



REGULATED WATER AND WASTEWATER _____ (JUNE 2025)

Background

The Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (“Division”) is charged with regulating six (6) of the state’s water utilities and one of its wastewater utilities.¹ The Division is responsible for ensuring that utilities charge reasonable rates to their customers for safe, reasonable, and adequate water services.²

The Rhode Island Department of Health’s regulations define what constitutes a “Public Water System.” Based on these criteria, there are over four hundred (400) public water systems in Rhode Island. Of these, twenty-eight (28) are required to file plans with the state’s Water Resource Management Board. Of those, only six (6) qualify as a regulated utility under Rhode Island law.

Precisely, R.I. Gen. Laws §39-1-2 (a) (20) defines a regulated water utility as “... [A] public waterworks or water service owned and furnished by any city, town, water district, fire district, or any other municipal or quasi-municipal corporation that sells water, on a wholesale or retail basis, inside and outside its territorial limits... [but]...shall not be construed as a public utility if it has fewer than one-thousand five hundred (1,500) total customer-service connections and provided outside sales do not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total water service connections or volumetric sales and provided the price charged to outside customers, per unit of water, is not greater than the price charged to inside customers for the same unit of water...”

The water utilities that fall within the purview of the Division include the City of Newport Water Department, Kent County Water Authority, the Providence Water Supply Board, Woonsocket Water Division, Veolia Water Rhode Island, and the Pawtucket Water Supply Board. The Narragansett Bay Commission is the only wastewater utility that falls within the regulatory authority of the Division. Below is a list of the salient facts concerning each of the regulated utilities.

¹ See R.I. Gen. Laws §39-2-1.

² The Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”), a quasi-judicial tribunal, holds investigational hearings governing the rates, tariffs, and charges of these regulated water and wastewater utilities, ultimately approving what rates will be charged to customers.

WATER UTILITIES

City of Newport Water Department

Authority: Newport, Rhode Island, Municipal Ordinance §2.23.010

Governance: Division of the City of Newport's Department of Utilities. Owned and operated by the City of Newport since 1936.

Water Sources: Nine surface reservoirs throughout Aquidneck Island and the neighboring towns of Little Compton and Tiverton. The Newport Water Department operates two water treatment facilities – the Station No. 1 Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and the Lawton Valley WTP.

Number of Customers: Approximately 14,895 active service accounts (13,129 residential, 1,764 commercial, 18 governmental, 1 other) wholesale customers include the Portsmouth Water and Fire District and Newport Naval Station.

Approved Revenue Level: \$20,101,419 effective July 1, 2022 (PUC Docket No. 4933).

Kent County Water Authority

Authority: The Kent County Water Authority ("Authority") was created by Chapter 1740 of the January Session of 1946 of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, approved on April 24, 1946 and organized on July 8, 1946. Laws governing the Authority are provided for under R.I. Gen. Laws §39-16, *et seq.*

Governance: 7-member board. Appointments: 1 East Greenwich, 2 Warwick, 2 Coventry, 2 West Warwick.

Water Sources: During the summer months, the Kent County Water Authority purchases approximately 75 percent of its water from the Providence Water Supply Board. In the winter months, the Kent County Water Authority purchases approximately 40 percent of its water from the Providence Water Supply Board. The remainder of the water supplied to the System is produced from four gravel-packed wells owned by the Authority and located in two well fields. One of the wells is located in East Greenwich and derives its water from the Hunt River Aquifer and three are located in Coventry and derive water from the Mishnock Aquifer. The Spring Lake Well in Coventry is currently inactive but is available for emergency use.

Number of Customers: Approximately 29,300 service accounts (including 25,434 residential, 1,472 commercial/industrial, and 256 government users) serving a population of approximately 88,780 people.

Approved Revenue Level: \$21,634,379 effective September 1, 2020 (PUC Docket No. 5012).

Providence Water Supply Board

Authority: The Providence Water Supply Board (“Board”) was created by Chapter 1278 of the January Session of 1915 of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, approved April 25, 1915. The current composition of the Board was established under Chapter 832 of the January Session of 1940 of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, approved April 26, 1940.

Governance: Seven-member board of directors. Four members are appointed by the mayor of Providence, two members are appointed by the city council and the city's finance director is an ex-officio member.

Water Sources: A reservoir complex consisting of the Scituate Reservoir and five smaller tributary reservoirs: the Regulating, Barden, Moswansicut, Ponaganset, and Westconnaug reservoirs. The complex has a total storage capacity of 41.3 billion gallons. All water is treated at the Philip J. Holton Water Purification Plant located in Scituate, Rhode Island.

Number of Customers: Approximately 318,819 residential, commercial, and industrial accounts through 77,644 metered service connections. Wholesale customers include Bristol County Water Authority, East Providence Water Utilities Division, Greenville Water District, Kent County Water Authority, Lincoln Water Commission, Smithfield Water Supply Board, and Warwick Water Department. Through these wholesale interconnections, the following communities are served: East Providence, Lincoln, Smithfield, Coventry, Cranston, East Greenwich, Scituate, Warwick, West Greenwich, West Warwick, Bristol, Barrington, and Warren.

Approved Revenue Level: Effective August 25, 2020, for Rate Year 2021, \$83,456,144; for Rate Year 2022, \$87,766,290 (PUC Docket No. 4994).

Woonsocket Water Division

Authority: Woonsocket, Rhode Island, Municipal Charter Art. 2, §2 establishes the general responsibilities for the City of Woonsocket’s Department of Public Works.

Governance: Owned by the City of Woonsocket and operated by the Department of Public Works’ Woonsocket Water Division.

Water Sources: The City of Woonsocket has three source water supply reservoirs: Reservoir No. 1, Reservoir No. 3, and Harris Pond Reservoir. Construction of the Jillson Avenue Treatment Plant was completed in 2021 and went online in July 2021.

Number of Customers: The service population of 45,840 is comprised of approximately 9,820 services throughout the City of Woonsocket including parts of the towns of North Smithfield, RI, Cumberland, RI, Blackstone, MA, and Bellingham, MA. Wholesale customers include portions of North Smithfield, RI including emergency connections with Cumberland, RI, and Lincoln, RI.

Approved Revenue Level: \$11,642,070, effective October 1, 2024 (PUC Docket No. 24-19-WW/4879).

Veolia Water Rhode Island

Authority: Veolia is organized as a corporation under the laws of the State of Rhode Island.

Governance: Veolia, Paramus, New Jersey, is a 100% subsidiary of Veolia Utility Resources LLC, Paramus, New Jersey.

Water Sources: The singular source of raw water supply for the Veolia water system is groundwater. Two well fields located off Tuckertown Road in South Kingstown, RI accommodate 100% of the service area demand. Both well fields draw water from the Mink Brook Aquifer.

Number of Customers: The service population is comprised of 19,617 individuals with approximately 8,699 connections that supply water to portions of the Towns of South Kingstown, Narragansett, and the Village of Point Judith. Wholesale customers include portions of Narragansett and South Kingstown.

Approved Revenue Level: \$5,435,695 effective May 7, 2020 (PUC Docket No. 4800).

Pawtucket Water Supply Board

Authority: The Pawtucket Water Supply Board ("PWSB") was created via the City's Home Rule Charter.

Governance: Six-member board of directors. One member of the City Council is elected by the council, four members are appointed by the mayor subject to the approval of the city council and the city's finance director is an ex-officio member.

Water Sources: The PWSB system's source water is derived from the Abbott Run watershed and its underlying aquifer, where the PWSB operates 4 surface water reservoirs along with 8 active and 2 inactive groundwater wells. The four surface water reservoirs (in order proceeding down the watershed) include Diamond Hill Reservoir, Arnold Mills Reservoir, Robin Hollow Pond, and Happy Hollow Pond with a combined storage capacity of 4,970 million gallons.

Number of Customers: Approximately 23,891 service connections in Pawtucket, Central Falls, and the Valley Falls section of Cumberland serving a population of approximately 98,120. Wholesale customers include the Town of Cumberland.

Approved Revenue Level: \$21,786,306, effective July 1, 2024; \$21,862,745; effective July 1, 2025; \$22,696,747; effective July 1, 2026 (PUC Docket No. 23-30-WW).

WASTEWATER UTILITIES

Narragansett Bay Commission

Authority: The Narragansett Bay Commission (“NBC”) was created pursuant to the R.I. Public Laws 1980, Chapter 342 §1 by the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island during the 1980 legislative session. Laws governing the NBC are provided for under R.I. Gen. Laws. §46-25, *et seq.*

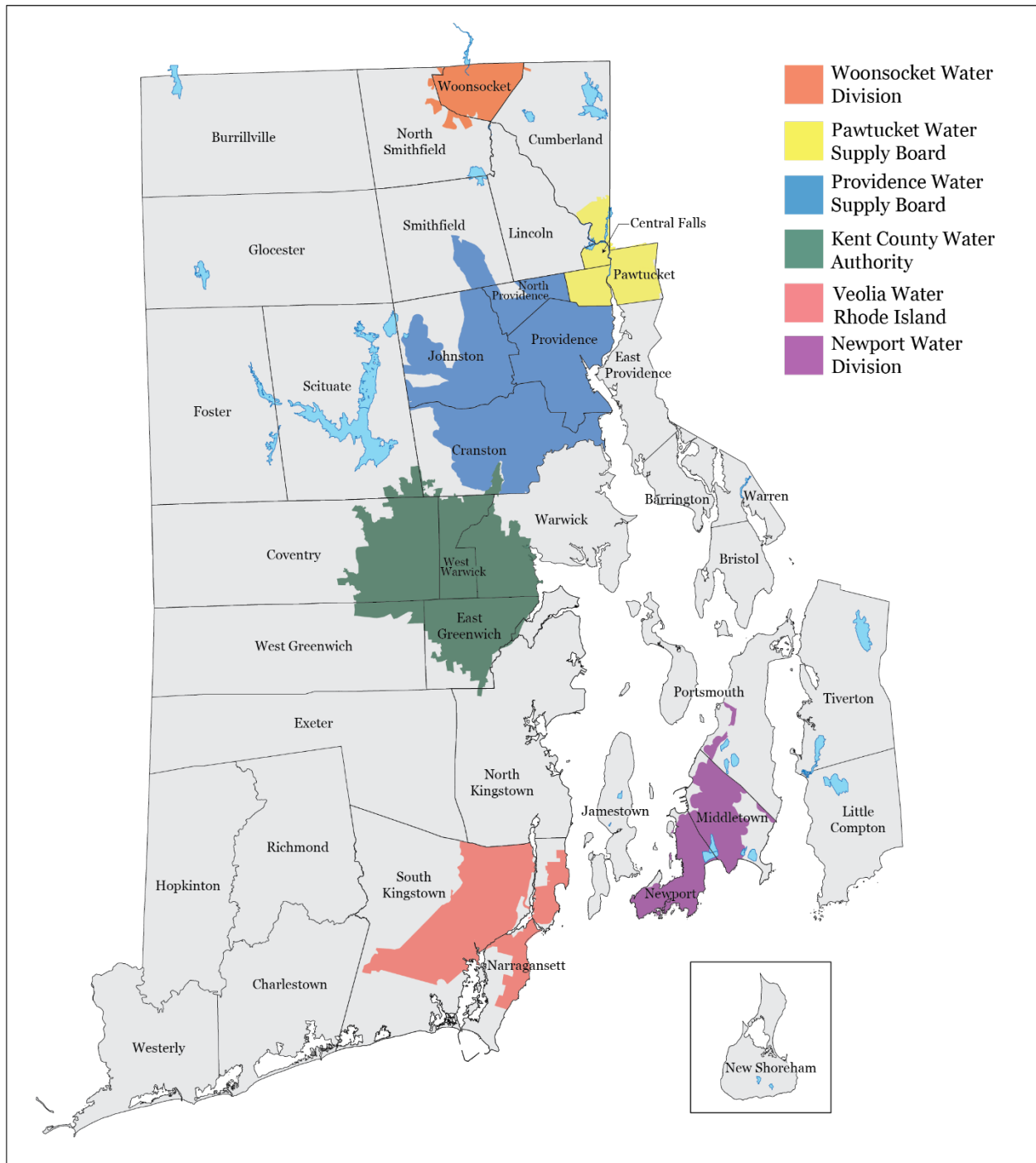
Governance: 19-member board. 10 gubernatorial appointments, 2 appointments by the mayor of Providence, and 1 member appointment by the mayors of the city/town(s) of Johnston, Pawtucket, Cumberland, Lincoln, Central Falls, and East Providence.

Number of Customers: Approximately 394,000 residents and approximately 7,700 businesses in the metropolitan Providence and Blackstone Valley areas. There exists a total of 85,129 service connections (77,468 residential, 218 industrials, 7,443 commercial).

Approved Revenue Level: \$112,901,346 effective August 1, 2023 (PUC Docket No. 22-47-WW).



Rhode Island Regulated Water Utility Districts



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