickly to emergent subscriber challenges and research ideas identified throughout the year. Approximately \$1.28 million has been allocated to this program for 2012.
- **The Tailored Collaboration Program** (20% of Foundation research budget) enables the Foundation to partner with utility subscribers on research that may be more limited or regional in impact. Approximately \$1.28 million has been allocated to this program for 2012.

The Board also approved the initial 10 water utility challenges that will be addressed under the Focus Area Program. These challenges were identified through a comprehensive review of existing research and input from Foundation stakeholders, most notably a subscriber needs assessment conducted in mid-2011. The 10 approved focus areas are:

1. **Hexavalent Chromium: Filling Critical Knowledge Gaps to Inform Effective Rulemaking and Customer Communication:** By 2016, develop national occurrence data, evaluate treatment technologies, quantify compliance costs, and develop effective communication tools for utilities.
2. **Water Utility Infrastructure: Applying Risk Management Principles to Effectively Manage Deteriorating Infrastructure:** By 2017, provide utilities with tools and strategies to optimize the use of condition assessment and risk management in making infrastructure renewal decisions, and the use of innovative renewal techniques.

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3. **NDMA and Nitrosamines: Precursor Control, Treatment Practices, and Distribution System Operations to Achieve Regulatory Compliance:** By 2016, provide resources to inform rulemakers and assist utility compliance with pending regulations by understanding the occurrence, precursor formation, treatment and control, and fate of nitrosamines in distribution systems.
4. **Carcinogenic VOCs Contaminant Group: Filling Critical Knowledge Gaps to Inform Meaningful Regulation:** By 2015, delineate co-occurrence, assess effectiveness of analytical methods, and provide treatment solutions for carcinogenic VOCs that are relevant to EPA rulemaking.
5. **Water Utility Energy Efficiency and Integrated Water-Energy Planning: Developing Tools and Strategies:** By 2016, provide effective strategies to reduce water utility energy consumption and cost; develop strategies for multi-sector, regional, integrated water-energy planning; and provide sound approaches for energy generation by water utilities and reduced water consumption by energy utilities.
6. **Water Utility Finances: Best Practices for Setting Rates, Financing Capital Improvements, and Achieving Public Support:** By 2015, develop utility communication tools for governing boards and customers, critically evaluate rate-setting strategies, tap financial success factors from outside the water industry, determine impacts of utility governance and ownership on financial sustainability, and develop decision support tools for infrastructure funding.
7. **CECs in Drinking Water: Improved Cost-Benefit Analysis of Different Management Approaches:** By 2016, develop robust approaches for managing CECs that consider the sources and variability of CECs, end uses of water, and the associated financial, environmental, and social costs/benefits.
8. **Contaminant Risk Communication: Developing Core Messages and Engaging Critical Stakeholders:** By 2014, develop core messages for water utilities to communicate the relative and often uncertain risk of contaminants to different audiences, and initiate dialogue among key stakeholder groups to foster agreement on related issues and solutions.
9. **Water Demand: Improving the Accuracy of Forecasts and Management:** By 2016, increase the accuracy of both short-term and long-term demand forecasting, and quantify the interdependencies between changing use, rate structures, and utility financial stability.
10. **Biofiltration: Defining Benefits, Overcoming Unintended Consequences, and Developing Utility Guidance:** By 2017, determine biofiltration effectiveness at removing CECs and other contaminants, define benefits and communicate to key stakeholders, develop strategies to mitigate unintended consequences of biofiltration, and provide utility guidance on optimizing biofiltration.

With Board approval of focus areas and allocation of 2012 Focus Area Program funds, the Foundation will now recruit a Technical Advisory Committee for each approved area that will work to develop a multi-year research agenda. Projects for each area will be selected in early April. Once projects are approved, requests for proposals will be finalized and issued for competitive award.

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In announcing the 2012 research program funding, Roy Wolfe, Board Chairman, said, "These research programs and funding decisions reflect the Board of Trustees' commitment to focusing on comprehensively solving the most pressing subscriber problems while accelerating the timeframe from identification of need to approval of project, without compromising quality of results. The initial utility challenges to be addressed by the Focus Area Program reflect the true priorities for a large percentage of the drinking water industry."

About the Water Research Foundation

Founded in 1966, the Water Research Foundation is an international, 501(c)3 non-profit organization that sponsors research to enable water utilities, public health agencies and other professionals to provide safe and affordable drinking water to the public. With more than 950 subscriber members who provide water to 80 percent of the U.S. population, the Water Research Foundation has funded and managed more than 1,000 projects. For more information, go to www.waterRF.org.

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