

# OUTREACH, COMMUNICATION, AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The WSTB has a long history of outreach and dissemination activities designed to make the knowledge contained in WSTB reports available to a wider audience, both nationally and globally. Its outreach, education, and communication activities involve print and the internet. Three of these activities are described below.

The WSTB Water Information Center (WIC) is a web portal of over 100 National Academies reports on water-related issues that have applications both in the United States and internationally. Launched in 2004, the WIC aims to provide information to assist decision makers, scientists, engineers, and water managers on topics such as water supply and sanitation, groundwater remediation, hydrologic hazards, river basin management, and general information about water science and technology. The WIC has been featured in and linked to many newsletters and websites. The project was supported by the National Academies Presidents Day Fund (to access the WIC, please visit: <http://water.nationalacademies.org>).

A second activity is a virtual, multimedia exhibit entitled “Safe Water is Essential.” Begun in 2007, this project was initiated in cooperation with The Marian Koshland Science Museum and the Academies Office of International Affairs to illustrate the importance of safe drinking water around the world. The exhibit features information panels on global water availability, water quality, water demand and distribution, and water treatment technologies. The website also has interactive functionality. For example, visitors to the site can explore water treatment options in a series of simple decision-making scenarios that draw from the results of the Academies’ water-related reports. Case studies also are presented to allow users to compare the situations in different parts of the world. The exhibit also is available on DVD. Thousands of DVDs have been distributed globally to water managers, field practitioners, and nongovernmental organizations with interest in safe drinking water. Both virtually and on DVDs, Safe Water Is Essential can be viewed in five languages: English, French, Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic. The project was funded by Kenneth Behring and the Global Health and Education Foundation (to access the site, please visit: <http://drinking-water.org>).

A third product from the WSTB is an educational booklet entitled “Drinking Water: Understanding the Science and Policy Behind a Critical Resource.” This booklet was created as a collaborative effort between the WSTB and the communication office of the board’s Division on Earth and Life Studies. It was designed to help raise awareness of the importance of drinking water supplies and the accomplishments of the water engineering and treatment sectors, as well as to highlight WSTB reports related to drinking water supply, treatment, and delivery. The booklet poses and discusses questions such as: Where do drinking water supplies come from? How is water treated before it gets to the tap? What laws and regulations govern the quality of drinking water? A pdf of the booklet is available at: [http://dels.nas.edu/dels/rpt\\_briefs/drinking\\_water.pdf](http://dels.nas.edu/dels/rpt_briefs/drinking_water.pdf).

