



**SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION**  
**P.O. BOX 995, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01101**

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Contact: Jaimye Bartak  
Communications Manager  
Springfield Water and Sewer Commission  
Email: [jaimye.bartak@waterandsewer.org](mailto:jaimye.bartak@waterandsewer.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**PIPELINE PROGRAM**  
Springfield Water and Sewer Commission

## **Commission Celebrates Leadership in Public Service**

*High school interns provide water and sewer updates at event highlighting public service*

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (Commission) celebrated leadership in public service with Mayor Domenic J. Sarno, Superintendent of Springfield Public Schools Dr. Sonia E. Dinnall, the Massachusetts Water Works Association (MWWA), and Veolia North America as part of the Pipeline Program Leadership Summit on Wednesday, July 30<sup>th</sup> at Forest Park.

The Commission's Pipeline Program is a work-based learning paid summer internship program that offers hands-on learning experiences and exposure to the variety of rewarding careers in the water sector – careers that deliver essential services to the public. Participating in the program are 12 high school student interns from Springfield representing 8 different high schools in Springfield.

As part of the interns' summer of learning and service, the Commission hosted the Pipeline Program Leadership Summit, where interns provided attendees with informational updates on the water and sewer systems. Their presentations covered progress on the new [West Parish Water Treatment Plant](#) currently under construction, upgrades at the wastewater plant, and information about the range of routine maintenance activities necessary to keep water and sewer systems in service 24/7.

A Pipeline Program internship is unique in that interns rotate through various Commission departments and support staff on activities and projects including Engineering, Watershed Protection, Wastewater Operations, Drinking Water Operations/Laboratory, Information Technology, Meters, and Water Quality. Interns also take MWWA's "How Water Works: An Introduction to the Drinking Water Industry." This course is a first step as part of the education and training required to earn drinking water operator licenses in Massachusetts. In addition, interns participate in enrichment activities including job skill building and networking at other water utilities and related industries to gain a better understanding of the wide spectrum of careers involved in the daily operations of water and wastewater systems.

"Through the Pipeline Program I have not only learned more about the wide variety of water sector jobs, which I never knew much about, but also the science and engineering and even forestry that goes on behind the scenes to provide my community with drinking water and sewer service," said **Pipeline Program Intern Jayden Barrera**, a rising senior at Renaissance School.

"I commend the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission for providing this valuable hands-on work experience in public service for our Springfield youth" said **Mayor Domenic J. Sarno**. "Water makes our city run, and is a key cornerstone to Springfield's economy and future. I hope to someday see these interns running our treatment



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plants, fixing pipes in our streets, or working in our public buildings and facilities while pursuing satisfying careers that make a difference in their own community.”

“As the Commission undertakes a much-needed generational reinvestment in our water and wastewater infrastructure, it’s equally important that we invest in the future local workforce to operate, maintain, and someday lead these critical systems,” said **Commission Chairwoman Vanessa Otero**. “The Pipeline Program is important because interns not only learn about opportunities in water, but gain hands-on experience, build their workplace skills, participate in a water workforce training program, and finish the summer with tools and resources to take the next step in pursuing their educational and career goals.”

**Superintendent Dr. Sonia E. Dinnall** said, “Work-based learning internship programs are vital to our students’ growth and future success. They help students explore opportunities and build tangible and marketable career skills. We’re proud to partner with organizations like the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission to support opportunities that connect classroom learning to real-world careers.”

“Veolia is excited to continue our partnership on the Pipeline Program and help build the next generation of water and wastewater professionals,” said **Matt LaPointe of Veolia North America**. “These young people are gaining exposure to daily operations as well as innovative projects that protect public health and the environment, potentially someday opening doors here in Springfield or in one of our facilities around the world.”

“Across Massachusetts, water utilities are constantly seeking new talent. MWWA is pleased to partner with the Commission and provide professional education training to the Pipeline Program interns to help them take the next step towards the countless opportunities to build a fulfilling career in the water sector,” said **MWWA Training Coordinator Dan Laprade**.

#### **About the Commission**

Established in 1996, the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission is an independent, public regional utility. The Commission serves 250,000 customers and businesses in the lower Pioneer Valley with safe and reliable drinking water and wastewater service. The Commission provides retail drinking water service to Springfield and Ludlow; regional drinking water treatment to Agawam, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, and Southwick; and emergency/peak service to Westfield, West Springfield, Chicopee, and Wilbraham. The Commission provides retail wastewater service to Springfield and regional wastewater treatment to West Springfield, Agawam, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Wilbraham, and Ludlow.

#### **About Springfield Public Schools and School-To-Career Program**

The Springfield Public Schools are world class learning environments that produce 21st century leaders. Our students will graduate from high school College and Career ready. The school district attracts knowledgeable, highly effective and diverse teachers and principals who want to work in a high performing district. The School-To-Career, Work-Based Learning Program is a statewide network led by DESE and organized through sixteen MassHire Workforce Boards, charged with supporting work-based learning and other career development education activities for students. Through the network, educators can exchange ideas and practices by accessing a wide range of tools, resources, and experiences that support students. Also, employers and community partners can find channels to connect with schools in order to promote career awareness and the career growth of local students.

#### **About Veolia North America**

Veolia North America is the contracted operator of the Springfield Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility. A subsidiary of Veolia group, Veolia North America (VNA) offers a full spectrum of water, waste and energy management services, including water and wastewater treatment, commercial and hazardous waste collection and



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disposal, energy consulting and resource recovery. VNA helps commercial, industrial, healthcare, higher education and municipality customers throughout North America. Headquartered in Boston, Mass., Veolia North America has more than 10,000 employees working at more than 350 locations across the continent. [www.veolianorthamerica.com](http://www.veolianorthamerica.com)

**About Massachusetts Water Works Association**

Massachusetts Water Works Association is a non-profit organization of water supply professionals with more than 1,400 members throughout the Commonwealth. MWWA's membership includes public water system operators, managers, consulting engineers and equipment manufacturers and vendors. Through education and advocacy, MWWA works to promote a safe and sufficient supply of drinking water for the Commonwealth's residents and businesses. Contact: Jennifer A. Pederson, Executive Director, [jpederson@masswaterworks.org](mailto:jpederson@masswaterworks.org)

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