

Work for Water Coalition

New England
Water
Workforce
Development
Initiative

Why? Silver Tsunami



The catalyst...



WORK FOR WATER





NEWWA's Initiative

Committee representing all six NE States

Conducted surveys, aggregated data

Conducted a LOT of research regarding educational opportunities

COVID slowed things down

Gathered a wealth of information...then hit a wall

NEWEA's Initiative



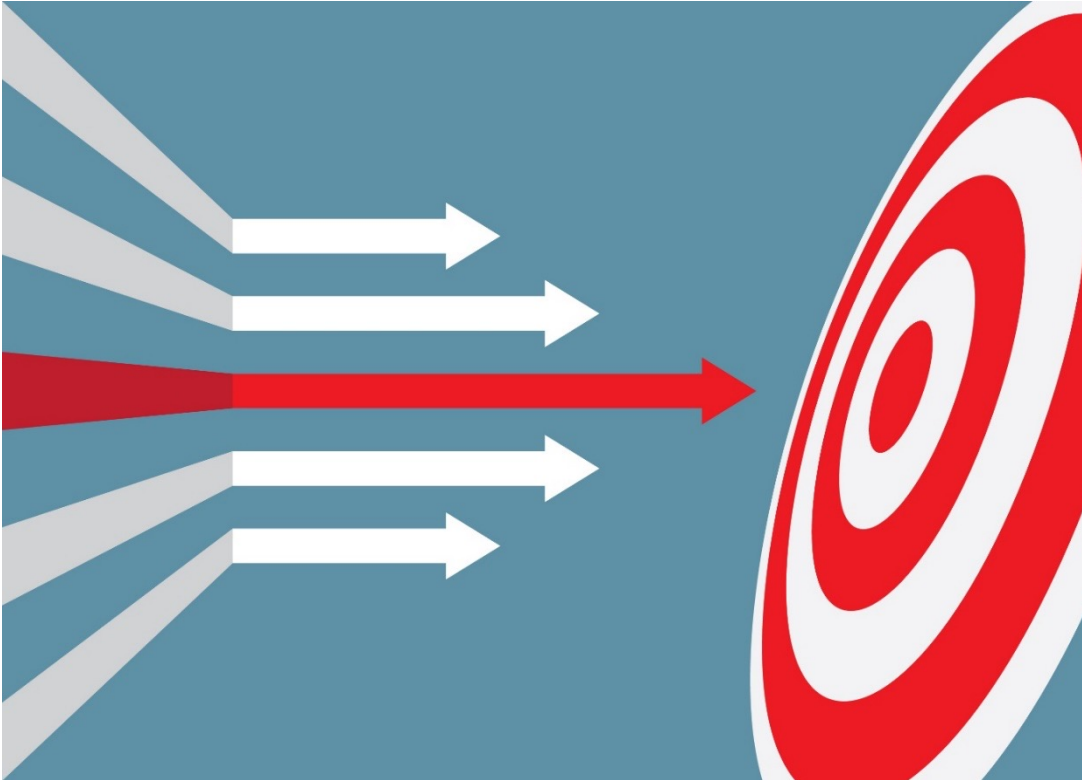
NEWEA
WORKING FOR WATER QUALITY

Established Workforce Development Committee to support six New England states

Identified and review workforce development programs, and prioritized those that are effective

Focused on recruiting and retaining college, university, and trade school students, as well as veterans, operators, YPs, opportunity youths, and other demographics to work in the clean water profession

Elevate the Water Profession



Multiple
initiatives,
with one
goal...



Let's grow this party!

The Invitees/Partners:

CLEAN WATER

CT WEA

GMWEA

MA WEA

ME WEA

NHWPCA

RICWA

DRINKING WATER

CT AWWA

GMWEA

MWWA

MWUA

NHWWA

RIWWA

Creation of Leadership Groups

A. Leadership Committee

- Executive Directors of NEWEA and NEWWA
- Industry Leaders in Drinking Water and Clean Water

B. Steering Committee

- Utility Representatives of Drinking Water and Clean Water Professional Organizations in 6 New England states



What next?

HIRE A CONSULTANT!

Phase I

Identification of Workforce Priorities

January-April
2023



On-line Water Workforce Needs
Assessment



Leadership Group and Steering
Committee meetings



Analysis of data previously collected
by NEWWA



Video-Conversations with Steering
Committee members

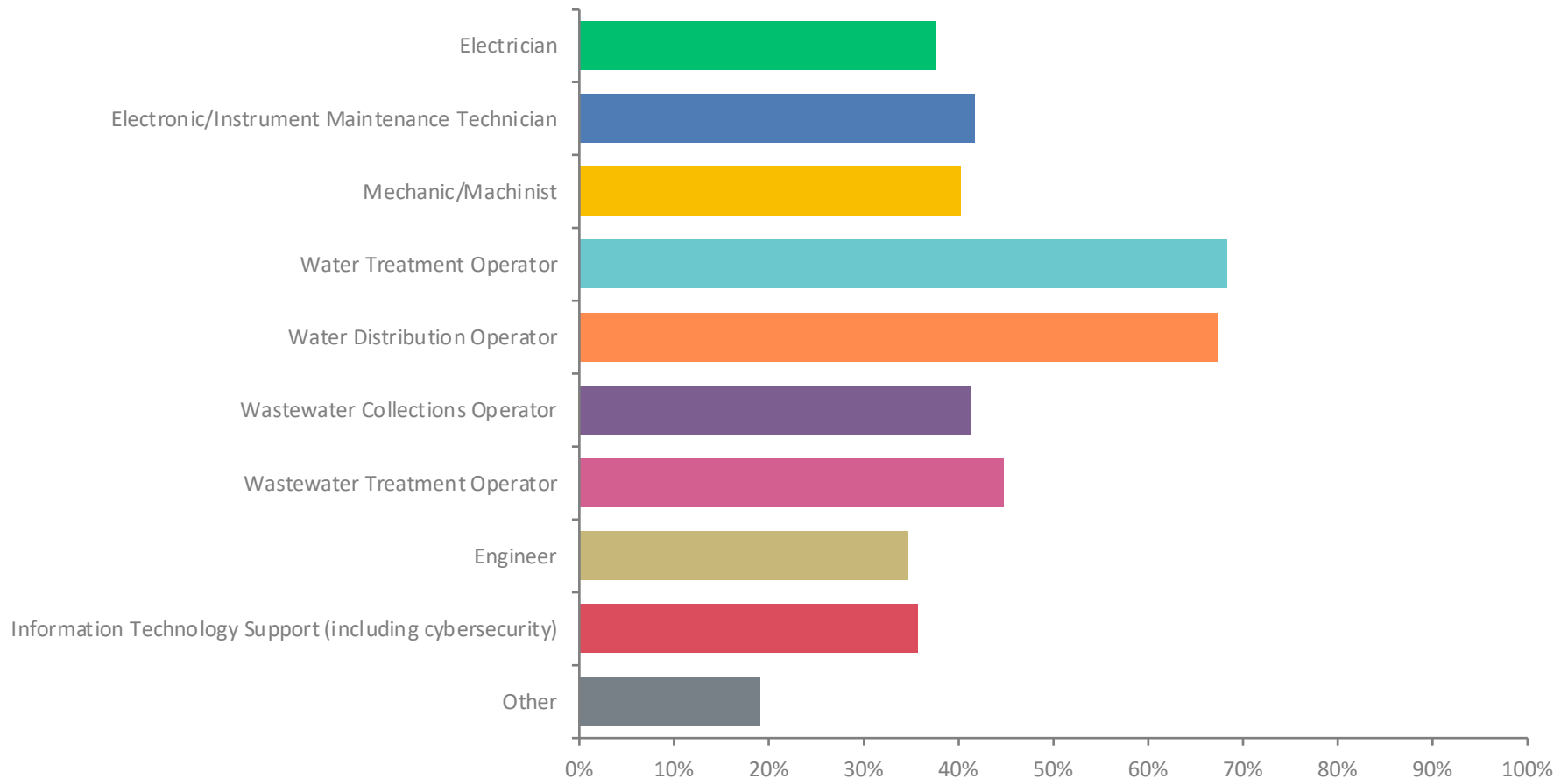


In-person workshops

New England Drinking Water/Clean Water Workforce Needs Assessment

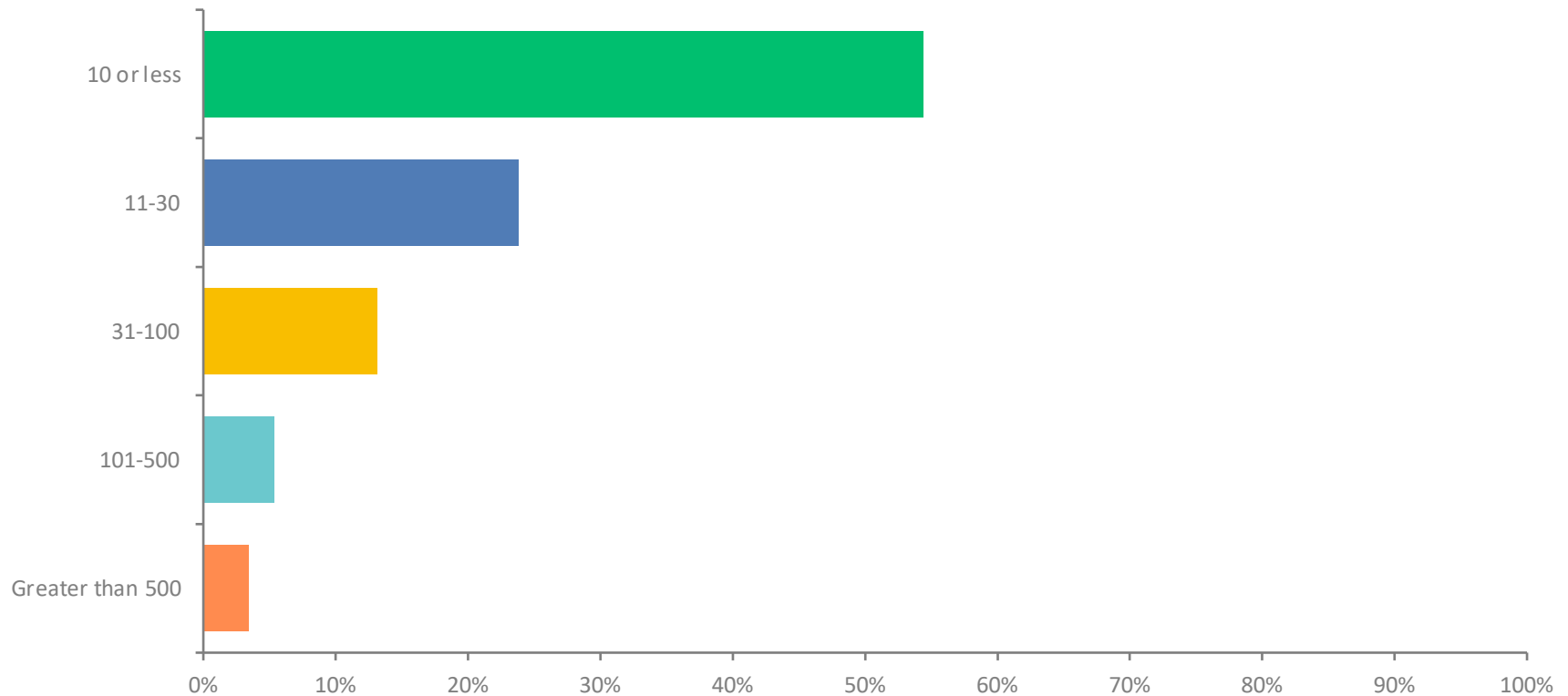
On-Line Survey

206 utilities responded



Categories defined as mission-critical

ANSWERED: 199 SKIPPED: 7



The largest category of respondents in terms of number of employees was 10 employees or less

ANSWERED: 206 SKIPPED: 0



Research on successes, challenges, and costs associated with workforce initiatives with similar goals



Analysis of potential organizational structures and funding opportunities

Phase II Learning from Other Collaboratives

March-
September
2023

Collaborative Efforts Investigated

- BAYWORK (CA)
- IEWorks! (CA)
- Bay Area Consortium for Water/Wastewater Education (BACWWE)
- Water Tower (Georgia)
- Inland Empire Water Utilities Internship (CA)
- San Diego County Water Authority (with 24 member agencies)/ Center for Water Studies
- Water Energy Education Alliance (WEEA)
Municipal Water District of Orange County



Phase III

September – December 2023

Development of Strategic Plan

- Video-conference meetings to discuss workforce strategies
- In-person workshop to discuss Draft Roadmap and proposed organizational structure
- Draft Strategic Plan
- Final text for Strategic Plan



Draft Roadmap = Strategies & Committees

1. Coordinated Outreach
2. Coordinated Recruitment
3. Collaborative Training
4. Effective Incentives
5. Effective Communication

Coordinated Outreach Committee

Spreading engaging information to communities, individuals, and organizations through a warm, high-contact approach combined with top-quality communication products on the importance of the water industry, and advantages of careers in the water industry, with a focus on mission-critical jobs.





Coordinated Recruitment Committee

Work with partners to reach into multiple communities with engaging messages, efficient collaborative recruitment processes, and multiple points of contact (e.g., career fairs, open houses, and organizational partners).



Collaborative Training Committee

Work with partners (such as educational institutions and non-profit organizations) to advertise existing program and build collaborative training programs at multiple levels, such as internships, operator-in-training programs, and apprenticeships.



Effective Incentives Committee

Work with water utilities within and outside New England, to identify:

- Pay, benefits, working conditions, and organizational cultures that work against recruitment and retention.
- Modifications to pay, benefits, working conditions, and organizational culture under consideration and/or effectively implemented by other utilities and industries.



Effective Communications Committee

Develop or find messages, reports, publications, brochures, social media templates, and videos that will be effective with different audiences to advertise the Water Profession and the Value of Water:

- Governing boards
- Legislators
- Students
- Parents
- Educational institutions and school counselors
- Non-profit and government organizations

Governance Structure

Governing Board

Currently 11 members, representing a mix of large, medium, and small utilities, as well as both drinking water and clean water utilities and all 6 states.

CEO of NEWWA and Executive Director of NEWEA.

FUTURE program manager.



Next Steps – Where we are Now

Membership Categories – With Annual Membership Dues:

- Signatories
- Associate Members
- Individual Members

Support Letters Sent – we already have our first utility commitment.

Signatories

New England Drinking Water, Clean Water, and Stormwater Utilities.

Annual dues of signatories will be based on utility size (e.g., number of customers served).

Signatories will be eligible to serve on the Governing Board and chair committees.

Associate Members

Non-utility partners that support planning, implementation, and funding (e.g., water associations, contract operators, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, regulatory agencies, credentialing agencies, One-Step Centers, veteran organizations).

Eligible to serve as members of all committees.

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Individual Members

Individuals with an interest in contributing to or learning about the water industry (e.g., retired utility employees and students interested in learning about the water industry).



In-Kind Opportunities

- Development and distribution of outreach and recruitment materials, job announcements, and information on events.
- Training support and training equipment.
- Staffing support, use of facilities for programs, products, and events.
- Membership on committees.

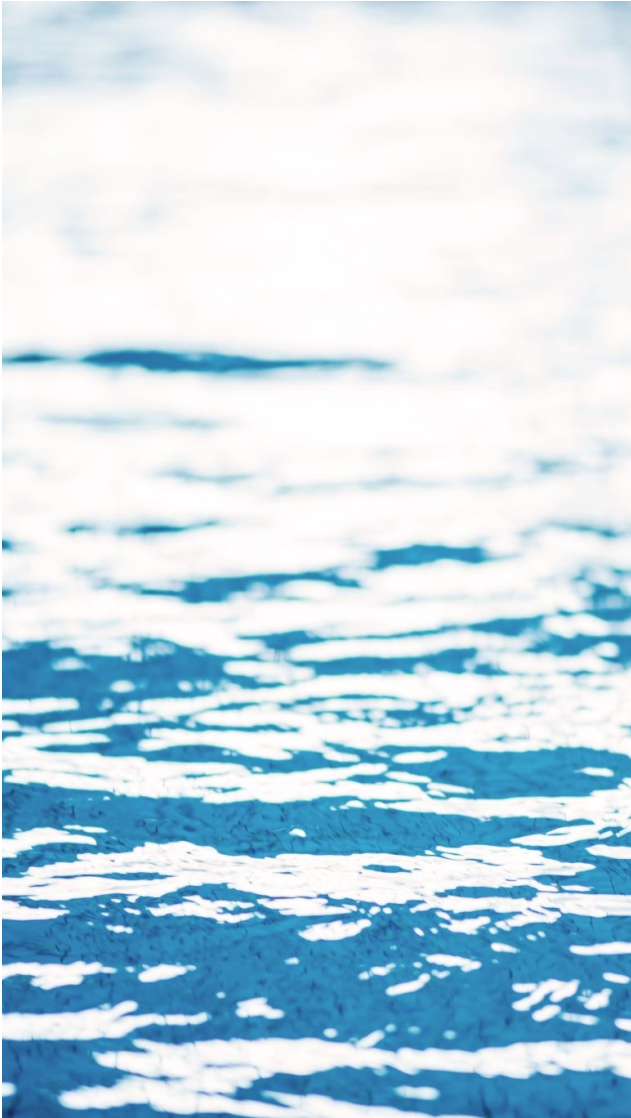
Business Plan

Mission: To create a collaborative dedicated to attracting and developing new talent in the drinking water and clean water professions across New England, ensuring workforce sustainability and the long-term success of critical water services.



Objectives

1. Increase Workforce Recruitment: Collaborate with utilities, educational institutions, and labor organizations to increase interest in water industry careers.
2. Talent Retention: Harness current and create new programs to train, develop, and retain talented individuals in water sector careers.



Objectives

- 3. Utility Collaboration: Foster collaboration among New England's water utilities to share best practices, pool resources, and create sustainable workforce solutions.
- 4. Public Awareness: Raise awareness of the importance of water sector careers through marketing and outreach campaigns.



Objectives

5. Diverse Workforce

Engagement: Encourage diversity in the workforce by promoting equity in recruitment and training efforts.

Services & Programs



1. Career Awareness Campaign:



- Goal: Raise public awareness about the water industry's critical role in public health and protection of the environment and the variety of careers available.



- Method: Digital campaigns, community outreach, industry ambassadors, in-person networking, and school presentations.

Services & Programs

2. Utility Apprenticeship and Internship Programs:

- Goal: Partner with utilities to create apprenticeship programs that provide on-the-job training for new recruits.
- Method: Establish partnerships with technical schools and community colleges to ensure that students can transition directly into water sector careers.

Services & Programs

3. Workforce Development and Training:

- Goal: Ensure that current and new candidates have access to training that prepares them for certification, technical work, and leadership roles.
- Method: Harness local and regional training already in existence, and create new training programs in collaboration with water associations and state and regional regulators.




Services & Programs

4. Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives:



- Goal: Promote diversity by targeting underserved communities, women, and minorities for water industry jobs.



- Method: Specific outreach campaigns and scholarship programs to reduce barriers to entry.

Services & Programs



5. Job Placement Assistance:



- Goal: Facilitate job matching between utilities and candidates.



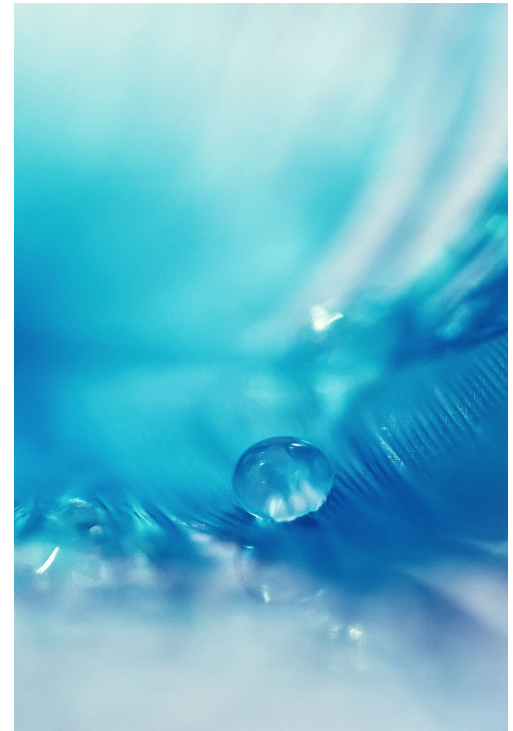
- Method: Host job/career fairs, utilize and/or consolidate current job boards, and work with labor organizations and recruitment agencies to ensure placement in water sector careers.

Webpage...

<https://www.newea.org/careers/work-for-water/>

Final Thought

The New England Work for Water Collaborative offers drinking water and clean water utilities in New England a unique opportunity to collaborate in solving the workforce crisis, ensuring they can attract and retain the next generation of water professionals. By joining forces, utilities will not only enhance their workforce but also help safeguard the region's critical water infrastructure for the future.



Thank you –
Leadership
Committee

Mary Barry, NEWEA

Kirsten King, NEWWA

Dan Bisson, Tighe & Bond

Bill Boornazian, City of Portland

Tom Tyler, Hartford MDC

Don Ware, Pennichuck

Cheryl Davis, CKD Consulting

Thank you – Steering Committee

<u>Representative</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Water Sector</u>	<u>Utility/Entity</u>
Art Simonian - Backup	CT	WW	Mattabasett District
Dionne Hector-Dale - Primary	CT	DW	Regional Water Authority
Tom Tyler - Primary	CT	WW	Hartford MDC
Stacy Thompson - Primary	ME	WW	City of Saco, Maine
Shannon Johnson - Primary	ME	DW	Portland Water District
Josh Schimmel - Primary	MA	DW	Springfield Water & Sewer
Karla Sangrey - Primary	MA	WW	Upper Blackstone Clean Water
Liz Mailhot - Primary	MA	WW	Upper Blackstone Clean Water
Charles B. Ryan - Backup	MA	WW	MWRA
Dick Kilhart - Backup	MA	DW	Town of Athol

Thank you – Steering Committee

<u>Representative</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Water Sector</u>	<u>Utility/Entity</u>
Mary Deroche - Primary	NH	DW	Pennichuck Corporation
Sam Currier - Backup	NH	DW	NHWWA
Krista Larson - Backup	NH	WW	Laconia, NH
Jeremy Bouvier - Primary	NH	WW, DW	Manchester Water Works
Joe Duncan - Primary	VT	DW	Champlain Water District
Megan Moir - Primary	VT	WW	City of Burlington, VT
Liz Royer - Backup	VT	DW/WW	Champlain Water District
Walter Palm - Primary	RI	WW	Narragansett Bay Commission
Meg Goulet - Back-up	RI	WW	Narragansett Bay Commission
Gregg Giasson - Back-up	RI	DW	Providence Water Supply Board
Jessica Lynch - Primary	RI	DW	Portsmouth Water & Fire Dist.

Comments or Questions?

Thank you

Kirsten King, CEO

New England Water Works Association, Inc.

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Mary Barry, Executive Director

New England Water Environment Association

mbarry@newea.org