



**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
Tel: 413-452-1302
Email: jaimye.bartak@waterandsewer.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Springfield Water and Sewer Commission Receives Competitive Financing
from Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds**

\$46,750,000 in Low-interest Competitive Loans Awarded to Commission

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (Commission) is excited to announce it has secured three competitive, low-interest subsidized loans for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects through the State Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF, CWSRF) programs. The projects support critical functions in the drinking water treatment and wastewater treatment and collection systems.

- 1. The Locust Transfer and Flow Optimization Project** will construct a conduit to connect the Main Intercepting Sewer (which transports approximately 70% of the region's waste to the Springfield Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility in Agawam) with one of the three new Connecticut River crossing pipes that will be installed in the summer of 2021. The conduit will allow for the diversion of flow from the Main Intercepting Sewer in order to perform future inspections and maintenance on the original Main Interceptor river crossing that has been in continuous service since the 1970s. The project will also include the installation of flow optimization structures to reduce combined sewer overflow to the Mill River. The Locust Transfer and Flow Optimization Project received a \$20 million CWSRF loan for the \$24,244,000 project cost.



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2. **The Nutrient Upgrades and Related Facility Improvements Project** involves the design and construction of improvements to the biological nutrient removal system, main electrical system, and rack room (where the removal of large objects takes place) ventilation system at the Springfield Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility. The project will improve treatment system efficiency and reliability and reduce nutrient pollution to Long Island Sound. This project will also ensure compliance with new regulations. A CWSRF loan of \$20 million will go towards the \$34,687,961 project.

3. **The Clearwell and Backwash Pump Station Replacement Project** received a \$15 million low-interest loan in 2020, and will now receive an additional \$6,750,000 loan from the DWSRF to cover the total project cost of \$21,750,000. Both the clearwell and backwash pump systems at the West Parish Filters Water Treatment Plant are essential for the continuous treatment and distribution of clean drinking water to the Commission's 250,000 customers.

The existing clearwell was built in 1925 and the backwash pump station was constructed in 1974. An assessment indicated that these facilities were in severe need of upgrades and redundancy to ensure reliable drinking water treatment, distribution and regulatory compliance. The existing clearwell stores filtered water prior to disinfection in the transmission mains leaving West Parish Filters. Presently, there is only one clearwell, which cannot be removed from service for maintenance or repairs despite numerous leaks.

The two existing backwash pumps are used to backwash (clean) the rapid sand filters. The pumps are obsolete, with no availability of replacement parts or service manufacturers. The new pump station will be constructed integral to the clearwell and will include two backwash pumps with increased horsepower and energy-efficient motors and controls and provide necessary redundancy.

As the Commission's only source of revenue is from the water and sewer services sold to ratepayers, securing low-cost financing from the CWSRF and DWSRF is part of an aggressive, multifaceted strategy to meet infrastructure investment needs and maintain customer affordability. The projects are part of the Commission's larger Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which aims to prioritize necessary



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infrastructure improvements for the aging water and wastewater systems, some components of which date to the early 1900s.

The Commission has aggressively pursued multiple alternative funding and financing sources for projects in the CIP, including annual subsidized loans from the DWSRF and the CWSRF, as well as a \$251 million potential loan from the federal Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), to reduce long-term costs and provide value for ratepayers. The DWSRF and CWSRF loans are also eligible for forgiveness of some of the principal based on Springfield's per capita income, unemployment rate, and population.

"I am excited that the Springfield region will benefit from these low-interest loans to support critically needed reinvestment in our essential drinking water and wastewater infrastructure," said State Senator Adam Gomez. "I thank MassDEP for recognizing the needs of the Springfield area and commend the Commission for its continual efforts to leverage state and federal funding to stabilize water and sewer rates for its customers."

"The Commission recognizes both the need to keep rates affordable, but also to sustain a drinking water and wastewater system that meets 21st century needs and provides dependable service," said Commission Executive Director Josh Schimmel. "This is why we employ a rigorous project planning and prioritization process and work to secure as many low-interest loan or grant opportunities as possible. We are grateful to MassDEP and the Clean Water Trust for their continued partnership in supporting the Springfield region's critical water needs."

The DWSRF and CWSRF are joint federal-state financing programs that provide low-interest loans for water supply and wastewater infrastructure improvement projects. The programs are administered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). Financing through the DWSRF and CWSRF programs offer loans at a lower-than-market rate of 2%.

About the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission is an independent, regional public utility that provides drinking water and wastewater service to approximately 250,000 people in the lower Pioneer Valley. The Commission provides retail drinking water service to Springfield and Ludlow, and wholesale drinking water to Agawam, Longmeadow, and East Longmeadow, as well as emergency/peak service to



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Southwick, West Springfield, Westfield, Chicopee, and Wilbraham. The Commission provides retail wastewater service to Springfield and wholesale wastewater service to West Springfield, Agawam, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Wilbraham, and Ludlow.

Photos (attached):

The Locust Transfer Project will connect to a new 72" wastewater conveyance line, seen here recently under construction on Bondi's Island, traversing the Connecticut River from the new York Street Pump Station (currently under construction).

Approximately 37,000 aeration heads (as shown here) will be upgraded as part of improvements to the biological nutrient removal system at the Springfield Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility in Agawam.

Two backwash pumps dating from 1974 (shown here) at West Parish Filters Water Treatment Plant will be upgraded.

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