



From: **Cleveland Division of Water**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CWD releases analysis of proposed Westlake water system

Report indicates substantial operational, system and financial issues

December 15, 2011 – The Cleveland Division of Water released a detailed evaluation of the recently proposed Westlake water system. This analysis revealed several operational, system and financial inadequacies inherent in the proposed Westlake water system and demonstrates that an independent Westlake water system would increase the cost of water for Westlake residents and businesses.

“We began our review of the report prepared by HNTB for the City of Westlake by trying to understand what impact Westlake’s departure would have on other communities in the CWD system. Very quickly, we realized the negative impact to other customers and communities was quite large,” said Darnell Brown, Chief Operating Officer for the City of Cleveland. “Our number one responsibility is to maintain the high level of water delivery to all our communities.”

Arcadis, an external consultant for CWD, conducted the analysis of the proposed Westlake water system. The report and a letter detailing the following issues were delivered to Mayor Dennis Clough of Westlake on Wednesday.

- **Failure to account for \$17 million in “costs to cure” the impact on the CWD system:** The proposal would require severing direct CWD connections with Westlake’s neighboring communities, including Bay Village, Fairview Park, North Olmsted and Rocky River. The “costs to cure” these proposed impacts and reestablish service to these communities would be approximately \$17 million, a cost that CWD would pass back to Westlake.

- **Loss of Valuable System Redundancy for Emergencies:** The proposal would have Westlake’s water system serviced by Avon Lake Municipal Utilities’ (ALMU) single treatment plant connected to Westlake by a single 30 inch main and it would be dependent on a single one million gallon ground-level water storage facility, which will have the capacity to provide only about four hours of back-up water supply. CWD would not provide back-up service to the City of Westlake because of potential issues associated with pressure compatibility, water quality, and CWD resources. Currently, CWD provides Westlake with 65 connections; and 35 million gallons of finished water storage and the emergency power back-up necessary to ensure a continuous water supply to Westlake during an emergency.
- **Higher bills for Westlake customers:** Arcadis’ analysis concludes that quarterly bills in the proposed Westlake system would be 18-20% higher than the CWD bill. Based on the revised capital needs outlined by Arcadis, including costs to disconnect from CWD and connect to Avon Lake, construct necessary back-up connections, construct more adequate levels of ground storage and pumping capacity, and the costs to cure owed to the City of Cleveland, the true capital costs for Westlake are likely to be in excess of \$47 million not the \$19 million used in the Westlake study. This increase in quarterly bills does *not* include:
 - \$39 million in already expended costs to provide service to Westlake that Westlake will be required to pay CWD; or,
 - Unbudgeted operational costs for personnel, equipment and other requirements to run a water system.

“Westlake should do what is in the best interest of Westlake,” said Brown. “We believe, and this report supports us, that what is best for the residents of Westlake is to stay with CWD.”