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# LCA Press Release – 5/11/2017

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## **Judges Agree: Taste of Lehigh County Authority Water Best in Pennsylvania**

***Next up: “Best of the Best Taste Test Contest” this June at conference in Philly;  
LCA and City of Allentown also honored with 10-year award for “Partnership” participation***

ALLENTOWN, Pa. – The 55,000+ water customers of Lehigh County Authority (LCA) may not realize it, but every time they fill a tumbler with water from their faucet, they are about to enjoy the best municipal water in Pennsylvania.

Or so deemed two panels of judges at the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Pennsylvania Section conference held in April in Hershey, Pa.

About 500 representatives from Pennsylvania water utilities and related organizations attended the annual conference April 25<sup>th</sup> to April 27<sup>th</sup>. Nine water providers – including LCA -- decided that their water was tasty enough to be judged in two blind taste tests over two days.

The first – a people’s choice testing – whittled the competition down to LCA and four other finalists. The following day, LCA’s water was decreed the best tasting of the five finalists by a celebrity panel of testers that included Artie Tafoya (Owner, Appalachian Brewing Company in Harrisburg), Cornelius Johnson (Hershey Foods, Quality Assurance), Steve Dennis (Vice President, American Water Works Association, representing the California-Nevada Section), Gene Koontz (Past President, American Water Works Association) and Robert Dumais (AquaPipe, the event sponsor).

LCA’s water will compete in the national “Best of the Best Taste Test” competition at the AWWA conference, June 11-14 in Philadelphia, where about 10,000 water professionals from around the country will converge to share information about their mission to provide safe drinking water to their communities.

LCA draws its award-winning water from multiple sources to serve residents of Allentown and surrounding municipalities including Upper and Lower Macungie townships. Nearly all of LCA's water originates from groundwater, springs and surface water within the Little Lehigh Creek watershed, which allows the utility to provide a very consistent, high quality water to customers across its service area, said Liesel Gross, CEO of LCA.

“Our water is known for its clarity and mineral content, which typically ranges from about 12 to 16 grains per gallon. Minerals such as calcium and magnesium are naturally found in our water supply thanks to the carbonate geology in our region. They give our water an extra-crisp finish on the palate,” said Gross.

“Our advanced treatment processes and the painstaking care of our professionals preserve that taste and quality. I like our water best straight from the tap. In a glass with ice, there’s nothing better on a warm spring day!”

Apparently, the judges agreed.

LCA’s samples for the competition were taken from a customer’s home in Allentown in accordance with the contest rules.

Also at the conference in Hershey, LCA and the City of Allentown were honored with a 10-year award for continuous participation in the Partnership for Safe Water. This means that the water filtration plant in Allentown has met standards for safe drinking water that meet the “Partnership” standards, which are more stringent than federal or state standards for filter plant performance. The “partnership” is truly that -- an organization formed by six industry-leading water organizations that focus on helping utilities optimize their operations and advance the quality of our product. More information about the Partnership is available at: <https://www.awwa.org/resources-tools/water-and-wastewater-utility-management/partnership-for-safe-water.aspx>

### **About Lehigh County Authority**

Lehigh County Authority (LCA) is a public water and wastewater utility committed to providing unparalleled service to residents and businesses. Its 150 LCA employees strive to meet this commitment through an unwavering focus on customers’ needs and a high level of professionalism, quality and flexibility.

LCA provides water service to more than 55,000 residential and commercial properties throughout Lehigh and Northampton counties, including the City of Allentown, and sewer service to about 35,000 properties, primarily in the City of Allentown. LCA also provides wholesale water and sewer services in many areas of western and northern Lehigh County. The estimated total population served by LCA systems about 200,000. A nonprofit, public agency, LCA was founded in 1966 by the County of Lehigh and is governed by a nine-member board of directors appointed by the County.

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