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## National Drinking Water Week, 1988

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Americans are thankful for the amount of water with which our country is blessed—for our more than two million miles of streams, our more than 30 million acres of lakes and reservoirs, our other surface waters, and our subterranean reserves known as aquifers. We also appreciate our public water systems, whose complex processes provide us with some 12 billion gallons of generally inexpensive and high-quality drinking water daily.

We can be grateful too for the Americans who are helping to bring safe drinking water to millions in the developing world through the efforts of charitable, business, and other private groups and the Agency for International Development. From providing technical assistance to water systems in burgeoning cities to helping construct one-pipe water stands in countless villages in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, dedicated Americans are bringing water to a thirsty world. Water supplies in those developing lands mean improved health and well-being and often presage better productivity and economic vitality that benefit us all.

Less than a century ago, epidemics of waterborne disease were a major public health threat in our country. Today, behind every drop of good drinking water are dedicated individuals such as scientists, engineers, elected officials, water plant owners and operators, regulatory officials, and citizen groups, whose unceasing efforts allow us to enjoy the world's best drinking water.

We must be aware, however, that we do face some difficulties regarding drinking water. Lead eroding from the lead pipes and solder used in some water systems is causing health problems, especially for children; natural contaminants such as radon need attention in many water systems; and man-made contaminants are at levels of concern in some water supplies. Controlling these problems will be a challenge, but not one beyond our abilities or our determination.

State and local governments continue their efforts in this regard, and the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended in 1986 (Public Law 99-939), enlists the help of the Environmental Protection Agency in preserving and improving our drinking water. Because of this law and growing public concern, dramatic changes in public water systems over the next 5 years are likely to affect every community.

Consumers and the private sector help protect and improve drinking water by checking the quality of local systems and regional supplies and by working with utilities and State and local officials to protect and improve them. They help preserve water supplies by supporting wellhead protection and watershed control measures. And consumers encourage improved operation and maintenance of water facilities, increased monitoring, replacement of aging pipes and equipment, and installation of new treatment technologies where necessary.

We desire drinking water of the highest quality and realize that our large water supply is neither limitless nor without expense. Knowing that good drinking water is a precious resource and one of the world's most important products, we need to continue to understand and identify potential hazards, how such hazards enter our water supply, and the best means to eliminate them.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 185, has designated May 2 through May 8, 1988, as "National Drinking Water Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 2 through May 8, 1988, as National Drinking Water Week. I call upon the people of the United States and government officials to observe that week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to enhance public awareness about drinking water and recognition of the benefits of drinking water.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

*Ronald Reagan*