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INHOFE, VITTER & ISAKSON INTRODUCE WASTEWATER SECURITY BILL

May 4, 2007

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[Link to bill](#)

INHOFE, VITTER & ISAKSON INTRODUCE WASTEWATER SECURITY BILL

Washington, D.C. -Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.), Ranking Member of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, together with Senator David Vitter (R-LA), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Transportation Safety, Infrastructure Security and Water Quality, and Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA), last night introduced the "Wastewater Treatment Works Security Act." The bill will enhance and strengthen security at wastewater treatment facilities by providing local governments with the tools they need to make security decisions. A new Government Accountability Office (GAO) report released this week confirms that decisions regarding security, as well as those regarding treatment technologies, are best made at the local level. The bill is nearly identical to legislation previously introduced by Senator Inhofe that passed the EPW Committee in each of the past two Congresses and similar to legislation passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in the House of Representatives in the 108th Congress.

"Wastewater security is an essential part of a broad, concerted effort to bolster the nation's defenses against terrorism," Senator Inhofe said. **"My wastewater security bill provides incentives to facilities to make security improvements and conduct assessments without imposing a federal, one-size-fits all regulation. We at the federal level must continue to work with our partners in state and local government to provide support to publicly owned wastewater facilities by providing local governments with the tools they need to make security decisions, not impose heavy-handed unfunded federal regulations."**

"Passing wastewater security legislation is vital to our nation and I hope our bill will receive prompt consideration in Committee."

Wastewater Treatment Works Security Act' Key Provisions:

- Defines several terms including a "disruption of service event", "emergency response plan" and "vulnerability assessment" to include not only intentional harmful acts but natural disasters that might also impact a publicly owned treatment works (POTW)
- According to a GAO report issued last year on security at wastewater treatment plants 74% of the largest wastewater utilities had either completed, were in the process of completing, or planned to complete a vulnerability assessment. To provide an incentive to the remainder of POTWs, the Wastewater Treatment Works Security Act authorizes the Administrator to provide grants to State, municipality, intermunicipal or interstate Agency or privately owned utility that principally treats municipal wastewater to conduct vulnerability assessments.
- For those communities that have completed a vulnerability assessment and to provide additional incentive to those who have not, upon certification that a vulnerability assessment has been completed, applicants are eligible for grants to address security needs identified in the assessment.
- The bill further authorizes funds to be used for the development, expansion or upgrading of an emergency response plan, and the voluntary creation by a State or network of treatment works, or the voluntary participation in, a mutual aid and emergency network preparedness agreement.
- Maintains local control over security information
- Provides technical assistance to small treatment works to conduct vulnerability assessments and meet needs identified in the assessments
- Authorizes funds to update vulnerability assessment tools used by many wastewater utilities
- Responds to concerns raised in the GAO report about the lack of attention given to collection systems
- Authorizes a total of \$225 million to fund these initiatives

Related Links:

GAO Report: Securing Wastewater Facilities – Released May 1, 2007

<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07480high.pdf>

Previous Inhofe Wastewater Security Legislation

[WASTEWATER SECURITY BILL INTRODUCED](#) - THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2006

[EPW COMMITTEE PASSES WASTEWATER SECURITY LEGISLATION](#) FOR THE SECOND TIME IN THREE YEARS MAY 23, 2006

[SEN. INHOFE INTRODUCES HOMELAND SECURITY LEGISLATION TO PROTECT NUCLEAR AND WASTEWATER FACILITIES](#) - MAY 12, 2003

[INHOFE CALLS FOR QUICK PASSAGE OF WASTEWATER SECURITY BILL "OBSTRUCTION OF A BILL WITH BROAD BIPARTISAN SUPPORT MUST END"](#)
OCTOBER 7, 2003

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Wastewater Treatment Works Security Act of 2007

WastewaterTreatmentWorksSecurityActof2007.pdf | 51.0 KBs

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