



**American Water Works  
Association**

## Public Affairs Advisory

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The Authoritative Resource on Safe Water <sup>SM</sup>

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### *Public Affairs Advisory*

**TO:** AWWA Leadership  
All Utilities

**FROM:** Jack W. Hoffbuhr

**DATE:** April 3, 2007

<b>Who:</b>	<b>Center for American Progress</b>
<b>What:</b>	<b>Report highlighting security risks associated with transporting chlorine to water treatment plants</b>
<b>When:</b>	<b>Published at <a href="http://www.americanprogress.org">www.americanprogress.org</a></b>

Water systems should be aware of a report released April 2 by the Center for American Progress that states millions of Americans are at risk from chlorine gas railcars traveling to water and wastewater plants. The report, titled "Toxic Trains and the Terrorist Threat," was announced through a media conference call.

The full report is available as a PDF at:  
[www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/04/chemical\\_security\\_report.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/04/chemical_security_report.html) An audio link to the news conference is also provided.

Among the report's conclusions is that water and wastewater utilities should shift to safer and more secure treatment alternatives.

According to the Center for American Progress, the organization surveyed 62 water facilities that receive or previously received chlorine gas by rail. The report includes an appendix that names facilities still receiving chlorine gas by railcar and includes their "conversion status."

The report was released as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced its new requirements for chemical security plants. [www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr\\_1175527925540.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr_1175527925540.shtm)

Water and wastewater utilities should be prepared for media inquiries on their disinfectant practices and choices. Attached are suggested talking points for utilities.

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### **Suggested Talking Points**

1. [Our water utility] shares the Center for American Progress's desire to ensure public health protection while minimizing risks associated with transporting and storing chemicals.
2. Water providers use disinfectants to inactivate harmful microorganisms during the treatment process and to prevent contamination while the finished water is in the distribution system. While no single disinfectant is right for all systems, chlorine is necessary and required by state and federal regulations for many drinking water systems.
3. Water utilities recently completed vulnerability assessments to identify areas where security could be improved. Utilities completed that process and invested more than \$2 billion in physical security upgrades. They also closely examined procedures related to receiving and handling chemicals and made adjustments where appropriate.
4. A growing number of utilities are exploring the use of alternative disinfectants to reduce disinfection byproducts and reduce security risks. Decisions about which disinfectant to use must be made locally. Those decisions must take into account several factors, including source water quality, water treatment goals, regulatory requirements and storage capacity. Cost must also be examined, but it is just one of many considerations when determining the best way to assure safe water.

Please contact Greg Kail, senior public affairs manager, at 303-734-3410 or [gkail@awwa.org](mailto:gkail@awwa.org) if you have any questions.