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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Peace River / Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Receives  
State Awards for its Water Treatment Plant and Chief Operator**

Sarasota, Fla. – May 27, 2003 – The Peace River / Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority (Authority) has recently been named Most Improved Water Treatment Plant by the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association (FSAWWA). Grady Sorah, the chief operator of the Authority's water treatment plant for more than 22 years, was also recognized with the FSAWWA's Outstanding Water Treatment Plant Operator award.

“These fantastic achievements by the facility staff are significant,” says Patrick J. Lehman, executive director of the Authority. “The Authority strives every day to provide a safe, quality product to our members in an efficient way. It's nice to be recognized for going above and beyond standard practices.”

Criteria evaluated by the FSAWWA for Most Improved Treatment Plant included water quality standards, operation accountability, maintenance of treatment plant equipment, education and professionalism of staff, safety records and emergency preparedness. The Authority was able to illustrate its exceptional advances in all of the categories considered.

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Sorah was recognized Outstanding Water Treatment Plant Operator due to his incredible leadership philosophy as well as his commitment to continuing education and professional development.

“Grady is an extraordinary asset to our team and to the water industry in Florida,” says Lehman. “His expertise and great attitude have successfully led the Authority through many rule changes that have occurred over the last several years.”

The Authority recently completed the construction of an expansion to the Peace River Regional Water Supply Facility. This expansion allowed the water treatment facility to increase production capacity from 12 to 24 million gallons per day. With this construction project, completed in May 2002, the Authority is able to supply more needed water to the growing population in the region.

The AWWA is the largest organization of water supply professionals in the world. With more than 50,000 members, the AWWA is represented by the entire drinking water community of treatment plant operators, scientists, environmentalists, regulators and others.

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**\*\*\* *About the Peace River / Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority***

The Authority works endlessly to fulfill its mission of providing its members with reliable supplies of high-quality water in a way that both protects and preserves the environment. Each day the Authority provides 16 million gallons of water to the people in our region. More information is available at

[www.regionalwater.org](http://www.regionalwater.org).