**Congress approves $12.3 billion water bill**   
Last week both the U.S. House and Senate voted to approve legislation that authorizes 34 new projects over the next 10 years, including flood protection and mitigation and harbor dredging and expansion, in addition to eliminating unnecessary Army Corps of Engineers reviews and speeding up environmental reviews for potential projects. [More>>](http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/senate-set-vote-123-billion-water-bill-23820352)

**Residential U.S. sewer charges increased 5.5% last year**   
2013 was the 12th consecutive year that sewer service charges increased faster than inflation, nearly doubling the average wastewater service charge since 2002, according to the [NACWA Cost of Clean Water Index](https://www.nacwa.org/images/stories/public/2014-05-08indexfinal.pdf). The $435 annual average national charge is expected to reach $500 by 2016.

**What is the cost of net zero vs. energy efficiency?**   
The cost premium for energy efficiency ranges from 1 to 12% depending on the building type and increases to 5 to 19% for net zero energy, according to [a new study by the New Buildings Institute](http://newbuildings.org/sites/default/files/ZNECostComparisonBuildingsDC.pdf). However, currently available tax and renewable energy credits make the return on investment approximately 30% for net zero compared to only 5 to 12% for energy efficiency alone.

**Next public draft of Legionellosis standard to be released this summer**   
Standard 188P: Legionellosis: Risk Management for Building Water Systems, currently under development by ASHRAE, will identify risk factors for growth and exposure along with measures to mitigate that risk to help facility managers and owners understand how to evaluate the design and operation of their building water systems to reduce the risk of Legionellosis. [More>>](https://www.ashrae.org/news/2014/ashrae-continues-work-on-legionellosis-standard-fourth-public-review-draft-slated-for-summer)

**Plumbing industry leaders ask senators to support the WaterSense bill**   
The Plumbing Industry Leadership Coalition, of which ASPE was a founding member, sent a letter to the U.S. Senate urging their co-sponsorship of The WaterSense Efficiency, Conservation, and Adaptation Act of 2014 (S. 2226) to improve U.S. water use efficiency and promote smart water systems. [More>>](http://www.pmihome.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageID=5094)

**NIBS Consultative Council recommends building industry priorities to the President**  
The National Institute of Building Sciences Consultative Council, of which ASPE's executive director/CEO is a member, recently released [its recommendations to serve as the basis for a national buildings policy](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.nibs.org/resource/resmgr/CC/NIBS_2013_CCReport.pdf), which include setting uniform national water quality criteria for end-uses of nonpotable water, developing water and energy industry-accepted evaluation, measurement, and verification protocols for standards developers, and compiling a national database of the embedded energy in water and vice versa.

**Canadian Water Quality Association releases recommendations for lead in drinking water**   
Due to a recent increase in inquiries regarding lead in drinking water, CWQA has issued suggested steps to help its member companies address concerns from the public, as well as guidelines for consumers to assess risk factors. [More>>](http://www.cwqa.com/attachments/press_release_-_lead_(2014-5-21)(1).pdf)

**Registration is open for ICC’s 2014 Annual Conference**  
[ICC’s Annual Conference](https://ww2.eventrebels.com/er/EventHomePage/CustomPage.jsp?ActivityID=10579&ItemID=42305), being held September 28 to October 5 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, will offer the opportunity to attend seminars, network with colleagues and peers, and help finalize changes to the 2015 International Green Construction Code.

**Australian research and development center to be established through new partnership**  
IAPMO and the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre have joined forces to establish the IAPMO Centre for Research Development in Melbourne, Australia to help encourage plumbing industry growth and innovation in the Asian-Pacific region. [More>>](http://iapmo.org/Press%20Releases/2014-05-27%20IAPMO%20PICAC%20Partnership.pdf)

**ANSI launches Network on Smart and Sustainable Cities**   
This [new forum for information sharing and coordination](http://www.ansi.org/standards_activities/standards_boards_panels/anssc/overview.aspx?menuid=3) on voluntary standards, conformity assessment, and related activities for smart and sustainable cities in the U.S. and internationally is open to all interested participants and initially will meet monthly via webconference.

**World Plumbing Council announces education and training scholarships**  
The two scholarships are each worth up to $10,000 to help a plumbing industry professional travel to another country to learn about and share innovative techniques in plumbing training systems. The scholarships are intended to provide for an educational exchange between countries focusing on plumbing industry training. Click [here](http://www.worldplumbing.org/scholarship.html) for more information and to access the online application.

**Backflow industry mourns the loss of an influential member**   
Ernest Havlina, considered one of the modern founders of the current water education process, passed away on May 7. [More>>](http://ncbpa.org/index.asp)