

PRESS RELEASE

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LCA PROPOSES \$45 MILLION IN WATER, SEWER PROJECTS THROUGH 2010

Public comments are due by October 14.

Lehigh County Authority (LCA) has released a draft of its 2006 – 2010 Capital Plan for public comment. The \$45 million plan includes both water and wastewater projects that would benefit more than 40,000 residents in 14 municipalities across western and northern Lehigh County.

The plan, which includes details for 46 projects to be completed in the next five years or more, will be funded through LCA's rate structure, reserve funds and future borrowings. Under the proposed plan, water system capital improvements would be completely justified by current water rates and the use of available reserve funds; however, a water rate study planned for later this year will determine if a rate increase will be necessary in 2006 or beyond due to rising operational costs.

The proposed capital plan is focused on projects that will allow LCA to continue providing high-quality, reliable and affordable water and sewer service to existing and future customers. Highlighted projects in the plan include a 1 million gallon reservoir to be constructed in Lower Macungie Township; implementation of a new financial information system; a new wastewater pumping station and force main in western Lehigh County; development of a public sewer system in the Vera Cruz area of Upper Milford Township, pending township approval; regional sewer system development in the Jordan Creek basin; and development of additional water supplies to meet the growing needs of Upper Macungie and Lower Macungie townships.

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The Lehigh County Board of Commissioners and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission will review LCA's capital plan at upcoming meetings in October, and LCA's Board of Directors will consider final revisions to the plan in response to comments from the commissioners, municipalities and other outside agencies or individuals in November.

After LCA approves the plan, individual projects will be considered for inclusion in LCA's 2006 budget and will require further Board authorization.

Public comments on the plan are due to LCA by October 14. A copy of the draft plan can be obtained by calling 610-398-2503.

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