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"Sanitation, Water and Health"

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This article focuses on sanitation, health and hygiene as themes of the 5th IWHA conference 2007. It investigates how understanding of the key concepts and the links between health, water and sanitation has changed over time. It identifies some of the key drivers that prompted these changes. The history of sanitation and hygiene is the history of epidemiology, medicine and public health, as well as the history of industrialisation, urbanisation and related urban misery. Since the first urban settlements appeared sanitation has also been linked to drainage and flood management. The conference papers and presentations discussed in this theme article provide insights into sanitation, health, water and urban development, including such specific themes as flood and rainwater management. The article initially focuses on early civilisations, then on health, broadening the scope to questions relating to economics and institutions in an attempt to identify a range of other drivers.

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