



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUL 08 2009

OFFICE OF
WATER

Mr. Gregg Grunenfelder
Chairman, National Drinking Water Advisory Council
Assistant Secretary
Division of Environmental Health
Washington State Department of Health
P.O. Box 47820
Olympia, Washington 98504-7820

Dear Mr. Grunenfelder:

Thank you for your letter of June 12, 2009, to Lisa P. Jackson, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on behalf of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC), expressing your recommendations regarding the issue of sustainability for small water systems. The Administrator has forwarded your letter to me for response. We welcome the Council's input and appreciate the significant effort contributed by Council members in providing it.

At the NDWAC's spring meeting in May, EPA sought input on developing a drinking water policy to ensure that small system customers receive equitable consideration. At the meeting, we engaged with the Council in a productive discussion of a broad range of tools that could be used in this effort, including a Small System Variance Policy, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program, Capacity Development Program and the Operator Training Program. We continue to focus our attention on this important issue and will use the Council's recommendations to inform our decision making as we move ahead.

You also mention in your letter the Council's action to approve formation of a working group to evaluate the concept of "Climate Ready Water Utilities." We are excited about this new initiative to enable water and wastewater utilities to plan for climate change impacts and we look forward to working with you to make it successful.

The Agency values the Council's advice and its support as we work with States and other partners to protect the drinking water community and public health. Again, thank you for your letter. If you have further suggestions or questions, please contact me or call Cynthia Dougherty, Director of EPA's Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, at (202) 564-3750.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Shapiro".

Michael H. Shapiro
Acting Assistant Administrator