



ISRAEL'S NEW HORIZONS WATER

Israel is a global leader in water management and technology development.

Despite a desert climate and a shortage of fresh water, in 2014 Israel effectively became “water secure.” Israel accomplished this remarkable feat through technological and infrastructure breakthroughs in desalination, drip irrigation, efficient piping, water recycling, and agricultural innovations. Today, Israel provides water to its neighbors and shares with the world powerful new tools to alleviate drought, reduce poverty, and improve the environment.

Water management is a key priority of the Israeli government.

Israel has long approached water infrastructure as a critical investment. In the midst of a 1999 drought, Israel implemented an emergency plan to address water usage nationwide. The result was a framework to build Israel's first large-scale seawater desalination plant, which opened in 2005. Four more plants have since opened. Desalination now provides approximately 40 percent of Israel's entire water supply. These efforts augment the government's efforts to reclaim wastewater—today an estimated 86 percent of all wastewater is reused in agriculture. In addition, the government aggressively applies technology to detect and minimize water lost from leaking pipes.

America looks to Israel to help minimize its water shortfalls.

Dozens of U.S. states are currently experiencing abnormally dry conditions and water shortfalls. Due to exceptional dryness and record heat, California has been forced to impose severe water restrictions on its citizens. Similarly, cash-strapped cities on the East Coast and in the Midwest are grappling with a rapidly deteriorating, century-old water infrastructure which loses billions of gallons of clean drinking water each year due to leaking pipes. Accordingly, several U.S. states have signed agreements with public and private Israeli institutions to apply the Jewish state's technologies and expertise to these serious problems.

AIPAC actively works to advance U.S.-Israel water cooperation.

In 2014, AIPAC supported former Sen. Mary Landrieu's (D-LA) and Sen. Lisa Murkowski's (R-AK) legislation authorizing the establishment of the U.S.-Israel Center of Excellence in energy and water. The bill seeks to bring the countries together at the public, private and academic levels in joint research and development of new technologies. AIPAC has also worked with Congress to promote the Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation (BIRD), which stimulates and promotes industrial R&D of mutual benefit to the U.S. and Israel. In 2014, AIPAC supported a successful bipartisan, bicameral initiative to extend that program to include collaborative water projects.