Essential Utilities Reports Progress on Infrastructure Projects to Improve Water, Wastewater and Natural Gas Service in 2020

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Essential emphasizes need for ongoing infrastructure investment during United for Infrastructure Week

BRYN MAWR, Pa.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sep. 10, 2020-- Essential Utilities Inc. (NYSE: WTRG) recognizes United for Infrastructure 2020: A Week to Champion America's Infrastructure (Sept. 14-21) by raising awareness of the country's critical need for infrastructure improvements and reporting progress on its planned approximately $950 million capital investment in 2020 in the 10 states where the company provides water and wastewater service as Aqua and natural gas service as Peoples.

"Essential has an immense responsibility to provide our customers safe and reliable utility services," said Essential Chairman and CEO Christopher Franklin. "As we've continued to deliver water, wastewater and natural gas services amidst the challenges of COVID-19, we know that repairing and replacing aging infrastructure remains critical to our mission to protect the public health and strengthen communities."

In 2017, the American Society of Civil Engineers' Infrastructure Report Card gave the United States a D+ for the state of its infrastructure.

Infrastructure projects are planned and taking place across Essential's states in 2020, and some of this year's projects are highlighted below.

Aqua Pennsylvania – Replacing aging water mains throughout Pennsylvania continues to be a large part of Aqua Pennsylvania's capital project program this year. Aqua Pennsylvania plans to replace approximately 120 miles of aging water mains to improve distribution and reduce service interruptions caused by main breaks. Aqua Pennsylvania also broke ground on an $8 million, 14,700 square-foot laboratory to support the utility's microbiologists and chemists who perform about 300,000 tests on 30,000 water samples each year.

Aqua Ohio – Aqua Ohio's planned water and wastewater system improvements this year include completion of the Struthers water treatment plant modernization project and construction of a new Franklin County operations center. Aqua Ohio also began a project to rehabilitate the Ashtabula water treatment plant. The Ashtabula plant project, which Aqua Ohio expects to complete in 2021, includes an engineering master plan for the plant to address future expansion needs.

Aqua North Carolina – Aqua North Carolina has completed the installation of eight new water treatment systems so far this year with plans to install two more in 2020. Aqua North Carolina is also working on several wastewater projects to improve service and reliability including upgrade projects currently underway for three separate wastewater treatment plants in High Point, New Hanover County and Union County.

Aqua Illinois – Aqua Illinois has completed improvements to the Lake Vermilion dam, investing $20 million in this vital resource. Aqua Illinois is preparing for the future with an intensive study of the Joseph Donovan Regional Water Treatment Plant in the City of Kankakee.

Aqua Texas – Aqua Texas plans improvements to water and wastewater service for customers statewide this year. Projects include expansions of three wastewater treatment plants to serve the growing needs of communities in Chambers, Harris and Montgomery counties.

Aqua New Jersey – This year, Aqua New Jersey's capital plans include upgrades and integrations to SCADA computer systems that monitor and control several wastewater plants to make operations more efficient and improve service for customers. These improvements will be completed in the fourth quarter. Plans also include improvements to drinking water treatment, including a new filtration system at a northwest New Jersey well.

Aqua Indiana – This year, Aqua Indiana's capital project plans include an expansion of the Hendricks wastewater treatment plant to serve the growing needs of the Avon and Brownsburg communities and unincorporated areas of eastern Hendricks County. Aqua Indiana expects to begin construction this fall and expects to complete the Hendricks expansion project in the first half of 2022.

Aqua Virginia – This year, Aqua Virginia is installing water meters at two of its largest remaining unmetered systems, Lake Caroline in Caroline County and Captain's Cove in Accomack County. The installation of water meters at these locations means customers pay only for water they use, while promoting conservation. Meters also enable Aqua to measure water losses from the distribution system and identify leaks in customers' homes. These improvements will be completed in the fourth quarter.

Peoples – In addition to investments included in its long-term infrastructure improvement plan projects in Western Pennsylvania and Kentucky this year, Peoples began a 7-year project on a pipeline system known as Goodwin Tombaugh, which runs through Greene and Washington counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. The 300-mile pipeline replacement project will transform an old gathering system into a new modern distribution system. The Goodwin Tombaugh project will provide multiple benefits including a reduction of methane emissions and continued safe and reliable service to 1,600 residents.

About Aqua

Aqua's water and wastewater utilities serve more than 3 million people in Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, Illinois, Texas, New Jersey, Indiana and Virginia. Visit Aqua online at AquaAmerica.com, facebook.com/MyAquaAmerica, and twitter.com/MyAquaAmerica.

About Peoples

Peoples is a natural gas provider serving approximately 740,000 homes and businesses in Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Kentucky. The company's mission is to improve the lives of its customers and to help build long-term economic growth for the regions it serves. For more information

about Peoples, visit Peoples-Gas.com and follow Peoples on social media @peoplesnatgas.

About Essential

Essential is one of the largest publicly traded water, wastewater and natural gas providers in the U.S., serving approximately 5 million people across 10 states under the Aqua and Peoples brands. Essential is committed to excellence in proactive infrastructure investment, regulatory expertise, operational efficiency and environmental stewardship. The company recognizes the importance water and natural gas play in everyday life and is proud to deliver safe, reliable services that contribute to the quality of life in the communities it serves. For more information, visit http://www.essential.co.

Forward-Looking Statements

This release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, which generally include words such as “believes,” “expects,” “intends,” “anticipates,” “estimates” and similar expressions. The company can give no assurance that any actual or future results or events discussed in these statements will be achieved. Any forward-looking statements represent its views only as of today and should not be relied upon as representing its views as of any subsequent date. Readers are cautioned that such forward-looking statements are subject to a variety of risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause the company’s actual results to differ materially from the statements contained in this release. Such forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements relating to the capital to be invested by the water, wastewater and gas distribution divisions of the company. There are important factors that may cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements including the risks and uncertainties described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K, our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. For more information regarding risks and uncertainties associated with the company’s business, please refer to the company’s annual, quarterly and other SEC filings. The company is not under any obligation — and expressly disclaims any such obligation — to update or alter its forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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