COUNTY AGENDA REQUEST

Department:	Fayette County Water System	Presenter(s):	Water System Director Lee Pope
Meeting Date:	Thursday, April 23, 2015	Type of Request:	Proclamation/Recognition

Wording for the Agenda:

Proclamation of May 4, 2015 as "Water Professionals Appreciation Day."

Background/History/Details:

Senate Bill 119 establishes in State law that the first Monday in May of each year will be “Water Professionals Appreciation Day in Georgia”.

It is fitting and proper that these individuals and their efforts be appropriately recognized. During its recently completed session, the Georgia General Assembly amended Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to holidays and observances, so as to designate the first Monday in May of each year as "Water Professionals Appreciation Day" in Georgia.

Water professionals provide critical services that are most often taken for granted, but that are essential to virtually everything we do.

What action are you seeking from the Board of Commissioners?

Proclamation of May 4, 2015 as "Water Professionals Appreciation Day."

If this item requires funding, please describe:

Not Applicable

Has this request been considered within the past two years?	No	If so, when?	
Is Audio-Visual Equipment Required for this Request?*	No	Backup Provided with Request?	Yes

**** All audio-visual material must be submitted to the County Clerk's Office no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting. It is also your department's responsibility to ensure all third-party audio-visual material is submitted at least 48 hours in advance.***

Approved by Finance	Not Applicable	Reviewed by Legal	
Approved by Purchasing	Not Applicable	County Clerk's Approval	Yes
Administrator's Approval			

Staff Notes:

Water Professionals Appreciation Day, Monday, May 4, 2015.

BACKGROUND:

The Georgia Water Quality Control Act was passed by the Georgia General Assembly and signed into law in 1964 by Governor Carl Sanders. At that time, there were 25 communities in Georgia which had no public sewage systems, 40 communities with a sewer system but no treatment facilities, 60 communities with a sewer system but only primary treatment facilities, 50 communities with a sewer system and secondary treatment facilities which were in need of improvement, and 395 industries which had documented untreated or inadequately treated discharges to Georgia's surface waters. At the time of passage of the Act, many of Georgia's surface waters were extremely polluted, and serious water quality problems existed all over the State of Georgia. The State established the Georgia Water Quality Control Board (later reconstituted as the Georgia Environmental Protection Division as a result of the 1972 Reorganization of State Government under Governor Jimmy Carter), and Governor Sanders appointed R.S. "Rock" Howard to be the board's executive secretary. By the time the Federal Water Quality Control Act was passed in 1972, most of Georgia's industries had been brought into compliance with the initial requirements of the Federal Act. Over the ensuing four decades, billions of Federal, State, and local dollars have been invested in planning, designing, and constructing modern publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities throughout this State. Georgia's water professionals are committed to operating these facilities to maintain consistent compliance with extremely stringent standards. Both publicly- and privately-owned facilities have performed so well that they are no longer the most significant threat to Georgia's waters. The quality of Georgia's waters has improved dramatically throughout this great state over the 50 years since the original passage of the Georgia Water Quality Control Act

Likewise, huge strides have been made over the past several decades in providing safe and reliable water at the tap throughout the State. According to the World Health Organization, four children die *every minute* somewhere in the world due to waterborne disease (that’s over two million children per year), and over half of the hospital beds in the world are occupied by people with waterborne diseases. Rarely do we hear of any such occurrences in the United States, thanks the dedication and commitment of water professionals, coupled with the mandate from leaders at all levels of government and from the public at large. Georgia’s last-known outbreak of water-borne disease was in 1989, over 25 years ago.

It is imperative that these improvements be sustained while continuing our efforts to educate Georgians of their growing responsibility in the reduction of non-point sources of pollution to Georgia's waters, and their responsibility for stewardship of Georgia’s precious water resources. The success that we have experienced thus far and the success that we will have in the future is made possible by the tremendous dedication and efforts of Georgia's water professionals.

It is fitting and proper that these individuals and their efforts be appropriately recognized. During its recently completed session, the Georgia General Assembly amended Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to holidays and observances, so as to designate the first Monday in May of each year as "Water Professionals Appreciation Day" in Georgia. Water professionals provide critical services that are most often taken for granted, but that are essential to virtually everything we do.