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Public Service Commission: Recognizes April 25- May 1, 2021, as Water Week

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MADISON – The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) is recognizing April 25 – May 1, 2021 as "Water Week," to highlight the importance of continued investment in the state's water systems, large and small. Clean drinking water supply and the infrastructure that obtains and delivers it to our homes and businesses are crucial to ensuring Wisconsin's health, quality of life, and economic growth.

"As Wisconsin's water infrastructure ages, there is an increasing need to update and repair our drinking water systems. The challenges posed by per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFASs) compounds and other contaminants, lead pipes, and aging infrastructure means now is the time to make smart investments in our water systems," said PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq. "Governor Evers' 2021-2023 biennial budget proposal makes infrastructure and affordability a priority by providing funding for needed infrastructure investments, the creation of a Water Loss Training Program and providing financial assistance towards water bills for low-income customers."

The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates in its 2021 Report Card for America's Infrastructure that Wisconsin needs $8.6 billion of drinking water infrastructure upgrades in the next 20 years. While not all water infrastructure projects require PSC approval, in 2020, the PSC authorized the construction of 45 drinking water projects totaling an estimated $263,679,722, which is just over half of the annual investment need estimated in the report.

Despite a growing need for investment, the federal government's share of investment in the drinking water infrastructure sector fell from 63% to 9% of total capital spending between 1977 and 2017. As a result, state and local governments have paid for, on average, 2/3 of public spending on water infrastructure since the

1980s. In its recently released 2021 Value of Water Index, the Value of Water Campaign found that, based on the results of its sixth annual poll of American voters, ensuring a reliable supply of water was identified as their highest single federal priority. Gallop's most recent annual Environment Survey echoed these results, revealing drinking water quality as the top environmental concern.

More information on this and other Water Week events can be found on the Water Week website at www.waterweek.us. For more information about drinking water infrastructure and the PSC's role, visit here.