

*Remarks for the  
Water and Sewer Task Force Report  
November 20, 2001*

Good morning. Water is one of the basic elements for life. Safe and plentiful water resources are essential for our communities and our people.

Today, we are releasing the report of the Governor's Water and Sewer Task Force. This task force was created in March of this year to study the water and sewer infrastructure of Mississippi, particularly in rural areas.

I'd like to thank Charles Chisholm,  
Executive Director of the Mississippi  
Department of Environmental Quality, for  
his work in chairing this task force. Thanks,  
too, to the members of the Task Force who  
are joining us today.

Adequate water resources and sewer  
treatment facilities are part of the foundation  
of communities across the state. People  
depend on them for safe drinking water,  
protection from fire, and basic health care.

Further, these resources and facilities are essential to economic development. At this time, 17 percent of the public water supplies do not have the capacity to allow for new connections, and 42 percent of our people do not have access to a centralized wastewater system.

It is our experience in economic development that businesses looking to locate or expand need adequate resources. We must ensure these resources are in place.

In the larger picture, most public water supply systems do a good job of producing safe water and correcting problems.

Building on these successes is essential.

This report offers a plan for accomplishing this goal. I'd like to ask Charles Chisholm, Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, to discuss some of the details for how we plan to do this work.

*(Mr. Chisholm speaks)*

We'll take your questions at this time.