



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

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news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES ALMOST \$3.5 MILLION IN OPPORTUNITY RETURNS FUNDING TO INSTALL NEW WATER TREATMENT PLANT AND SPUR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN BATAVIA

SPRINGFIELD - Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced that the City of Batavia in Kane County has received a nearly **\$3.5 million** loan for design and construction of a central water treatment plant for its public water supply. The funding is being provided through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) as part of *Opportunity Returns*, Governor Blagojevich's economic development plan designed to spur economic growth and create jobs in the Northeast region that will be unveiled in the coming months.

"Though this new treatment facility is vital to protecting the health of Batavia residents, it will also strengthen the community's infrastructure, which we all know is critical to attracting and supporting new business. Through targeted investments such as this one in Batavia, *Opportunity Returns* is giving communities the tools they need to grow and prosper," Governor Blagojevich said.

Batavia requested the funding for the new treatment plant in order to remove iron and manganese from its shallow well source water and radionuclides from its deep well source water. The project will also provide for necessary treatment equipment to remove naturally occurring radionuclides from the city's public drinking water supply to meet the federal radium standard.

The project is the first phase of a multi-phase upgrade of the city's public water supply in its effort to provide all customers with drinking water that meets federal and state standards. Batavia will also receive a \$143,605 grant from the U.S. EPA to cover design and engineering costs associated with the project.

The loan is being made from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's revolving loan program that utilizes federal and state funding to provide loans for eligible drinking water and waste water treatment projects at half the market interest rate. Interest paid on the 20-year loans is returned to the fund to support other low interest loans.

"The Illinois EPA is committed to ensuring that all persons served by community water supplies receive water that is consistently safe to drink, and we are pleased to be able to assist another community in meeting the radium standard. This loan program results in significant savings for local communities in constructing the facilities needed to meet growth and comply with environmental standards," Illinois EPA Director Renee Cipriano said.

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Governor Blagojevich noted that 80 percent of the funding for the loan program comes from the federal government, and he has urged Illinois' Congressional delegation to ensure there is adequate federal funding to continue assisting communities in upgrading this vital infrastructure for the benefit of their citizens and the environment.

The *Opportunity Returns* regional economic development plan is the most aggressive, comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois' history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn't work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions – finding areas with common economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. This grassroots effort is a product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. *Opportunity Returns* contains tangible actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to business. Each plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from. He will be announcing the plan for the Northeast regions in the coming months.

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