



**American Water Works  
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The Authoritative Resource on Safe Water®

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## NewsRelease

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### **Drinking Water Week Highlights Importance of Protecting and Conserving Water Resources**

(DENVER, CO) May 8, 2008 – As Drinking Water Week continues, the American Water Works Association (AWWA) joins water professionals across North America in highlighting the importance of protecting and conserving water resources.

“Drinking Water Week reminds us of the essential role we each play in respecting and protecting our drinking water supplies,” said Gary Zimmerman, AWWA executive director. “Periodic drought conditions, population shifts, and general increased demand on these supplies have caused many of us to rethink the way we approach our water supply.”

Several years of drought across parts of the United States have strained water resources. In fact, in 2007, much of the Southeast, including North Carolina, Alabama and Georgia, reached the most severe category of drought assigned by climatologists, creating a situation so serious that some cities came dangerously close to running out of water.

In the United States alone, communities use approximately 40 billion gallons of tap water for everyday uses, such as drinking, cooking, and cleaning, fighting fires and supporting local economy. To meet increased demand, the water community is exploring new technologies to develop alternative sources of clean, drinkable water. This includes desalination, the removal of salt from ocean water or brackish water in underground aquifers. Communities also are exploring water reuse, which involves recycling wastewater that has been treated to improve its quality. This reclaimed water can be used for irrigation, wetland restoration, industrial washing and cooling, fire protection, geothermic energy production and car washing.

#### **About Drinking Water Week**

A safe, reliable water supply is critical to the success of any community. It creates jobs, attracts industry and investment, and provides for the health and welfare of citizens in ways ranging from disease prevention to fire suppression. We often take water supply for granted until it is threatened, either by drought, water main breaks, or some other event. For more than 30 years, the American Water Works Association and its members have celebrated Drinking Water Week – a unique opportunity for both water professionals and the communities they serve to join together to recognize the vital role water plays in our daily lives.

Established in 1881, AWWA is the oldest and largest nonprofit, scientific and educational organization dedicated to safe water in North America. AWWA has more than 60,000 members worldwide and its 4,600 utility members serve 80 percent of the U.S. population.

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*AWWA is the authoritative resource for knowledge, information, and advocacy to improve the quality and supply of water in North America and beyond. AWWA is the largest organization of water professionals in the world. AWWA advances public health, safety and welfare by uniting the efforts of the full spectrum of the entire water community. Through our collective strength we become better stewards of water for the greatest good of the people and the environment.*