

Governor's Water and Sewer Task Force
Press Conference
Wednesday, March 28, 2001
9:30 a.m.

- Mississippians rely on 1,586 public water supply systems across our state for safe drinking water.
- We know the critical importance of safe drinking water for all people and clean water for the state's growth and development.
- The proper treatment and handling of wastewater is also critical to the public health and safety of our people and we rely on approximately 1,900 treatment facilities across our state for the proper treatment and handling of wastewater.
- We have come to rely on the recreational beaches, coastal waters, streams, rivers and lakes that are essential to the quality of life we have come to enjoy.
- Many factors threaten the safety of our water, including natural disasters that have contaminated drinking water.
- In the year 2000, 286 counties received boil water notices, and approximately 60 percent of

Mississippi's monitored rivers do not fully meet state water quality standards.

- That is why I am establishing the Governor's Water and Sewer Task Force.
- The 27-member task force will be a time-limited commission with the sole purpose of assessing, evaluating and recommending action regarding the safeguarding and enhancement of Mississippi's water resources and infrastructure, and will propose recommendations for assuring the quality and safety of Mississippi's water resources.
- I have asked the Charles Chisholm, Executive Director of the Department of Environmental Quality to serve as chair of the task force.
- Charles, would you like to say a few words?
- (Charles speaks)
- Charles has more than 20 years experience in the environmental community and has done an excellent job establishing and maintaining a

balance between environmental issues and our state's business interests.

- The health of our children and families, and the protection of our natural resources are of great importance.
- The quality of water in our state has a profound effect on the quality of health and welfare of our citizens and wildlife; as well as our domestic, agricultural, industrial and recreational activities.
- Working as a team, we can ensure that our people have the use of clean and safe water.