



JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI:

THE CRITICAL NATURE OF WATER INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

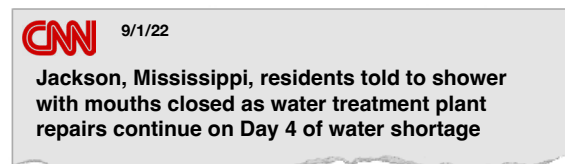
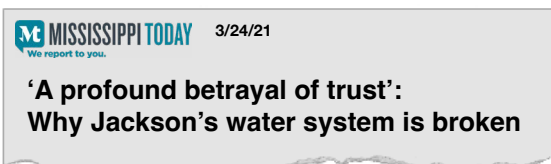
Americans deserve access to water that is safe, reliable and affordable, no matter their zip code or household income. It is the responsibility of America's water system operators – both public and private – to ensure that high-quality drinking water and dependable wastewater services are provided to the communities they serve.

To deliver these critical water services, operators must proactively maintain and update their system pumps, pipes and treatment facilities. However, some blindly advocate for keeping water rates artificially low at all costs – even if it jeopardizes the safety of the water. While keeping water affordable should be a top priority for system operators, water that is unsafe to drink is unjust at any price.

The crisis in Jackson, Mississippi is an unfortunate example of what happens when water infrastructure investments are delayed or neglected. After what has been described by state and local elected officials as “decades of deferred maintenance”¹ and “underinvestment”² in infrastructure, Jackson residents are now shouldering the burden in the form of unreliable service and unsafe water.

“Water is the most intimate relationship you have with the government... It comes into your house. You take it into your body. And when that fails – when the water is of poor quality or, in your case, just not delivered – it's a profound betrayal of trust. And it shakes you to your core.”³

The headlines say it all.



Strategic and proactive infrastructure investment is at the core of how America's water companies operate and is central to their commitment to ensuring customers can always count on the highest quality water services. Every year, America's largest water companies collectively invest \$3.9 billion into community water systems – investments that allow their customers and future generations to turn on the tap and know that the water is safe for their families.

Sources

1. "Jackson, Mississippi, residents told to shower with mouths closed as water treatment plant repairs continue on Day 4 of water shortage," [CNN](#), 9/1/22
2. "The water crisis in Jackson follows years of failure to fix an aging system," [NPR](#), 8/31/22
3. Manuel Teodoro, associate professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison's La Follette School of Public Affairs and Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, Mississippi Today, 3/24/21