

Long Island Water Conference

Legislative Forum



March 8, 2024

Opening Remarks

Jason Belle

Chairman, Long Island Water Conference

Superintendent, West Hempstead Water District



WEST
HEMPSTEAD
WATER
DISTRICT

Keynote Address

Supervisor Don Clavin

Town of Hempstead



Infrastructure Funding, Lead and Copper Updates & Support for NYS DOH & DEC

Paul Granger, P.E.

Legislative Committee Co-Chair,
Long Island Water Conference
Superintendent,
Hicksville Water District





Thank You for Including Our Chapter Amendment on Lead Right to Know Law

- We would like to extend our gratitude to Governor Kathy Hochul for including the requested chapter amendments to the Lead Right to Know Act submitted by water suppliers statewide in 2023.
- These changes were crucial to ensure water suppliers were not doing unnecessary or duplicative reporting as the amendments aligned the legislation with the Federal lead inventory requirements.
- This was a win for water suppliers while also maintaining transparency and providing access to information the sought by interested members of the public.

Reauthorization of LICAP

- The LIWC also appreciates the efforts of the Nassau and Suffolk County Legislatures for their continued support and recent reauthorization of the Long Island Commission for Aquifer Protection (LICAP) and commitment to bi-county cooperation for aquifer protection and management.
- Since it was established in 2013, LICAP has brought local water professionals and stakeholders together to develop a coordinated approach to managing groundwater issues and concerns facing Nassau and Suffolk.

2024 Legislative Agenda Overview

- Continued need for drinking water infrastructure funding
- Support for S.8730/A.7521 to provide water utilities with access to water quality infrastructure improvement funding
- Provide adequate funding to NYSDOH Bureau of Public Water Supply Protection & NYSDEC Region 1 Water Division
- Support for S.4350 Hinchey /A.3133 Steck calling for the enactment of the “Safe Water Infrastructure Action Program Act”
- Investment in Workforce Development
- Water conservation legislation to improve lawn irrigation efficiency
- Support \$70 million for Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

Emerging Contaminant Recap

- Total capital costs island-wide to treat 1,4-dioxane, PFOS and PFOA is at more than \$1.5 billion.
- More than 67 wellhead treatment systems for 1,4-dioxane, PFOS and PFOA removal are online as of March, 2024.
 - Water suppliers continue to swiftly and aggressively pursue means of action to install and implement treatment as quickly as possible.
- All of the efforts by our state, county and local elected officials to help secure such funding have been tremendously appreciated by the LIWC.
- We still have no shortage of budget holes to fill and new challenges on the horizon, so continued funding is needed to keep our water quality high and our costs low.
 - Additional wells need treatment for emerging contaminants
 - Cost to operate and maintain new treatment systems is a significant, on-going expense
 - Supply chain issues continue to impact cost and project timelines



Drinking Water Infrastructure Funding

- 50 public & private water systems provide water to 3+ million people on Long Island.
- 95% of submitted improvement projects to the DWSRF program remain unfunded.
- Estimates for repairing, replacing, and updating drinking water infrastructure adds up to **\$38.7 billion** over the next 20 years.
- The addition of emerging contaminant MCL compliance will cost billions over the next 20 years.
- Hundreds of wells are impacted by emerging contaminant treatment.
- Funding sources need to be established to help with customer-owned lead service lines when they are found.



Drinking Water Infrastructure Funding

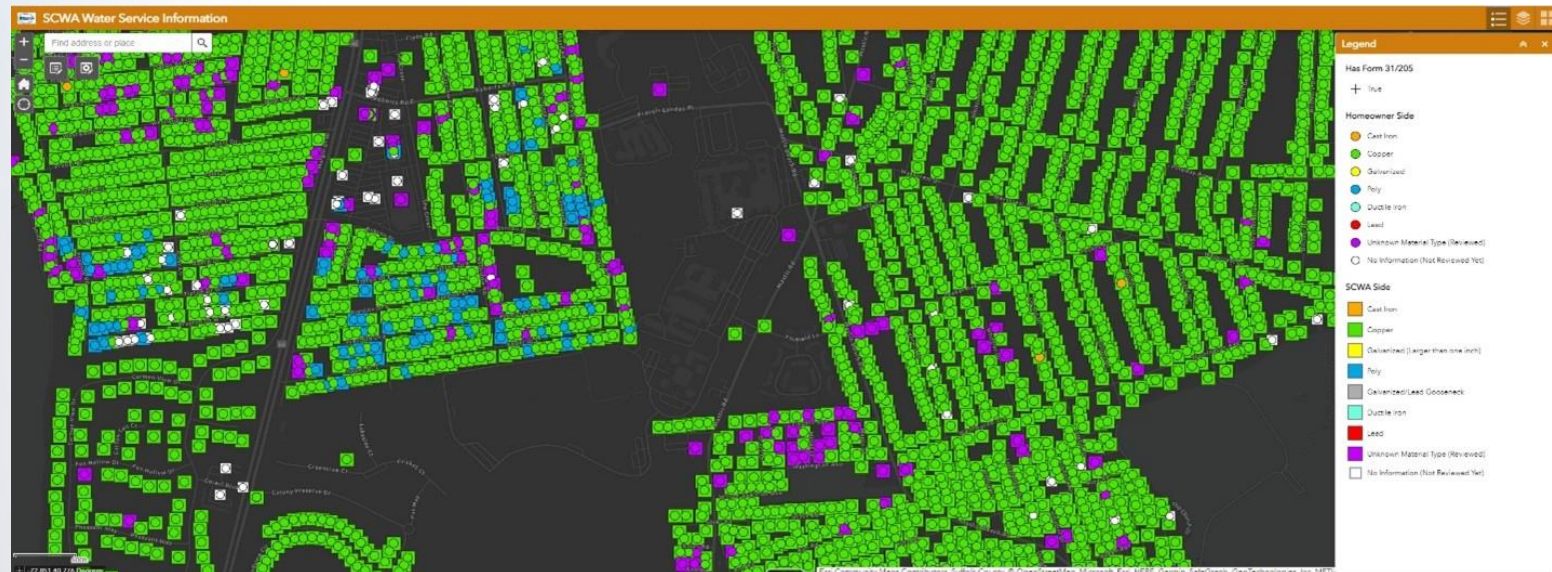
- The funding received from the state has been integral in our successful treatment of emerging contaminants so far. However, there is much more work to be done. We implore the Governor and State Legislature to increase funding to sufficient levels that will allow for continued construction of treatment for emerging contaminants and for the replacement of aging critical drinking water infrastructure.
- In advance of the promulgation of MCLs for future emerging contaminants, we also request that the Legislature consider measures that provide avenues to minimize ratepayer impact through a more practical implementation timeline coupled with additional funding.


EPA Lead and Copper Rule Revisions

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is in the process of updating its regulations to the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR).
- Long Island water providers continue to meet or surpass all current regulatory requirements, ensuring that our water is not corrosive and accelerating the leaching of any lead materials.
- With all water providers' distribution infrastructure adhering to requirements, if elevated levels of lead are found in a resident's home, it is indicative of issues with a water service line or plumbing fixtures.
- While the vast majority of lead-based materials have been phased out and replaced over the years, some residents may still unknowingly have them in their home, especially those with older houses and pipes.
- Replacement of lead service lines and other internal plumbing components in the home may be the homeowner's responsibility.

EPA Lead and Copper Rule Revisions

- As part of the revisions to the EPA's LCR, which are expected to be finalized in October of 2024, water providers have begun various education and awareness campaigns about what residents can do to limit lead exposure in their home should they have a lead service line or other lead-based fixtures.
- Water providers are engaging in an aggressive data-collection initiative, as required by the new rule revisions, to better understand identify the specific materials which have been used for water service lines throughout their service territories.





Provide Adequate Funding to NYSDOH & NYSDEC

- We are thankful to Governor Hochul and the State Legislature for providing additional funding for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Region 1 Water Division.
- As public awareness of unregulated contaminants increases, so too does the importance of maintaining funding to address spills and protect our vital groundwater source.
- The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) requires sufficient funding to regulate health effects and regulatory limits for these emerging compounds.
 - Failure to properly fund the NYSDOH will result in the delay of wellhead treatment implementation, adversely impacting water supply operations.
- We implore our legislators to prioritize funding these vital agencies and their programs for the upcoming state budget.

S.W.A.P Act & Water Conservation Legislation

Tyrand Fuller, P.G.

Legislative Committee Co-Chair,
Long Island Water Conference
Director of Strategic Initiatives,
Suffolk County Water Authority



**WATER YOU CAN TRUST
SERVICE YOU CAN RELY ON**



Safe Water Infrastructure Action Program (S.W.A.P.) Act

- This bipartisan program is made to address drinking water, storm water and sanitary sewer and gas line infrastructure.
 - It is modeled after the successful Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS).
- S.W.A.P. would provide annual funding to all municipalities in the state to identify and swap out old, deteriorating pipes, water mains and gas lines for newer, more efficient materials.
 - Most underground water infrastructure under New York State is aging, with some on Long Island exceeding 100 years of use.
 - Aging infrastructure is costly to localities, a threat to public safety and impedes economic development.
- We urge state legislators to take action and pass **S.4350 Hinchey / A.3133 Steck**

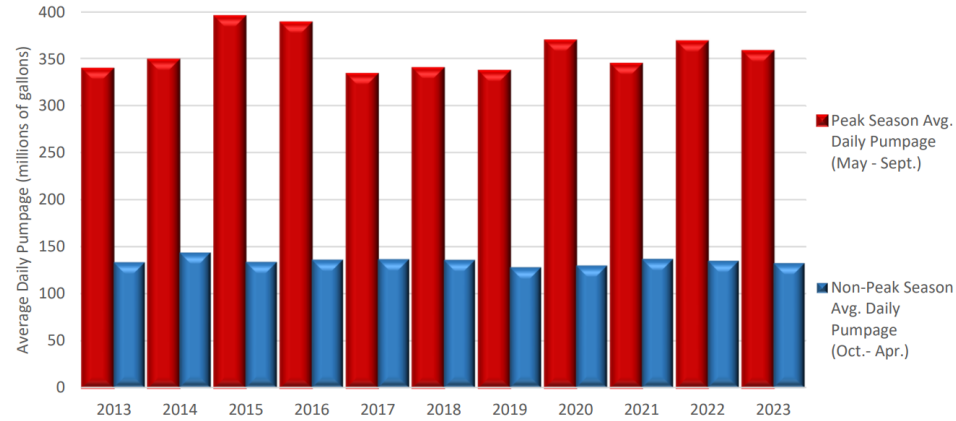


Water Conservation Legislation to Improve Lawn Irrigation Efficiency

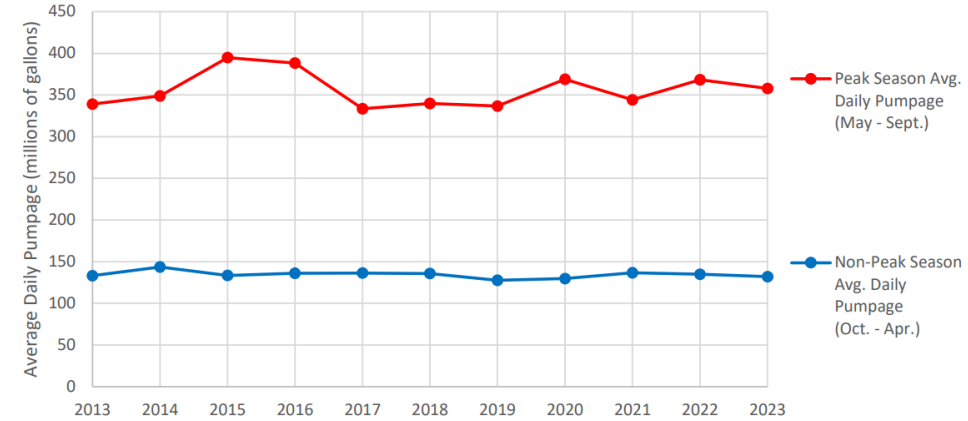
- Lawn irrigation is, by far, the most significant user of water throughout the spring and summer, even during times of drought.
 - Water use in most water service territories throughout Long Island increases 300% to 400% during the summer in comparison to the winter. This is almost exclusively due to the operation of irrigation systems.
- Thank you for the passage of legislation requiring pressure-regulated sprinkler heads. This is a tremendous step toward helping conserve water.
- The use of smart irrigation controllers is one of the most effective ways to help save water during irrigation season. Every automatic irrigation system should have one, and we strongly encourage our legislators to establish a funding stream for homeowners to convert to this water-saving technology.
- We urge our legislators to continue to support our water-saving efforts and to work alongside us in helping our shared constituencies reduce water waste.

Peak vs Non-Peak Pumpage

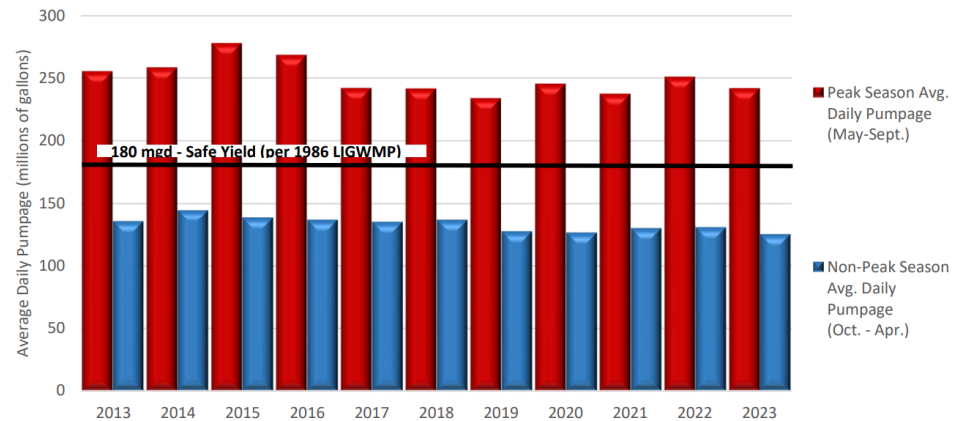
Suffolk County Public Water Supply
Average Daily Pumpage
Peak vs. Non-Peak



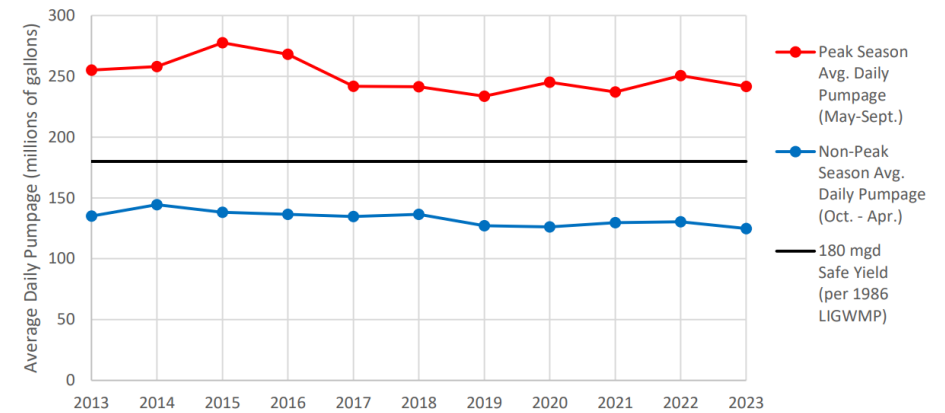
Suffolk County Public Water Supply
Average Daily Pumpage
Peak vs. Non-Peak



Nassau County Public Water Supply
Average Daily Pumpage
Peak vs. Non-Peak



Nassau County Public Water Supply
Average Daily Pumpage
Peak vs Non-Peak





Why Support Water Conservation?

- Human society simply cannot exist without a clean water source.
- The continued success of our region and economy is dependent on our access to a plentiful supply of high-quality water.
- Conservation helps to mitigate impacts of salt water intrusion and groundwater contamination.
- The majority of infrastructure projects with state and federal funding is taking place to ensure we have capacity to meet demands at peak times.
- We strongly ask our legislators to support legislation that adopts new water conservation regulations, stopping water waste and protecting our most precious and vital natural resource.

Support for Private Water Utilities to Access Infrastructure Funding Sources & LIHWAP

Steve Delligatti

Legislative Committee Co-Chair,
Long Island Water Conference
External Affairs Manager,
Liberty New York Water



Liberty™

Support for Private Water Utilities Accessing State Grant Funds A.7521 & S.8730

- Public grant funding is currently unavailable to investor-owned water utilities in New York State.
- Liberty New York Water, which serves more than 124,000 customer connections (over 300,000 Nassau County residents) on Long Island is currently ineligible for state or federal monies and other public funding opportunities.
- Access to federal or state grant funding would allow Liberty's water system to make crucial investments while also providing rate relief to hundreds of thousands of customers.
- All monies would go directly to necessary infrastructure projects for residents. The company will not see any profit from this grant funding.
- Taxpayers in Liberty New York's service territory are already partially funding existing grant programs and deserve to benefit from the grant monies pool that they are helping to fund.
- Established a dedicated advocacy website – stopthehiddentax.org



Support the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

- Created in 2021, LIHWAP was initially funded with Federal ARPA money that expired in 2023.
- Provided nearly \$70 million in water bill assistance to more than 40,000 New York families.
- Grants are extremely helpful in keeping costs down but the level of investment needed will require water rates to go up.
- Rate increases place a disproportionate amount of financial burden on low-income families.
- As more bills go unpaid, water rates for everyone go up.
- We urge that LIHWAP be reinstated through the inclusion of a \$70 million appropriation in the upcoming budget.

Q & A



Closing Remarks

Hon. Pat Peterson

**Immediate Past President, Nassau Suffolk Water Commissioners Association
Chairwoman, Locust Valley Water District**





Thank you for coming!

**We look forward to addressing these issues with you
on behalf of all the Long Islanders we collectively
serve.**

LIWC.org

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