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**GREAT LAKES WATER AUTHORITY SURPASSES STATE GOAL OF REDUCING
PHOSPHORUS LEVELS BY 40 PERCENT BY 2025**

Phosphorus reduction considered a key component of water quality in the Great Lakes

DETROIT— The Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), Michigan’s largest drinking water and wastewater treatment service provider, has reached a milestone achievement: surpassing federal and state regulators’ goal of reaching a 40 percent reduction in phosphorus levels by 2025, six years ahead of its deadline.

GLWA has not only met the federal and state requirements, but it has been able to reduce its phosphorus levels by approximately 60 percent in treated and discharged waters from its Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF). It is the first treatment facility along the tributary to Lake Erie to achieve this milestone.

“As with many of our optimization initiatives, we strive to provide the highest quality treatment through careful management of our treatment processes and implementation of innovative solutions,” said Navid Mehran, Chief Operating Officer, Wastewater Operating Services, GLWA. “The reduction in phosphorus that we have been able to achieve in recent years is a testament to the dedication and commitment of GLWA team members that operate our Water Resource Recovery Facility.”

As part of its dedication to creating a cleaner community, GLWA has also partnered with the Michigan Cleaner Lake Erie through Action and Research (MI CLEAR) in response to the ongoing algal blooms in Lake Erie. The partners are working together to examine multiple factors of algal formation in order to develop a holistic solution.

Presently, high phosphorus levels in Lake Erie are the leading cause for continued meetings among Governors in the Great Lakes region, as well as Ontario’s Premier. In order to halt harmful algae blooms, GLWA has been a prime participant in reducing phosphorus runoff.

“With our regulatory phosphorus reduction goals met, we are focusing on understanding and mitigating nutrient contribution to the Western Lake Erie basin through targeted research. This is all part of GLWA’s commitment to sustainable and environmentally conscious operations,” said Mehran.

GLWA is also participating in the Detroit River Watershed Project, which involves quantifying phosphorus loadings entering the watershed impacting algae growth. Partnering researchers will determine how the amounts of phosphorus in the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair and the Detroit River – all part of the Detroit River Watershed – contribute to Lake Erie.

These efforts are part of GLWA’s overarching plan to create less waste and conserve energy. Since the Authority’s inception in 2016, GLWA has spearheaded research and transitioned to additional environmentally sustainable approaches, such as:

- GLWA’s biosolids dryer facility, which has the ability to turn up to 1.1 billion gallons of solid waste into environmentally-friendly, nutrient-rich Class-A organic fertilizer annually, rather than burning or landfilling it;
- Partnering with Michigan State University (MSU) to estimate the potential amount of net energy that can be recovered from biosolids through anaerobic digestion and thermal conversion. As a part of the research, MSU has custom built two 150-gallon anaerobic digesters at GLWA’s WRRF (formerly known as the wastewater treatment plant);
- Joining with the University of Michigan on a Dynamic Collection System Control modelling project to test the theory that the GLWA sewer collection system could store more storm water during a wet weather event, while ensuring basement flooding is prevented and reducing combined sewer overflows to the Detroit River. The project has potential to decrease the new construction required to significantly eliminate combined sewer overflows and result in substantial capital cost avoidance over the next 20 years, while improving water quality and long-term affordability.

For more information on the Authority, please visit www.glwater.org.

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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 seven 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 customer communities outside the tri-county area.