Karen Mancl, professor, Ohio State University, is being honored for her commitment to eliminating the discharge of water pollutants from homes, communities and food industries in rural America.

Mancl is a professor of food, agricultural, and biological engineering and a water quality specialist at Ohio State University (OSU). She conducts research and teaches courses in rural infrastructure and onsite wastewater treatment. She established the Soil, Environment, Technology Learning Lab, which is a research and teaching facility at OSU. She also conducts international policy research on US/China environmental issues with the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars. In 2023, Mancl was named a Wilson Center Fellow to study renewed agricultural collaboration between the United States and China.

Mancl's extensive work has resulted in a design manual series on low-cost, onsite wastewater treatment systems. The research and manuals introduced technologies such as mound, sand bioreactor, and onsite spray wastewater treatment systems and became the basis for new Ohio wastewater regulations. Two manuals were also published in Chinese and she worked with the Shandong Academy of Agricultural Sciences to bring low-cost wastewater treatment to rural China. Research on treatment of food processing wastewater resulted in the construction and operation of a first of its kind full-scale wastewater treatment system at an Ohio meat processing plant. Over the first decade of operation, the system has met all effluent standards. Mancl's current work is helping to continue dialogue between the United States and China on climate change issues in agriculture.

Mancl is a 39-year member of ASABE. She was previously the chair of the ASABE Soil and Water Division. She is also a past president and founding member of the Ohio Onsite Wastewater Association. She maintains membership with the Water Environment Federation, the American Water Works Association, and the Ohio Academy of Science.

Mancl has authored or coauthored many publications, including peer-reviewed papers, conference proceeding papers, and extension publications. Throughout her career, Mancl has received a number of awards including 20 ASABE Educational Aids Blue Ribbon awards. She received the Wisconsin Governor's award for Children and Youth, a Distinguished Alumni award from the University of Wisconsin Green Bay. She has also received several awards from Ohio State University including the diversity award from the College of Food, Agriculture, and Environment Science and a mentoring award from the College of Engineering. She received a distinguished service award from both the Ohio Onsite Wastewater Association and Water Management Association of Ohio.