

**SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION**  
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**SRBC, WINNER, O'MARA, ELMIRA WATER BOARD AND NYSDEC  
MARK FINAL SET-UP YEAR FOR EARLY WARNING SYSTEM TO  
PROTECT SOUTHERN TIER WATER SUPPLIES**

Project to Protect 300,000+ Elmira and Binghamton Water Customers

ELMIRA, N.Y. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) was joined today by Senator George Winner (53<sup>rd</sup> District), Assemblyman Tom O'Mara (137<sup>th</sup> District), Elmira Water Board General Manager Mark LaDouce and Ray Yacuzzo, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, N.Y. State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to mark an important milestone toward the full deployment of the Susquehanna Basin Early Warning System (EWS) in 2009 for the Elmira and Binghamton public water supply systems. The EWS will help the two public water supply systems protect drinking water supplies for their 300,000 plus customers.

SRBC is in its third and final year of setting up the EWS in New York. The system, which includes state-of-the-art monitoring and upstream remote sensor equipment, will give system operators access to real-time water quality data and allow them to predict how long it will take chemicals and other substances in the water to reach their intake pipes. Harmful substances from fuel spills and other toxic releases entering water supply treatment plants have the potential to shut down operations for extended periods.

“Having water quality data and time-of-travel information for pollutants will allow system operators to anticipate and make needed adjustments before their water supplies are affected,” said SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz. “This enhanced response time will help protect public health and safety and improve operational efficiency by reducing the number and duration of potential system shutdowns.”

When the EWS is fully operational next year, the Elmira and Binghamton water supply treatment plants will be able to monitor water quality factors, including pH, temperature, turbidity, dissolved oxygen levels, conductivity, and organic contaminants.

The EWS components and benefits include:

- providing for state-of-the-art water quality monitoring, including through upstream remote sensors, and communication technology to collect and transmit real-time data via the web site for advance spill notification;
- helping to contain operational costs by improving system efficiency (through reduced shutdowns and enhancing continuous and safe supply of drinking water);
- providing water quality data for improving day-to-day treatment operations;
- improving water quality and minimizing the impact from spills;

- enabling, through early warnings, more timely responses to adverse changes in water quality; and
- using web site interface to provide the water supply system operators user-friendly access to other critical information and tools such as maps, contaminant databases and time-of-travel calculators.

Swartz said, “Elmira and Binghamton are joining the network of four other water suppliers in Pennsylvania currently participating in SRBC’s EWS program. Our longer-term outlook includes the expansion of the EWS into the Maryland portion of the basin, making this truly a basin-wide warning and notification system.”

SRBC – headquartered in Harrisburg, Pa. – is the governing agency established under a 100-year compact signed on December 24, 1970, by the federal government and the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland to protect and wisely manage the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin. The Susquehanna River starts in Cooperstown, N.Y., and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Md., where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay. SRBC web site: [www.srbc.net](http://www.srbc.net).

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