

# Congress Must Act Now to Extend Funding for Wastewater Monitoring: A Key Tool to Detect Emerging Threats and Protect Communities

Over the past four years, communities across the country have come to rely on wastewater as a modern early warning system to detect infectious diseases and help protect families. Whether it is seasonal viruses, new threats like avian influenza, or the next pandemic, wastewater now plays a crucial and cost-effective role in detecting threats before they show up in hospitals — empowering communities and individuals to respond and make health care decisions. According to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, wastewater monitoring is fast and effective, does not require individual testing or clinician reporting, protects privacy, and “will continue to be a valuable component of the nation’s strategy to manage infectious disease outbreaks.”

**Now is the time to build on, not dismantle, this significant progress.** Despite strong bipartisan support in Congress, wastewater funding is set to expire at the end of fiscal year (FY) 2025. If we don’t act now, Americans will lose access to a critical early warning system, our country will be less prepared to respond to emerging threats, and we will be far more likely to repeat the mistakes of COVID. We cannot let that happen.

Wastewater Action Alliance (WAA) is working to strengthen America’s wastewater monitoring system and sustain its federal funding so that American families, communities, and health care providers don’t lose access to its valuable, real-time, and life-saving data.

## Federal Funding



**\$200 million is urgently needed in FY 2026**

to continue CDC’s critical wastewater monitoring system in **all 50 states** and strengthen the ability of states and communities to quickly detect and respond to new and emerging health threats.

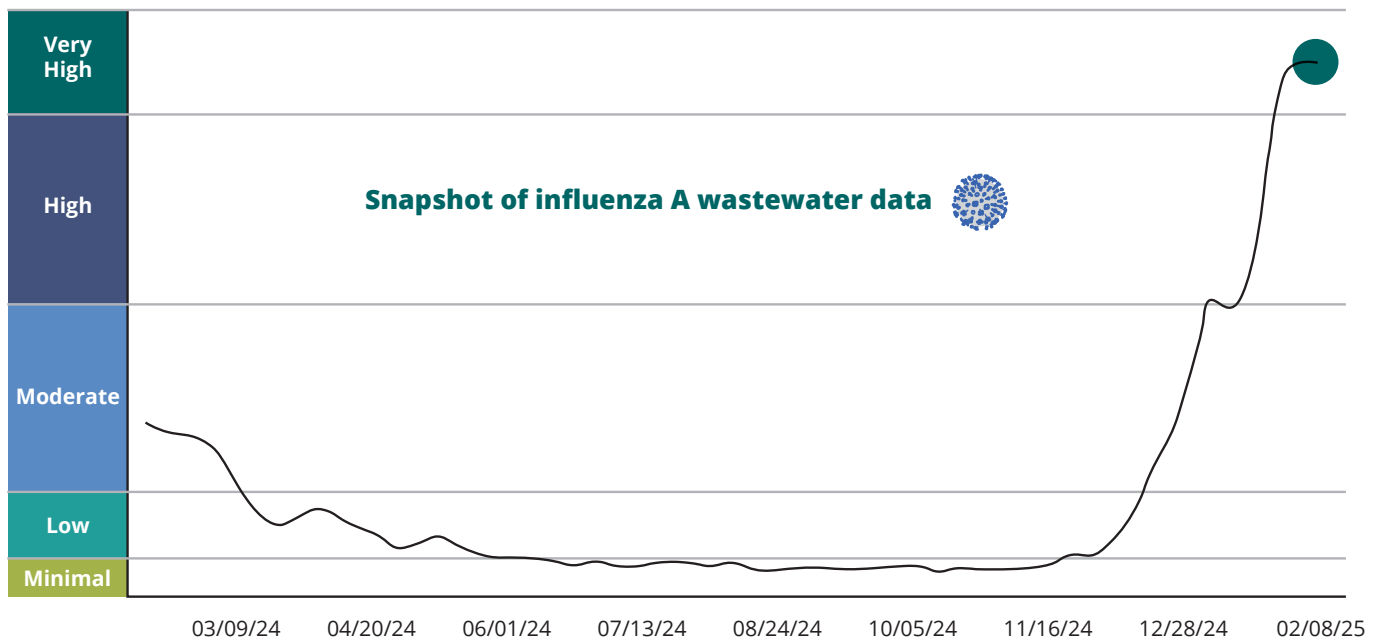
**Congress must act now to strengthen and sustain this important tool that has modernized our nation’s ability to detect threats and protect individuals, families, and communities all while protecting individual privacy.**

**// The CDC is not perfect — we know that better than anyone. But it needs to be strengthened, not hamstrung. To empower people and their communities to protect themselves from a wide range of health threats, CDC reforms should strengthen our nation’s early warning systems with sustained investments in laboratory networks, genomic sequencing, and wastewater surveillance.... //**

Source: Eight former directors of the CDC: Drs. William Foege (1977-1983), William Roper (1990-1993), Jeffrey Koplan (1998-2002), Julie Gerberding (2002-2009), Tom Frieden (2009-2017), Brenda Fitzgerald (2017-2018), Robert Redfield (2018-2021), and Rochelle Walensky (2021-2023).

## CDC National Wastewater Surveillance System (NWSS)

National trends of wastewater viral activity level of **influenza A**



**// To maintain these modernized, public-private defenses against natural and deliberate threats, sustained funding from Congress is needed. Some of these efforts were launched with a one-time post-pandemic funding boost and could vanish if that support isn’t renewed ... wastewater surveillance was funded in fiscal year 2024 by remaining Covid supplemental funds, but there’s no appropriation line for these efforts, making it unfunded under the Continuing Resolution. //**

Opinion piece by Dr. Scott Gottlieb, former FDA Commissioner, and Dr. Mark McClellan, former FDA Commissioner and Administrator for CMS.

## About Wastewater Action Alliance

Wastewater Action Alliance is a 501(c)(4) organization dedicated to modernizing America’s approach to fighting infectious diseases by strengthening wastewater monitoring across our country. Wastewater Action Alliance’s advocacy efforts are built upon the work of WastewaterSCAN, which has been advancing wastewater science and monitoring since COVID-19 emerged in 2020. WastewaterSCAN now monitors for 11 infectious diseases across 40 states, serving more than 39 million people, quickly identifying emerging threats, and showing how wastewater monitoring is a nimble and effective early warning tool to help communities detect infectious diseases and protect families.



**WastewaterSCAN  
data dashboard**