



**THE
OHIO RIVER
VALLEY WATER
SANITATION
COMMISSION**

Nineteen Hundred and Ninety

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*As of April 1, 1991

TO

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THE HONORABLE W. GASTON CAPERTON III, Governor of West Virginia

AND

THE HONORABLE GEORGE H.W. BUSH, President of the United States

The Commissioners of the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) — an interstate compact water pollution control commission created jointly in 1948 by the State of Illinois, the State of Indiana, The Commonwealth of Kentucky, the State of New York, the State of Ohio, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of West Virginia, with the approval of the Congress of the United States — respectfully submit the following report of the Commission's activities in 1990.



*ORSANCO headquarters are
located at 49 E. Fourth St.,
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(513)421-1151*

Chairman's Report

ORSANCO — LEADING THE WAY

Across the country and around the world, 1990 witnessed a resurgence of concern for the environment. As the United States celebrated the 20th anniversary of Earth Day, the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission celebrated its 42nd year of working to improve the water quality of the Ohio River Valley. Now, as ORSANCO enters the final decade of the 20th century, we are evaluating what we have accomplished and setting new goals to insure continued improvements in the water quality of the Ohio River and its major tributaries.

When the Commission was created in 1948, its initial goals to improve water quality were very easy to establish. Most cities and industries discharged their wastes untreated into the rivers. Our streams were devoid of oxygen, laden with bacteria and toxic chemicals, incapable of supporting a balanced aquatic community and unsuitable for basic human uses. The Ohio River was virtually an open sewer.

Today, most of these gross pollution problems have been addressed. Almost 99 percent of the communities which discharge wastes to the Ohio River have achieved secondary wastewater treatment, fish populations are rebounding, and the river is being used for recreational purposes more than ever before.

The problems facing the Ohio River today are of a different nature, and a new approach to achieving further water quality improvements is needed. ORSANCO must take the lead in establishing new goals and



programs to further reduce pollution.

With point sources successfully regulated, it is clearly documented that the greatest amount of pollution to the Ohio River is now from nonpoint sources, including agriculture, resource extraction, and urban runoff. If we are to continue to make real progress in improving water

