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## **News Release**

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### **AUB WATER PLANT EARNS JULIAN FLEMING AWARD; TOP PLANT IN STATE FOR 2006**

ATHENS, Tenn. – The team of professionals that supplies Athens with clean, fresh drinking water has received top honors from the Tennessee Water and Wastewater Association (TWWA).

At its recent fall meeting in Chattanooga, the executive board of TWWA named Athens Utilities Board's Vernon S. Wade Water Filter Plant the state's top water plant for 2006.

The four AUB employees responsible for the plant's round-the-clock operations—Jeff Ferguson, Kevin Moses, Larry Burger and Richie Layman—received the 2006 Julian Fleming Award for their handling of the plant and the quality of the water produced.

TWWA state chairman Casey Hall said in presenting the award that the exceptional quality of water produced at the AUB plant is a direct reflection of the people who operate it.

“The operators of AUB's water filter plant are some of the best in the business,” Hall said.

A key indication of the filter plant's efficiency is water clarity, or turbidity, measured in units called NTUs.

“AUB's plant consistently produces finished water in the 0.05-0.06 NTU range. Very few water treatment plants anywhere in America can consistently produce water of this quality,” Hall said.

AUB Water and Wastewater Superintendent Jill Davis said that Athens is fortunate to have such a team of water professionals in place.

“I hope everyone in our community realizes what an accomplishment this is for the plant operators and how fortunate we are to have such a dedicated group of professionals,” she said. “Our water filter plant is almost 40 years old, but these guys keep it running and looking like a new facility.”

There is a saying in the water industry that ‘water is the oil of the 21<sup>st</sup> century’ because high quality drinking water is becoming scarce in many regions worldwide.

“Based on that, I'd say our community is water rich thanks to people like Jeff, Kevin, Larry, and Richie,” Davis said.

In addition to finished water quality, the award criteria include housekeeping of the plant, its laboratory and equipment, record keeping and accuracy, safety, and a zero-incidence of any violations noted by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.