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GLWA TRANSFERS OVER \$1.2 MILLION IN ADDITIONAL WRAP FUNDING TO CITIES OF DETROIT AND FLINT FOR BILL PAYMENT AND CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

Of the transferred funds, over \$200k will be dedicated to replacement of fixtures that pre-date 1986 lead-free plumbing code change

DETROIT – The Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) Board of Directors has approved the transfer of more than \$1.2 million in additional WRAP (Water Residential Assistance Program) funding to the city of Detroit, as well as to the city of Flint, with over \$200,000 dedicated to the replacement of kitchen and bathroom fixtures that predate the 1986 lead-free plumbing code change.

The transferred funding is from the uncommitted 2017 bill assistance funds from GLWA's three major county partners: Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties. Of the \$1.2 million being transferred, nearly \$787,000 will be directed to the city of Detroit, and approximately \$425,000 will be set aside to provide WRAP assistance to eligible Flint households.

"Today the GLWA Board of Directors showed its commitment to the cities of Detroit and Flint. With the transfer of uncommitted funds to these communities, we have shown our steadfast dedication to them and to water affordability for those who need it most," said Sue McCormick, CEO, GLWA. "In addition, the Board also changed the program to make it easier for households to qualify for lead fixture replacement by removing the pre-condition that eligible households have over 120 percent average annual usage. Now anyone participating in WRAP is eligible to have their lead fixtures replaced by the program, ensuring safe and quality water."

WRAP, which is administered by Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency, provides qualifying customers at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty threshold with help in paying current and past-due water bills. Eligible customers receive a \$25 monthly credit toward current water bills with any arrears suspended for 12-24 months. Customers who successfully make their monthly payments for six months, receive an additional credit of up to \$350 toward the arrearages (up to \$700 during a 12-month period).

"Today's vote further underscores GLWA's commitment to our low-income residents throughout Southeast Michigan, particularly in the cities of Detroit and Flint," said Brian Baker, Board Vice Chair and representative for Macomb County. "As the program continues to evolve, we've also made the effort to transfer conservation funding, which will allow

participants to have access to plumbing repairs that can dramatically impact their bill and lead to significant ongoing savings. As a region, we must ensure that all of our residents have a path toward assistance, and that is what WRAP and GLWA have provided to these communities. Also, in conjunction with the transfer approval, the Board encouraged Wayne Metro, WRAP's administrator, to seek methods to further increase utilization of all elements of the program by currently enrolled and potential new communities."

Since its inception in March 2016, 76 GLWA customer communities have opted in to WRAP, which is a first-of-its-kind program in Michigan and one of only a few sustainable assistance plans in the county.

From March 2016 through June 30, 2018, \$11.6 million total funding has been committed to communities throughout Southeast Michigan. To date:

- Over 11,000 households have enrolled in the program, with over 8,000 households being from Detroit
- In 2017, over 1,000 homes with high usage have received a home water audit, with over 1,600 repairs performed
- On average, participating households have been able to save \$420 on their water bills for an annual savings of \$432,600

Eligible residents may apply for WRAP by calling 313-386-9727, or learn more at waynemetro.org/wrap.

About the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA)

The Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) is the provider of choice for water and wastewater services to 127 municipalities in eight Southeastern Michigan counties. With the Great Lakes as source water, the GLWA is uniquely positioned to provide its customers water of unquestionable quality. GLWA has capacity to extend its service to other Southeastern Michigan communities. The authority offers a Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) to assist low-income residential customers throughout the system. The GLWA board includes one representative each from Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties as well as two representatives from the City of Detroit, and one appointed by the governor of Michigan to represent member partners outside the tri-county area.

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