State of Maine
Public Drinking Water Commission



2025 Annual Report
State Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

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Executive Summary

The Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP), a division of Maine Department of Health and Human, oversees almost 2,000 public water systems (PWS). The DWP's primary responsibility is to protect public health by ensuring that PWS are in compliance with the *National Primary Drinking Water Regulations* under the *Safe Drinking Water Act* (SWDA). Maine was granted primacy over the SDWA by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the 1990s.

The Maine Public Drinking Water Commission (MPDWC), established by statute, is tasked with an annual evaluation of the Drinking Water Program's operations, staffing requirements, funding formulas and fee collection schedules. A summary of our findings based on our review of the DWP's FY 2025 operations is as follows:

- In FY25, the DWP staff met its goals and provided quality regulatory guidance to public water systems in Maine. The MPDWC commends the DWP staff and its leadership for their dedicated efforts on behalf of the people of the State of Maine. However, **providing the required level of oversight over the long term is not sustainable with the current staffing levels.**
- The responsibilities and workload of the DWP are driven by external forces including new regulations, grant programs and initiatives such as EPA's recently enacted PFAS standard, replacement of lead service lines, cybersecurity, climate resilience, and infrastructure funding.
- As a result of these initiatives, the DWP workload has increased dramatically in the last few years in terms of the number of tasks and the amount of funding the DWP must manage.
- Based on a recent third-party comparative assessment – and DWP staff's direct experience - **the DWP is significantly understaffed to meet these growing responsibilities.**
- A total of eleven limited period positions are currently funded through short term federal funding sources including the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and ARPA funds. The temporary nature of these positions makes it hard to attract quality candidates and does not provide the long-term staffing levels required to meet the DWP workload. **The MPDWC recommends converting these eleven positions to permanent using on-going long-term federal funding sources. No State General Funds are needed and there is no impact to the taxpayers.**
- The MPDWC also supports a modest increase to the Alternative Funding Mechanism (AFM) program in order to provide increased revenue to cover rising salaries and administrative costs for the DWP.
- The MPDWC is strongly in support of the DWP proposal to convert eleven limited period positions to permanent full time permanent positions utilizing federal and AFM funding sources. Funding of DWP staff positions via these two revenue streams is consistent with the financial objectives and guidelines of these programs. The transition of these positions from temporary to permanent will ensure that the DWP can continue to meet the growing needs of the drinking water industry, while protecting public health and maintaining primacy.

Introduction

The Annual Report of the Maine Public Drinking Water Commission (MPDWC) is prepared for the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), pursuant to 22 M.R.S. §§ 2660-C (4)(H). This statute requires that the MPDWC submit an annual report to the DHHS Commissioner that must include, but is not limited to, a performance evaluation of the program, including the implementation of administrative remedies, and MPDWC recommendations regarding, but not limited to, administrative remedies, program operations, funding and staffing requirements, funding formulas and fee collection and transfer schedules.

The purpose of the report is to provide the DHHS Commissioner with an understanding of the issues the MPDWC and the Maine CDC 's Drinking Water Program (DWP) faced during the last year, as well as outline the goals and work for the upcoming year. Background information about the regulated public water systems is also provided, along with the current fee structure.

Public Water System Classification

A public water system is defined as any publicly or privately-owned system of pipes or other constructed conveyances, structures and facilities through which water is obtained for or sold, furnished or distributed to the public for human consumption, if such system has at least 15 service connections or serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year or bottles water for sale. There are three types of public water systems, and each is regulated differently. The three types of public water systems are:

1. **Community Public Water Systems**
   A public water system that serves at least fifteen service connections used by year-round residents or regularly serves at least 25 year-round residents is considered a Community public water system. (Year-round is defined as a permanent residence greater than six months.) Examples include water utilities, mobile home parks, apartment buildings, nursing homes, etc.

2. **Non-Transient, Non-Community Public Water Systems**
   A Non-Transient, Non-community (NTNC) public water system serves at least 25 of the same persons for six months or more per year. Examples include schools, office buildings, factories, etc.

3. **Transient Public Water Systems**
   Transient public water systems are non-community systems that serve at least 25 persons, but not necessarily the same persons, for at least 60 days per year. Examples include restaurants, camps and campgrounds, motels and hotels, golf courses, etc.

Bottled water producers and Vendors are also regulated by the Maine Drinking Water Program

Bottled Water/Vendors
These systems include water bottling facilities and water vending machines.

Enabling Legislation

Legislation relating to the MPDWC is found in 22 M.R.S. §§ 2660-B - 2660-G. The statutes were first established in 1993 (c. 410) and have been modified five times since (1995, c. 581; 1995, c. 21; 1997, c. 705; 2001, c. 232; 2003, c. 601; and 2009, c. 15).

The legislation includes definitions, membership requirements, responsibilities, duties, compensation, annual report requirements, and authority to impose an annual public water system (PWS) operation fee.

The Commission has the following duties:

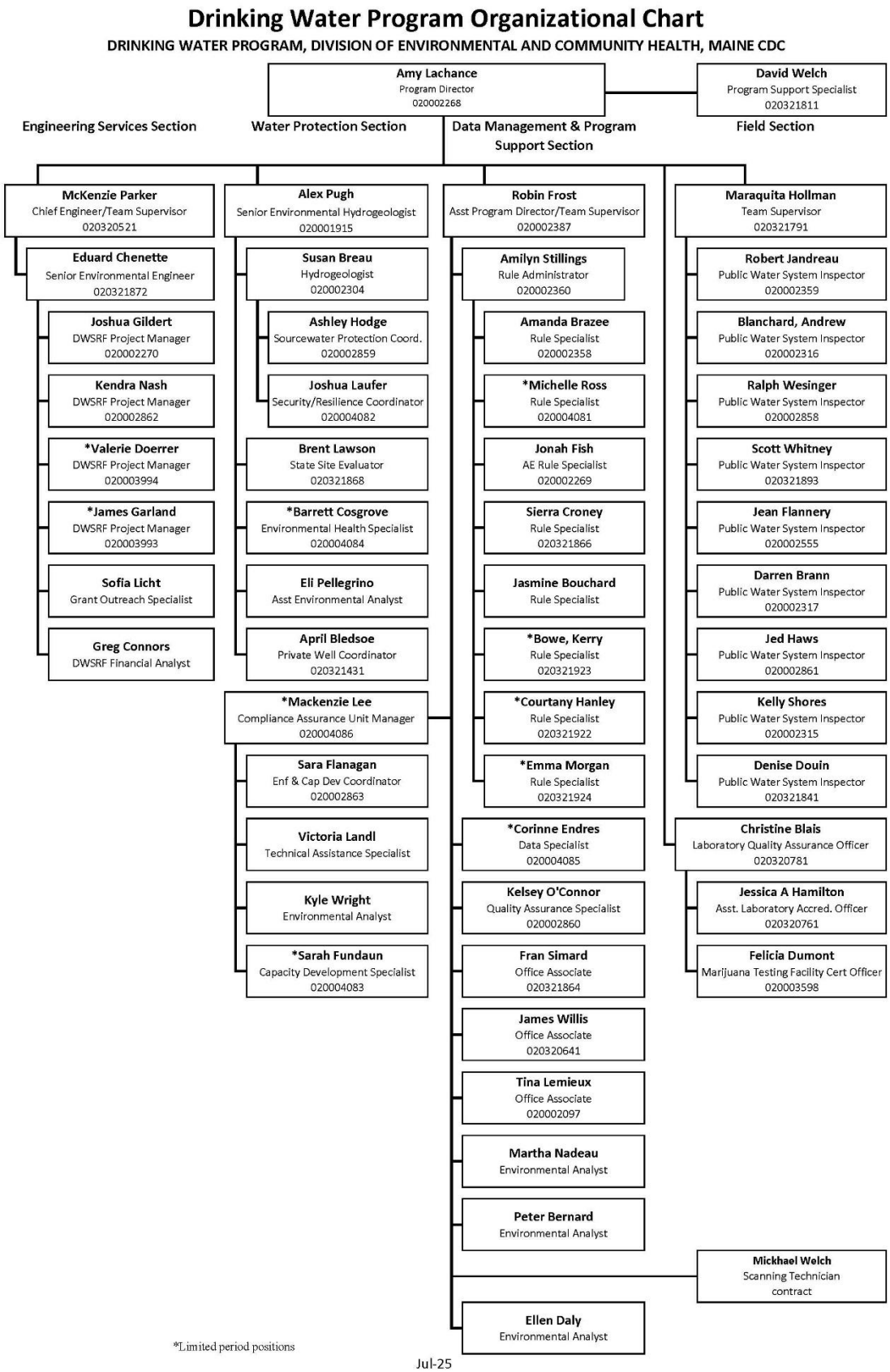
- Evaluate the proportion of program effort dedicated to each type of public water system served by the program; [PL 1995, c. 581, §2 (AMD).]
- Evaluate existing and projected program workloads; [PL 1993, c. 410, Pt. DD, §4 (NEW).]
- Evaluate existing program resources and project future staffing and resource requirements; [PL 1993, c. 410, Pt. DD, §4 (NEW).]
- Determine funding requirements necessary to meet projected workloads and staffing and resource requirements; [PL 1993, c. 410, Pt. DD, §4 (NEW).]
- Determine an equitable program funding share for each type of public water system that recognizes the level of program effort required for that public water system; [PL 1995, c. 581, §2 (AMD).]
- Determine fee formulas and collection and transfer schedules for each type of public water system; and [PL 1995, c. 581, §2 (AMD).]
- Submit to the commissioner annually by August 1st a report that must include, but is not limited to, a performance evaluation of the program, including the implementation of administrative remedies, and commission recommendations regarding, but not limited to, administrative remedies, program operations, funding and staffing requirements, funding formulas and fee collection and transfer schedules. [PL 1993, c. 678, §5 (AMD)].

Table 1 - Members of the Maine Public Drinking Water Commission

See MPDWC

Name & Address	Seat Number & Expiration Date	Statutory Provisions for Seat
Amy Lachance Director, Drinking Water Program 11 State House, Station Augusta, ME 04333-0011	Seat 1 Until Replaced	Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the Commissioner's designee
Vacant	Seat 2	Represent the water purveying community and be associated with a public water system serving a population of not more than 1,000.
Matthew D. Reynolds 74 South Rd Freeport, ME 04032	Seat 3 August 31, 2025	Must represent the drinking water public
Pending appointment Eric Gagnon, General Manager Yarmouth Water District 181 Sligo Road Yarmouth, ME 04096	Seat 4	Represent the water purveying community and be associated with a public water system serving a population of at least 1001, but not more than 10,000.
Brian Tarbuck, General Manager Greater Augusta Utility District 12 Williams St Augusta, ME 04330	Seat 5 August 31, 2025	Represent the water purveying community and be associated with a public water system serving a population greater than 10,000.
Lee Worcester, III Smugglers Den Campground PO Box 787 Southwest Harbor, ME 04679-0787	Seat 6 August 31, 2025	Must be a user of a transient, non-community water system
Carol White, Chairperson C.A. White & Associates 1 Main Street Yarmouth, ME 04096	Seat 7 August 31, 2024	Must be a user of a non-transient, non-community water system
Jeffrey D. LaCasse, 35 East River Road Skowhegan, ME 04976	Seat 8 August 31, 2027	Must represent the drinking water public
Vacant	Seat 9	Must represent the drinking water public

Table 2 -Drinking Water Program Organizational Chart (updated 8/25)



Staffing Initiative

Maine Drinking Water Program Proposal to Convert Eleven Limited Period Positions to Permanent

Eleven Limited Period Positions (LPP's) have been added to the Drinking Water Program (DWP) since 2022 to address the significant increase in responsibilities stemming from new federal mandates regarding

- PFAS testing and response,
- lead service lines, lead in schools,
- cybersecurity,
- climate resilience, and
- infrastructure funding needs at Public Water Systems.

The need for these positions will continue into the future and has been documented by a third-party report ("Analysis of Maine's Drinking Water Program Resources and Needs," Cadmus, 2023) that modeled Maine's workload compared to national standards and determined that 84 full time equivalent (FTE) staff positions are needed to meet the DWP's regulatory responsibilities and maintain primacy for oversight of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The DWP currently has 55 FTE's including the 11 LPP's. These eleven positions are currently funded through federal funds including the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and ARPA funds. Once the federal BIL and ARPA funds expire the MPDWC supports continuing to fund these eleven positions from on-going federal sources, therefore **no State General Funds are needed to convert these eleven positions to permanent.**

These positions include eight Environmental Specialist III's focused on PFAS, lead, cybersecurity, climate resilience and database support, an Environmental Engineer (EE) and Assistant Environmental Engineer overseeing the current 275 active drinking water infrastructure projects receiving federal loans/grants, as well as one Environmental Specialist IV leading a newly organized compliance unit providing violation follow-up and technical assistance to struggling and disadvantaged water systems. The MPDWC and water industry organizations advocate fully staffing the DWP on a long-term basis. Also, the EPA audit report of the DWP documents the need for staffing to ensure that program primacy requirements are met. Hiring and retaining qualified and dedicated staff for limited period positions has been difficult as applicants are wary of potential position termination. The DWP needs to be fully prepared for upcoming challenges facing the drinking water industry.

Performance Review of the Drinking Water Program

The MPDWC gets regular updates from the DWP and assesses the performance of this State agency. The management and the staff of the program continue to effectively implement the drinking water regulations in a manner that is protective of public health.

However, the scope of the drinking water regulations, along with public concerns about their drinking water quality, have grown significantly in recent years. New federal regulations such as the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions, promulgated in December 2021, have expanded direct regulatory activities several times over. And, with the passing of the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the amount of funding for infrastructure improvements, emerging contaminants and lead service lines has increased from $11M in 2021 to approximately $70M per year for the years 2022-2026, and the required state match has risen proportionally. Additionally, state regulations regarding PFAS and lead in schools have increased the DWP's workload significantly.

As required by Section 1414(c)(3) of the Safe Drinking Water Act the Maine Drinking Water Program publishes an annual report of violations of the primary drinking water standards. This report provides the numbers of violations in each of six categories: MCL, MRDL, treatment techniques, variances and exemptions, significant monitoring violations, and significant consumer notification violations. The 2024 Annual Compliance Report is linked on this page.

This is an important time in the history of the drinking water industry, and the DWP must adapt in order to keep up with considerable new regulations and infrastructure expenditures. The DWP has been successful in adding eleven positions to address this additional workload; however, these are limited period positions. The MPDWC supports converting limited period positions to permanent status in order to manage the widening scope of drinking water regulations in future years. These positions can be sustainably supported using set-aside funding from the State Revolving Fund, combined with a proposal to increase the Alternative Funding Mechanism Fees to support one additional staff person. Right sizing the DWP on a permanent basis to address its current and future challenges will ensure that safe and adequate drinking water can continue to be provided by Public Water Systems across Maine.

Maine Public Drinking Water Commission FY25Activities

Alternative Funding Mechanism Fee

In 1993, the Legislature created legislation enabling the DWP to assess a fee on all public water systems. This fee is deposited in the Public Drinking Water Fund for the purpose of supporting the DWP. The fee, also known as the Alternative Funding Mechanism (AFM) Fee, is calculated by using a formula with a base rate and a population multiplier. In State Fiscal Year 2025 the AFM fee supported the costs of 5.0 full-time DWP employees. Each year, the MPDWC reviews the formula, the base fee, the per capita fee and the DWP budget to determine if any changes need to be made to the formula or fee rates. Revenues derived from the collection of these fees are used to ensure adequate staffing to meet the EPA requirements. In order to provide sustainable funding for the DWP in future years, the rule-making process has proposed funding **one existing full-time employee through the AFM Fee**.

For all public water systems except bottled water and vending machines, the fee is equal to the minimum fee plus the per capita rate, multiplied by the population capacity of the system, minus the exempt population. A summary of the rate structure for these types of water systems can be found in Table 3 below.

Table 3 -SFY 2025 AFM Rate Structure for all Public Water Systems except Bottled Water and Water Vending Machines

Description	Rate
Per capita rate (above base population)	$0.60
Base fee	$65
Base population	100

A separate formula and rate structure exists for bottled water facilities and water vending machines. A summary of the rates for these facilities can be found in Table 4 below.

Table 4 - SFY 2025 AFM Rate Structure for Bottled Water Facilities & Water Vending Machines

System Type	Description	Rate
In-State Small Bottled Water Facility	Small (up to 250,000 gallons per year)	$105
In-State Medium Bottled Water Facility	Medium (>250,000 to 20 million gallons per year)	$300
In-State Large Bottled Water Facility	Large (>20 million gallons per year)	$3,900
Water Vending Machine	Per Water Vending Machine	Minimum $50 $10 per machine up to $150 maximum

AFM Fee Rate Changes for SFY 2025

The MPDWC has maintained a long-standing policy that the carry-over funds available at the end of each fiscal year should equal approximately three months of program expenditures. The MPDWC asserts that adequate funding of the reserve account is necessary and reasonable to protect program operations in the event of unexpected circumstances. The MPDWC's intent is to continue to review and adjust funding and budgets annually to ensure financial stability for the program.

At this time, the reserve account has an adequate level of funding. However, the MPDWC supports the DWP's proposal to increase fees in SFY 2025 and beyond in order to fund one existing full-time equivalent position. In order to accomplish this, the fee structure will need to be expanded to produce an additional $135,000 per year. The proposal, including changes to the base fee and the per capita rate, was approved by the MPDWC in FY25.

Table 5 Fees by Public Water System Type
State Fiscal Year 2025 Summary of AFM Fee Billings

Types of Public Water Systems (PWS)	Number of PWS	Percent of Total PWS	Population Served	Calculated Revenue	Percent of Total Revenue
Community	384	20%	693,083	$420,922	66%
Non-Transient, Non-Community	378	20%	62,094	$43,952	7%
Transient, Non-Community	1,108	58%	186,520	$131,187	21%
Bottled Water /Vending Machines	47	2%	N/A	$34,205	6%
Totals	**1,917**	**100%**	**941,697**	**$630,266.00**	**100%**

Figures 1 and 2 show the percentage of PWS by type and the total calculated AFM revenue by PWS type, respectively. Although Transient, Non- community systems make up 58% of the individual PWS, only 21% of the AFM revenue is derived from these systems. In contrast, the Community PWS comprise 20% of the total number of water systems, but they provide 66% of the total calculated AFM fees. Municipal water utilities such as Portland Water District Community PWS. Although these systems are not as numerous, collectively they comprise the largest percentage of water consumers in the state.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of total billed vs collected AFM fees for F25. As shown on Figure 3, 97% of the billed AFM fees were collected by the end of FY25. Figure 4 depicts the total value of billed vs collected AFM revenues. Figure 4 shows that the total amount billed was $643,083, the amount collected was $620,749 with uncollected fees totaling $17,008 less than 3% of the total AFM fees billed. The DWP program has an established procedure for following up with systems that are delinquent. The MPDWC reviews the status of the AFM collection at its regular meetings to ensure that adequate funds are available to support the DWP. An online payment process has been established which will reduce AFM fee delinquency . Tables 6 and 7 summarize FY25 DWP's various funding sources and expenditures.
Table 8 summarizes the direct technical assistance to PWS or technical Service providers.

Staff Merit Award

Annually, the MPDWC recognizes an employee of the Drinking Water Program who has made a significant contribution in the past year to the goals and mission of the program. Nominations are solicited and received from the drinking water "community" in Maine, including the DWP staff, other Maine water industry associations, and public water systems. In 2024, the Commission recognized Mackenzie Parker, DWRSF Program Manager, for her skill and dedication.

Maine Public Drinking Water Commission Initiatives for FY 2026

The MPDWC will continue to support and guide the DWP as needed and prudently oversee the alternative funding mechanism established to fund a portion of the program's budget. Staffing and funding will remain priority issues for the DWP.

In response to those concerns, the Commission in the upcoming year will:

- Continue to support and work to obtain the appropriate funding for the State Match of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund;
- Support the DWP's efforts to convert limited period positions to permanent status;
- Review DWP performance measures to evaluate the operations and effectiveness of the DWP; and
- Seek to fill the vacant seats on the Commission (Seats 2 and 9) by the end of 2025.

Acknowledgement

The Maine Public Drinking Water Commission acknowledges the dedication and work ethic of all employees of the Maine Drinking Water Program. DWP staff continue to provide effective and valuable assistance to Maine's 1,900 public water systems as they address ever-evolving water issues and new regulations. The MPDWC feels confident in the DWP as a critical presence in promoting the safety and reliability of Maine's drinking water.

Figure 1 Percentage of Public Water Systems by Type

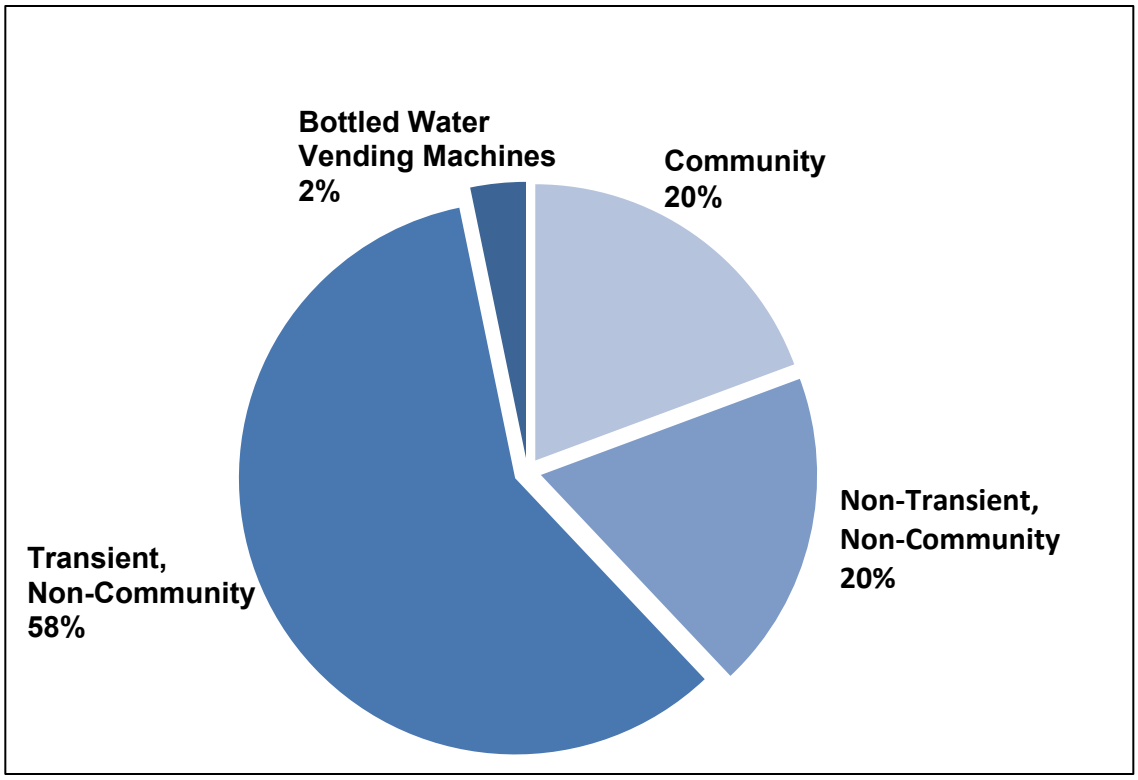


Figure 2 Percentage of Total Calculated AFM Revenue by PWS Type

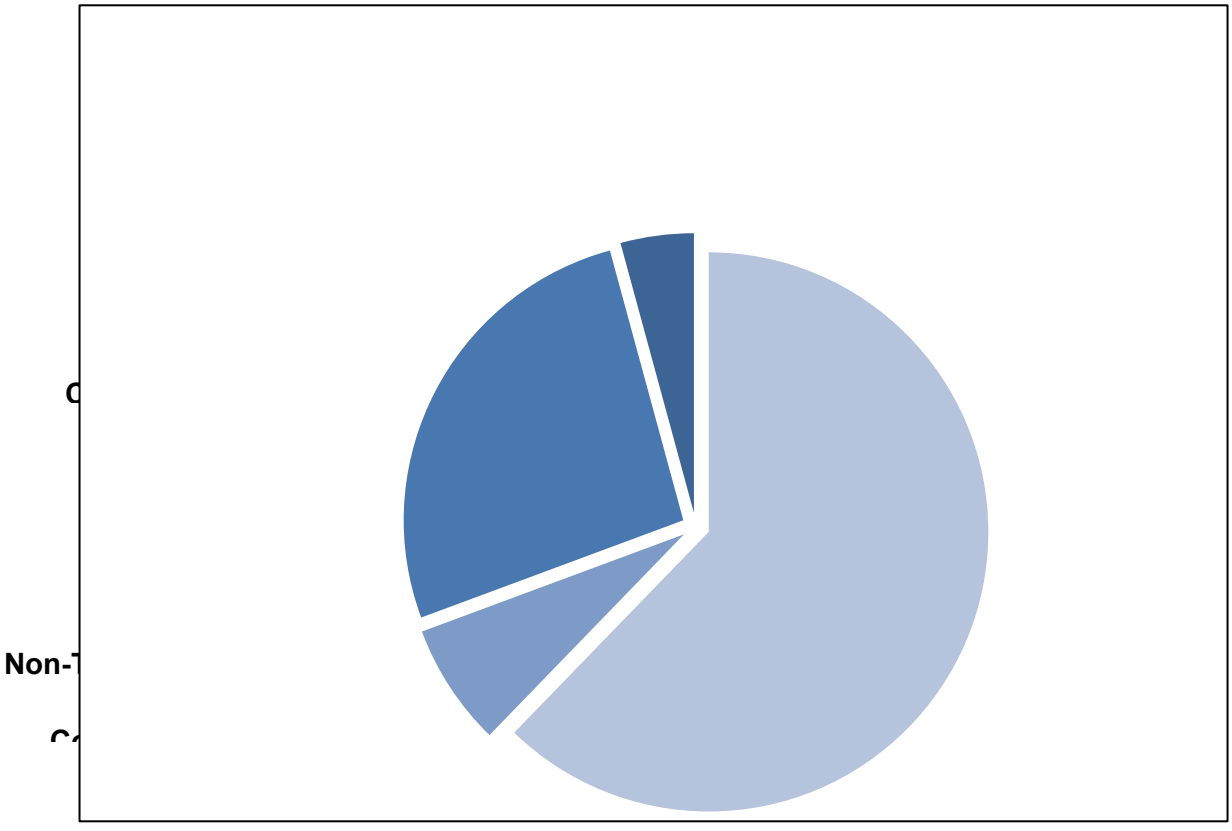
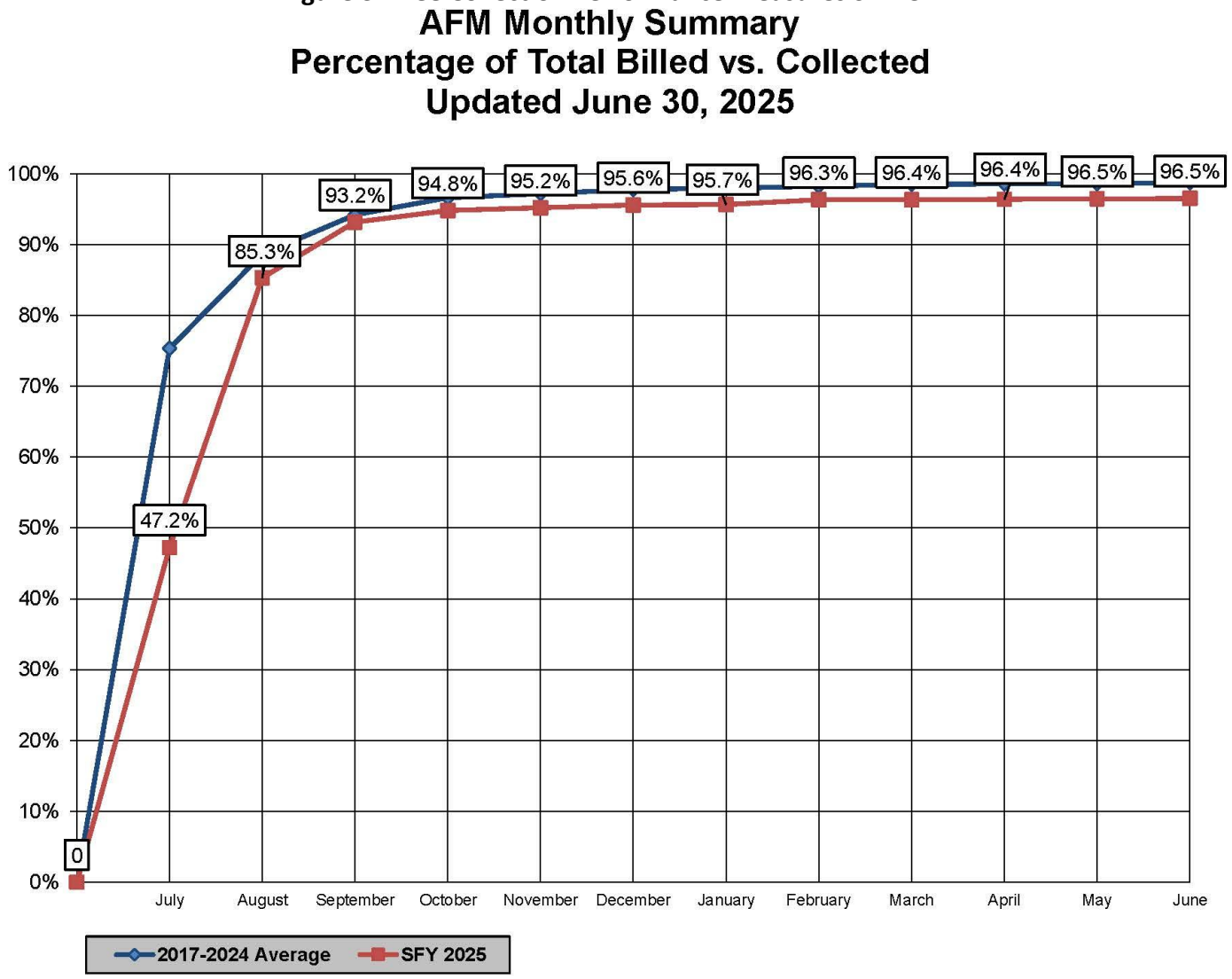
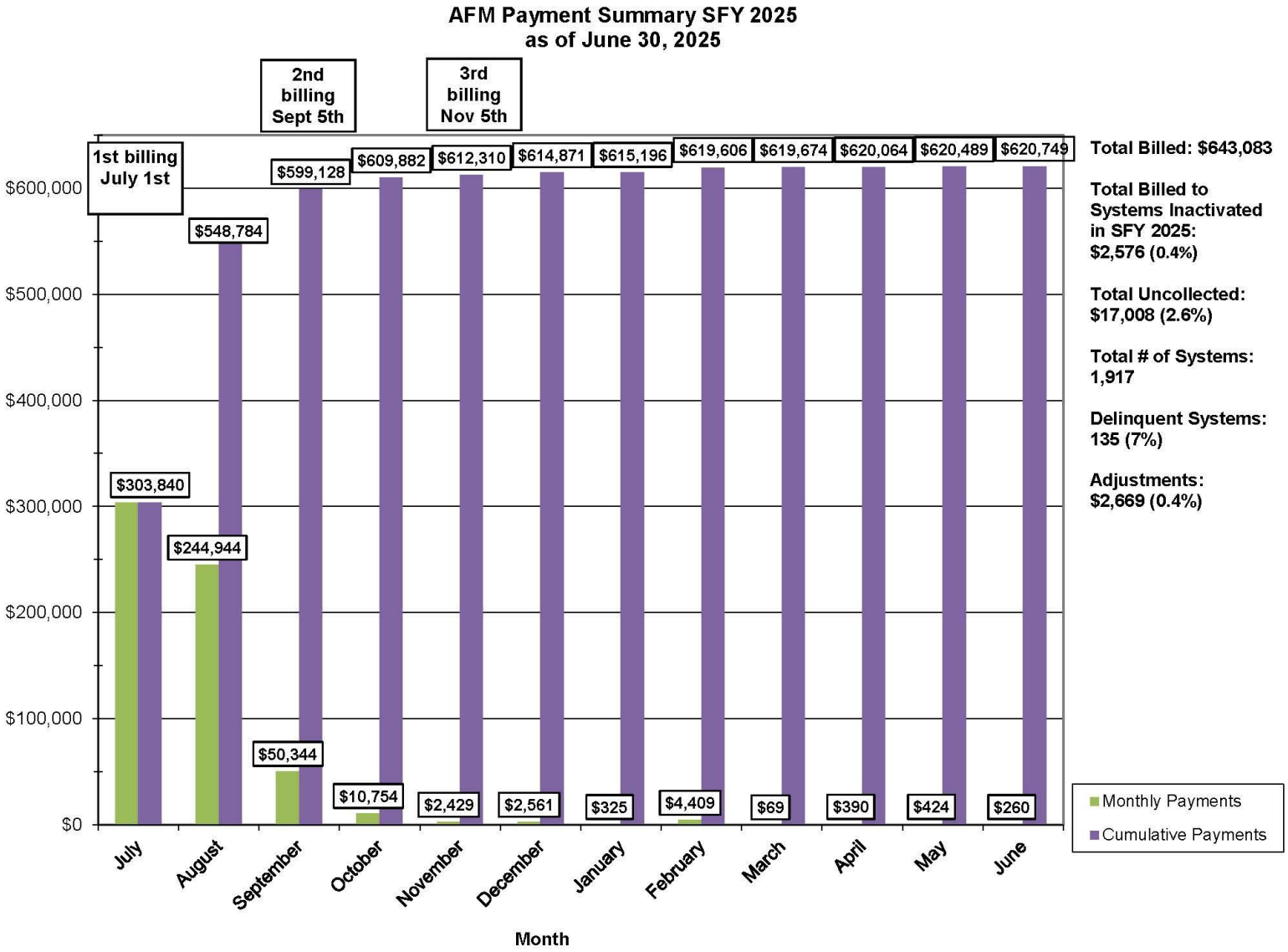


Figure 3 Fee Collection Performance Measures SFY25



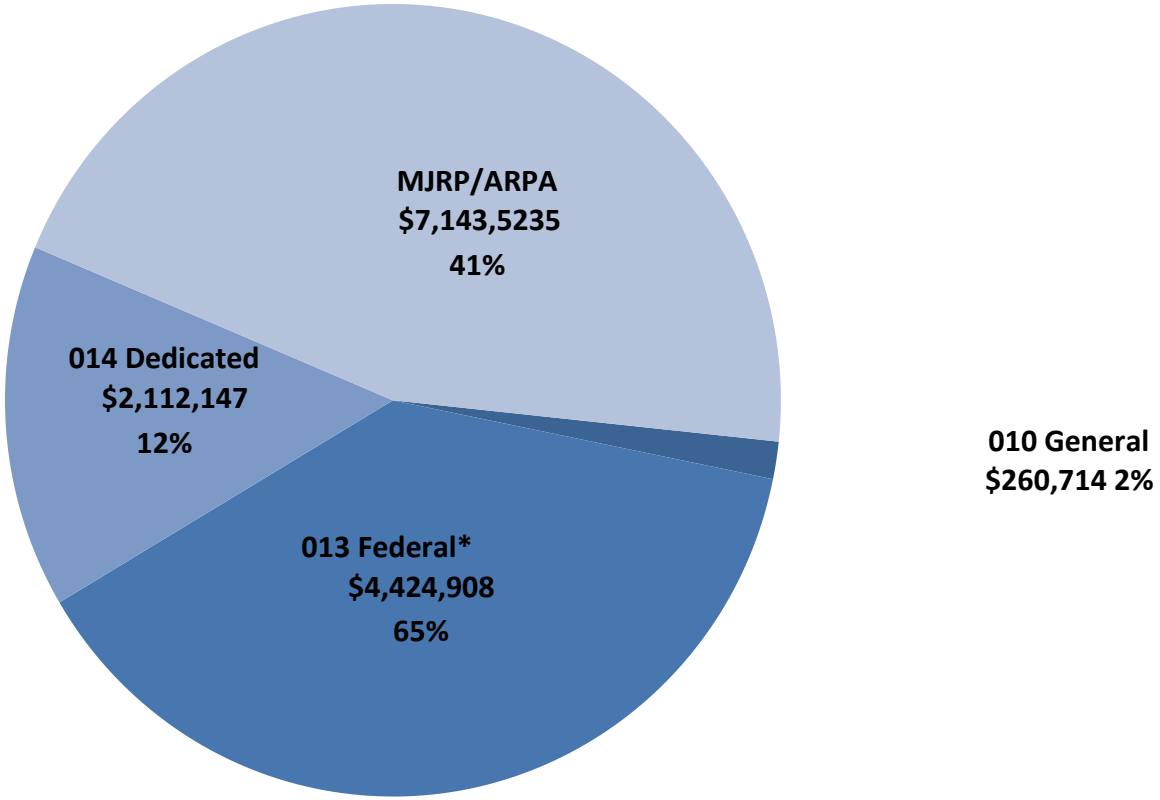
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Figure 4 AFM Payment Summary SFY25



State Fiscal Year 2025 Summary of Expenditures - Drinking Water Program

Figure 5 Drinking Water Program Expenses, SFY2025



* Does not include direct assistance to public water systems or technical assistance providers

State Fiscal Year 2025 Summary of Expenditures - Drinking Water Program

Table 6 Drinking Water Program Staff Costs, Grants to Public Water Systems, and Other Expenses

	10 General	23 MJRP	013 Federal						
							Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (Set Asides)		
	General Fund	Rescue Plan Act (Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan)	Public Water System Supervision Grant	WIIN Grant Lead in Schools	Contaminants Assistance for Small & Disadvantaged Systems	Small, Underserved & Disadvantaged Community Grant	4% Set Aside SRF Admin.	10% Set Aside Program Management	15% Set Aside Other
Salary & Benefits	250,763	361,215	871,496	28,888	12,182	0	308,171	978,924	421,345
Travel	0	2,077	9,485	0	0	0	19,129	4,001	9,097
Operating Expenses	2,255	225	39,366	0	75	0	1,631	73,565	10,028
Technology	7,696	6,410	24,632	157	0	0	16,944	120,895	18,515
Contracts	0	6,773,595	23,304	0	3,010,561	80,647	0	945,519	0
Overhead (StaCAP & DiCAP)	0	0	217,078	15,206	70,129	2,181	95,093	217,334	82,843
Total	**$260,714**	**$7,143,523**	**$1,185,361**	**$44,251**	**$3,092,947**	**$82,828**	**$440,967**	**$2,340,239**	**$541,827**
# Of FTE (Budgeted)	**2**	**4**	**8.82**	**0.5**	**1**	**0**	**2**	**15.5***	**5.5**

* Includes 9 contractors

State Fiscal Year 2025 Summary of Expenditures - Drinking Water Program

Table 7 State Fiscal Year 2025 Summary of Expenditures - Drinking Water Program

014 Other Special Revenue (Fees)

Expense	Water Operator's Board	Laboratory Accreditation	Marijuana Laboratory Accreditation	Well Driller's Commission	Drinking Water Act Fund (AFM)	Drinking Water Enforcement	Subsurface Wastewater	Site Evaluator Licensing	Total
Salary & Benefits	33,145	139,602	125,259	2,175	528,752	0	564,697	0	$4,626,613
Travel	589	0	583	424	19,692	0	68	0	$65,146
Operating Expenses	186	4,527	2,944	1,851	58,846	22,417	83,966	1,169	$303,053
Technology	2,749	2,278	3,161	1,833	24,784	0	105,846	0	$335,902
Contracts	3,470	0	0	6,184	60	3,308	34,499	0	$10,881,146
Overhead (StaCAP & DiCAP)	11,566	30,212	28,754	285	124,506	1,292	136,438	27	$1,032,945
Total	$51,706	$176,619	$160,702	$12,751	$756,641	$27,017	$925,514	$1,197	$17,244,804
# Of FTE (Budgeted)	**0.4**	**1**	**1.5**	**0.4**	**6**	**0**	**6.13***	**0**	**54.75**
Revenue	$35,057	$146,475	$115,325	$32,761	$617,689	$9,943	$867,662	$17,895	$1,842,807
Cash balance (6/30/25)	$12,823	$4,090	-$27,296	$41,729	$347,660	$22,881	$173,164	$103,570	

* Includes 0.75 contractors

Table 8 Direct Assistance to Public Water Systems or Technical Assistance Providers

The technical assistance set-aside funds two Water Quality Specialists through the Maine Rural Water Association. Water Quality Specialists provide. free on-site technical assistance to small public water systems.

Technical Assistance Provided to Public Water System $250,250

Public Water Systems receiving Source (Wellhead and Sourcewater) Protection Grants:
AOS 91 Mt. Desert Island High School, Ashland Water & Sewer District, Bath Water District, Canton Water District, Caribou Utilities District, Dixfield Water & Sewer Department, Kennebec Water District, Limerick Water District, Madawaska Water District, Mexico Water District, Norway Water District, Old Town Water District, Orono-Veazie Water District, Oxford Water District, Portland Water District, Portland Water District, Rangeley Water District, Richmond Utilities District, Southwest Harbor Water & Sewer District, Unity College, Wilton Water Department, York Water District

Source (Wellhead and Sourcewater) Protection Grants to Public Water Systems $292,636

Public Water Systems receiving Capacity Development or Consolidation Grants:
Brunswick & Topsham Water District, Alfred Water District, Ashland Water & Sewer District, Auburn Water District, Bath Water District, Bridgton Water District, Brunswick & Topsham Water District, Dexter Utility District, Ellsworth Water Department, Farmington Falls Standard Water District, Gray Water District, Great Salt Bay Sanitary District, Hallowell Water District, Hampden Water District, Houlton Water Company, Kents Hill School, Keywood Manor MHP LLC, Maine Medical Education Trust, Mechanic Falls Water Department, New Harbor-Chamberlain Water Association, Norridgewock Water District, Old Town Water District, Sabattus Sanitary District, Sugarloaf Water Association, Town of Hermon (Hermon High School), Wiscasset Water District.

Capacity Development and Consolidation Grants to Public Water Systems $1,266,548

Training includes funding provided as reimbursements to training providers based upon the number of training contact hours awarded, pre-exam training, asset management training and more.

Training and other Capacity Development Assistance Provided to Public Water System Operators and other Personnel $495,774

Public Water Systems receiving low interest construction loans:
Alfred Water District, Anson/Madison Water District, Baileyville Utilities District, Bangor Water District, Brewer Water Department, Brunswick & Topsham Water District, Caribou Utilities District, Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens, Covered Bridge Apartments, Damariscotta Montessori School, Dedham Elementary School, Dover & Foxcroft Water District, Fieldstone Meadows HOA, Great Salt Bay Sanitary District , Guilford/Sangerville Water District, Hermon High School, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, & Wells Water District, Kennebec Water District, Limerick Water District, Lincoln Water District, Livermore Falls Water District, Madawaska Water District, Maine Water Co Kezar Falls Division, Maine Water Co Millinocket Division, Milbridge Water District, Monmouth Water Association, Mountainside Community Cooperative, Inc, MSAD #61 Lake Region High School, MSAD #70 Hodgdon Elementary School, Old Town Water District, Parker Ridge Retirement Comm, Plymouth Water District, Portland Water District, Rangeley Water District, Raymond Woods Townhouses, RSU #38 Maranacook Community School, RSU #38 Mt Vernon Elementary School, RSU #56 Dirigo Elementary School, RSU #68, Sanford Water District, Searsport Water District, Squire Court LLC, Sugarloaf Water Association , Town & Country Motel, Unity College Cottages , Washington Academy, Washington County Community College, Whitetail Ridge Association, Winthrop Utilities District, Wiscasset Water District.

Low interest construction loans to Public Water Systems $36,568,885
($20,002,659 forgiven)

Grand Total All Expenditures SFY 2025 $56,119,898