

Houtzdale receives \$22M loan for drinking water project

HARRISBURG — Gov. Tom Wolf on Wednesday announced the investment of \$92 million for 19 drinking water, wastewater, storm water, and non-point source projects across 13 counties through the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST).

Houtzdale Municipal Authority was the only Clearfield County project named.

The authority received a \$22,222,400 loan to replace 185,000 feet of waterline, replace 1,200 service lines and meter pits to address water loss and ensure reliability of the system.

“The projects represented in today’s approvals continue our commitment to clean water for Pennsylvania,” said Wolf. “These projects benefit the environment, economic development and public health, as well as advance our shared goal of a clean and safe environment for our families to enjoy, both now and for years to come.”

The funding comes from a combination of state funds approved by voters, Growing Greener, Marcellus Legacy funds, federal grants to PENNVEST from the Environmental Protection Agency, and recycled loan repayments from previous PENNVEST funding awards. Funds for the projects are disbursed after expenses for work have been paid and receipts are submitted to PENNVEST.

In addition, PENNVEST staff also introduced a policy modification aimed at making the program’s incentives more attractive for water utilities to utilize for lead service line replacement projects.

“The change in how we look at these types of projects, and how they impact those specific areas of concern, should result in funding packages that will best reflect the impact on those customers, and promote implementation of lead line replacements.” said Brion Johnson, PENNVEST Executive Director.

A modification to the affordability analysis associated with drinking water systems with lead line replacement projects seeks to promote these projects in the neighborhoods that can least afford the cost to replace the necessary piping.

Eligible projects are with utilities that have adequately mapped areas of concern with needed lead service line replacement work due to exceeding the safe levels in the drinking water provided to the customers. Staff will base the funding upon neighborhoods, or clusters of customers rather than the entire system user base to determine the financial package.