



## NEWS RELEASE

### WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCE AUTHORITY

*Arizona's water and wastewater funding source*

100 North 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 103, Phoenix, Arizona 85007 | [azwifa.gov](http://azwifa.gov) | (602) 364-1310

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**Contact:** Susan Craig, Communications Director, (602) 364-1236

# Arizona's Water Loss Control Pilot Project Kicks Off

**PHOENIX (September 6, 2017)** - The Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona (WIFA), in partnership with the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR), is kicking off a Water Loss Control Pilot Project.

Water supply challenges and the need for continued conservation are driven by declining water supplies and aging utility infrastructure. In the United States, leaking pipes lose 2.6 trillion gallons of water annually, approximately 17% of the total water our country consumes. On a statewide basis, although less than the national average, Arizona estimates similar annual water losses.

Controlling water loss is an important and cost-effective part of water resource management for water utilities and state agencies. Due to the successful implementation of water loss control programs in other states, WIFA and ADWR decided to develop a program in Arizona. This project will take the first steps towards determining the feasibility of standardizing and promoting water loss auditing among utilities across the state.

In addition to WIFA and ADWR, partners and other state agencies are taking a closer look at this issue.

- Arizona Corporation Commissioner, Andy Tobin, and staff at the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) are investigating the issue of water loss as part of a multi-prong approach to water conservation and the need for an updated and more collaborative approach to water loss methodology for ACC-regulated utilities.
- The Governor's Water Augmentation Council has also recognized the importance of water loss control to ensure long-term water supplies for Arizona and recommended that ADWR act to address water loss control outside of the Active Management Areas (AMAs).
- Other supporters include the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and the Arizona Water Association.

Cavanaugh and Associates was selected as the contractor for the pilot project and has performed similar water loss pilot projects in several states utilizing the American Water Works Association's (AWWA) Manual for Water Audits and Loss Control Programs. This manual details the industry best-practice for water loss accounting, otherwise known as the M36 methodology. The pilot program has been designed to provide the selected utilities with a foundational understanding of the M36 methodology, how it is applied, and how water audit data may be used to assess and improve water loss performance at the utility level.

For Arizona's pilot project, WIFA and ADWR selected a variety of public and private systems outside of the AMAs, based on their population size, percentage of water loss, potential to implement water loss recommendations, and, most importantly, supportive leadership to embrace and champion the M36 methodology.

Six drinking water systems have been selected, including four public utilities – the City of Kingman, Town of Clarkdale, City of Flagstaff and Pine-Strawberry Water Improvement District - and two privately-owned, ACC-regulated systems - Arizona Water Company - Pinewood and Global Water - Eagletail.

A water loss study broader in scope than this pilot project may be conducted in the future to gain more comprehensive knowledge of water loss in Arizona.

“WIFA and its state partners anticipate that the success of this pilot project will open avenues to offer technical assistance to drinking water utilities throughout the state,” said WIFA Executive Director, Trish Incognito. “We are confident that this project will assist utilities in developing strong water loss control programs to regularly and accurately assess opportunities to reduce losses.”

“We are excited to have a variety of public and private systems outside of the AMAs participating in the pilot. The participating systems are very engaged so we anticipate a high level of success with respect to implementation of recommendations that reduce water loss,” said ADWR Water Planning and Permitting Division Deputy Assistant Director, Gerry Walker.”

“Since investments in infrastructure are often necessary to reduce water loss, the Water Loss Control Pilot Project was a natural fit for WIFA and we are thrilled to provide funding,” said Ms. Incognito. “WIFA initiated this project to help communities both identify and resolve system losses through our funding programs.”

This contract will be funded with \$75,000 from WIFA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Technical Assistance Set-Aside along with ADWR contributing \$25,000 through an interagency service agreement.

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