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**IAPMO Renews MOU with U.S. EPA, Partner Organizations
on Improving Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems**

Washington, D.C. (Dec. 11, 2023) — Continuing a successful partnership that began nearly a decade ago, the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO®) has renewed its participation in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to collaborate on improving the overall performance and management of decentralized wastewater treatment systems.

EPA and the MOU partners — representing national organizations across the wastewater and sanitation industry, state and local governments, and federal agencies — are looking to develop effective mechanisms for information exchange on program activities, regulations, and plans for engaging members in decentralized system activities; continue collaborative efforts to develop training, credentialing, and certification programs designed to improve consistency and competency among practitioners. Additionally, they aim to continue a public awareness effort to promote improved system performance and management; and develop materials for organizations interested in considering, planning or implementing decentralized systems for community wastewater treatment needs.

Other partners include the World Health Organization (WHO) and DigDeep, with whom IAPMO partners regularly to educate the public and improve sanitary conditions and access to drinking water.

IAPMO serves as a technical liaison for the WHO and was a technical advisory group member on its global guidance on reducing lead in drinking water. DigDeep and IAPMO's charitable arm, the International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Foundation (IWSH), have teamed up to bring clean, running water to thousands of families on the Navajo Nation, Appalachia, and the Texas border.

"Millions of Americans rely on decentralized systems for their water and sanitation access," Vice President of Government Relations Christopher Lindsay said. "For years IAPMO has been proud to partner with EPA and the partnership in creating new opportunities to effectively deliver these services — particularly to rural and underserved communities. We look forward to continuing to bring new partners into this effort and expanding our work to help ensure that no household gets left behind."

According to recent studies, 25 percent of all U.S. households (or one in four homes) are served by individual decentralized systems, which are used for existing and new homes as well as commercial or large residential settings. Additionally, a study conducted in 2020 by the National Environmental Services Center found that approximately one-third of new single-family homes built from 2015 to 2018 utilize decentralized systems.

The MOU was signed Dec. 5 during a two-day meeting at EPA headquarters in Washington, D.C., that included a group discussion on the next steps for the partnership and an update on EPA's Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap initiative.

To learn more about EPA's Decentralized Wastewater Partnership, visit <https://www.epa.gov/septic/epas-decentralized-wastewater-partnership>.

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