

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 27, 2013

Acting Administrator Bob Perciasepe  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Ariel Rios Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Acting Administrator Perciasepe:

Superstorm Sandy wreaked havoc on New Jersey's water infrastructure, creating serious environmental and public health hazards. In response to this damage, the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act (P.L. 113-2) included \$600 million for the State Revolving Fund programs under the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act. I urge EPA to move forward quickly to use these funds to repair the damage to and improve the resiliency of New Jersey's water facilities, including through projects to prevent sewage overflows during future storms.

During Superstorm Sandy, New Jersey's largest sewage treatment facility, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC), was flooded by 200 million gallons of saltwater. At one point, a five foot wall of water overwhelmed the plant, which treats an average of 240 million gallons of wastewater daily. Throughout the course of the storm, buildings at the facility were destroyed, pumps flooded, and critical equipment was badly damaged, forcing operators to release billions of gallons of raw or partially treated sewage into Newark Bay over several weeks.

In addition, the Middlesex County Utilities Authority (MCUA) suffered similar damage. MCUA, which serves 797,000 customers in 37 surrounding towns, lost two of its three pump stations due to the storm, and untreated sewage was discharged into local waterways, causing water restrictions for local residents.

As you know, untreated sewage poses serious environmental and public health risks, including bacteria, viruses, and other disease-causing organisms. It is critical that we build stronger in the wake of Superstorm Sandy so that communities do not have to worry about contaminated water and broken infrastructure during future storms.

Thank you for all of your efforts to protect communities that were impacted by Superstorm Sandy. As we move into the recovery phase, I look forward to our continued work together to repair, rebuild, and strengthen New Jersey's water infrastructure.

Sincerely,

