



The ARAMARK Tower  
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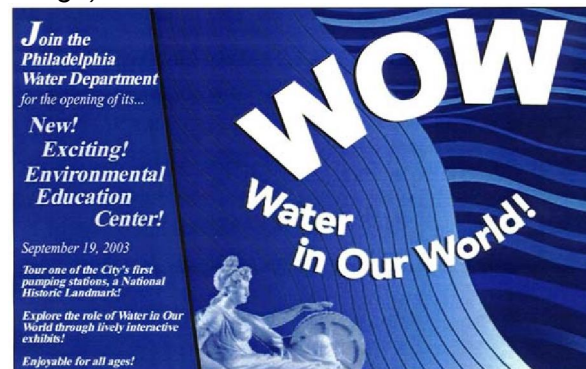
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Fresh Water In Our World**  
**Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center To Open in the Fall**

Philadelphia, August 1, 2003 - Mayor John Street and Philadelphia Water Department Commissioner Kumar Kishinchand have announced the September 19 ribbon-cutting for the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center. The Center will be officially open to the public on Saturday, September 20 as part of the 2nd annual Pennsylvania Coast Day. The learning Center is a \$5.6 million environmental education facility situated on the Schuylkill River in the Delaware River Basin. The Center is located on Water Works Drive, off of Kelly Drive in Fairmount Park.

Water in Our World is the main topic of the Center's exhibits for this world-class project in the National Historic Landmark Fairmount Water Works, where the Philadelphia Water Department will focus on the urban watershed and the incredible history of this site. The 9,000 square foot Interpretive Center situated at river level will also include a classroom, river balconies and an esplanade. Visitors may explore subjects further in the Water Lab. Final design, fabrication and installation of the exhibits are currently underway. The entire site is designed to be ADA accessible.

(Click the image below to view a full size image)



A major public affairs program of the Philadelphia Water Department, the Center's mission is to:

- educate citizens to understand their community and its environment,
- know how to guide its future, and
- understand the interconnections between their daily life, ecology and the natural environment.

Visitors will develop the necessary skills to take advantage of a host of educational and professional opportunities in science and technology, and be empowered to stabilize their communities, improve the quality of life in their city and region and develop a sense of pride in the place where they live, work and play.

"Water is a human survival tool and a vital resource that must be protected and preserved. The uniqueness of the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center's exhibits

and programs will not only provide lessons for Philadelphians, but are relevant to people everywhere." said Mayor John F. Street. "The relationship between the city's Water Department and our federal, state and private partners has turned our vision of The Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center into a reality and truly embodies the spirit of Philadelphia. We are grateful for everyone's commitment and hard work!"

Our goal is to further improve the region's water quality. We use the return of aquatic life to the rivers, in the 30 years since the 1972 Clean Water Act, as a true measure of success. In 1988, there were only eleven varieties of fish below the Fairmount Dam. By 1998, that number climbed to more than 40 varieties. Today, nearly 80 varieties of fish have returned due to municipal and industrial wastewater treatment. The Center will educate the public about their role in getting our water resources to the next level of purity -- reducing non-point source pollution -- and achieving the goal of fishable and swimmable water quality. Everything we do, individually and collectively affects the river -- the source of our drinking water. The river tells the truth about our stewardship and how seriously we take our responsibilities for the environment.

The Center's funds are being raised through the Fund for the Water Works, a partnership between the Fairmount Park Commission and the Philadelphia Water Department. The Philadelphia Water Department has supported the Center with over \$1 million in funding to date. The Delaware River Port Authority matched the William Penn Foundation \$1.1 million challenge grant for capital improvements to the site. PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources granted \$240,000 toward construction and PA Department of Community and Economic Development has pledged \$550,000 to complete construction. Two grants totaling \$225,000 from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency funded the exhibits design process and PA Department of Environmental Protection Growing Greener grants of \$1.4 million are funding the fabrication and installation of our exhibits. We have received several other generous contributions from Advisory Committee members, professional organizations and individuals. The project is also the result of a major collaboration with over 20 program partnerships with local and regional environmental and scientific organizations.

For more information about the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center contact:

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