

BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS HINGHAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE



WATER SYSTEM USAGE RATE INCREASE

**CAPITAL DEBT SERVICE ASSESSMENT FOR
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS**

Effective July 1, 2026

Presented by Russell E. Tierney, Managing Director / Superintendent

JANUARY 28, 2026

In 2019 Hingham's Annual Town Meeting voted to authorize the purchase of the water system by a 79.4% yes vote. During the next year the Town of Hingham finalized the transaction and obtained the needed financing, and on August 1, 2020, the daily operations were transferred from the previous owner's to Weir River Water System



The WRWS was set up as an enterprise fund which is self-supporting municipal accounting entity that separates the revenue and expenses of water system services from the general tax-supported budget.

It operates utilizing customer and other supporting fees to cover direct/indirect costs, debt service, and infrastructure maintenance, ensuring long-term financial sustainability for the utility.



This model allows for dedicated financial management, separating utility debt from municipal debt and ensuring that water fees are reinvested back into the water system.

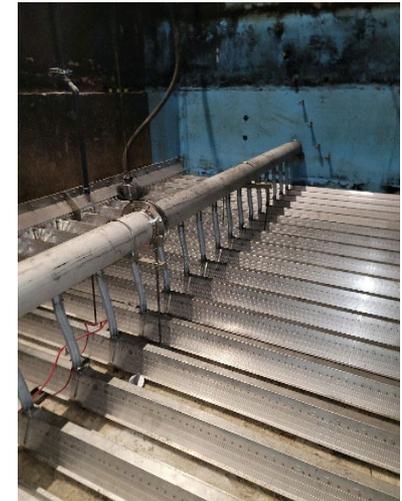
Providing outstanding customer service to our customers in Hingham, Hull, and North Cohasset while continuously supplying the highest quality water and improving the water system infrastructure

Water System Services

- **Water Treatment**
- **Distribution System O&M**
- **Billing Services**
- **Customer Service**
- **24/7 Emergency Repairs**
- **Capital Improvements**
- **Public Outreach and Education**
- **Water Conservation**



- **Focus on water quality by continuously reviewing and improving preventative maintenance programs**
- **Annual Water Main Replacement Projects**
- **Annual Water Treatment Plant Upgrades**
- **June 2026 - Update and Improve GPS Coordinates and GIS Mapping**
- **March 2026 - Finalize New Meter Reading System with Focus on Accuracy and Conservation**
- **January 2027 - Utilization of GIS System for Asset Management**
- **December 2027 – Revise Capital Study Report**
- **Spring 2028 – New Water Storage Tank and Booster Station in Hull**





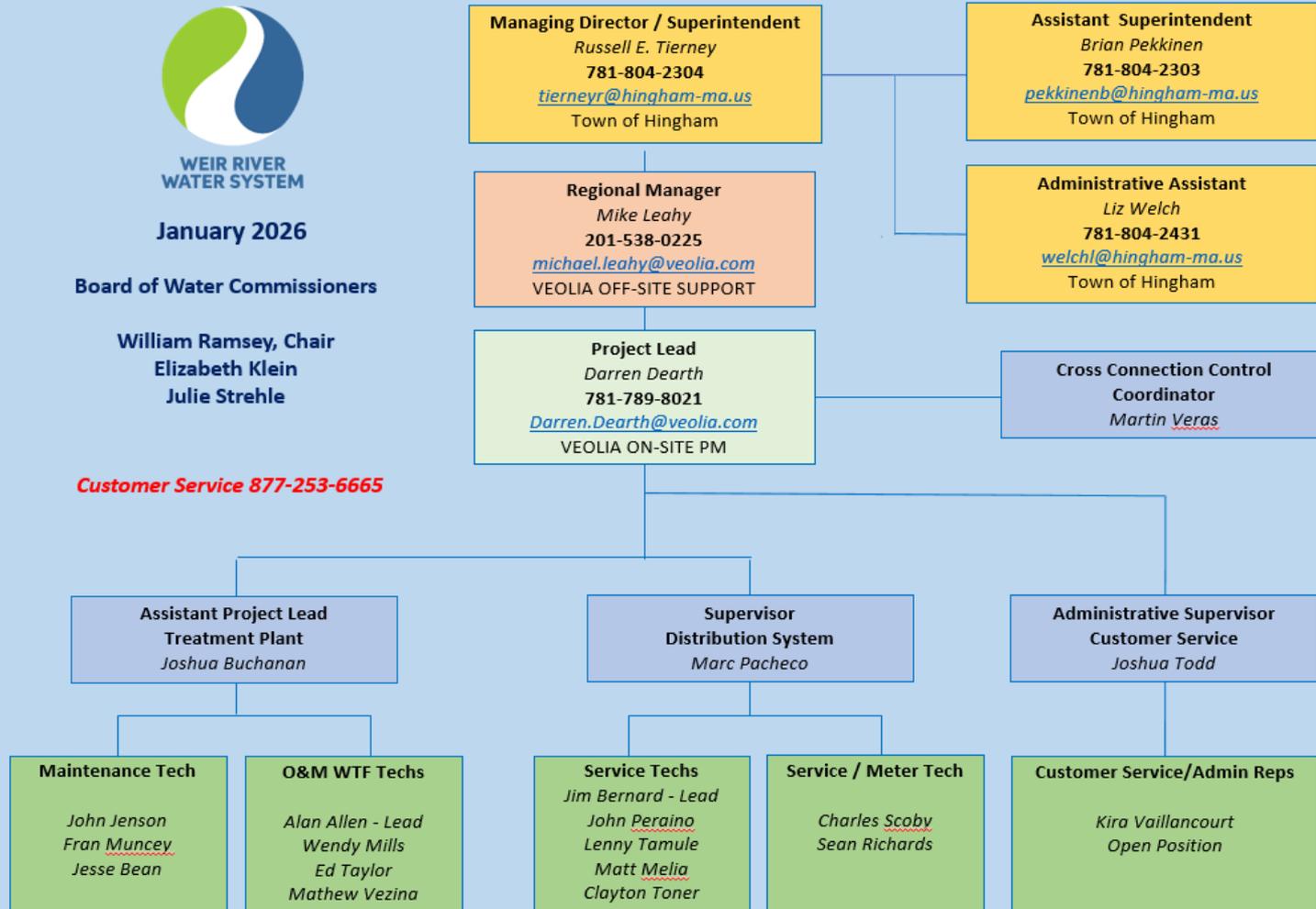
**WEIR RIVER
WATER SYSTEM**

January 2026

Board of Water Commissioners

**William Ramsey, Chair
Elizabeth Klein
Julie Strehle**

Customer Service 877-253-6665



VEOLIA

On-Site Staff - 22 Full Time Employees

EXAMPLE ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

DESCRIPTION	BUDGET
Revenue	\$14,260,000
Total Expenses	\$14,200,253
Personnel Services	\$271,431
Operating Expenses	1,633,746
VEOLIA Contract Services	\$5,385,000
HMLP Contract Services	\$583,000
R&M Hydrants, Valves, Other	\$273,000
Debt Service – Purchase	\$5,593,319
Debt Service – Capital	560,757

>1.0 Debt Service Ratio FY21-FY23
1.5M – Retained Earning
10.3% of Annual Revenue
17.5%- Retained Earnings Goal



Capital Improvements

7.1 M - Distribution System

5.2 M - Treatment Facility

MCAP Repairs and Upgrades

712,235 – Annual CY Ave

2.8 M – Total CY1-CY5

1.7 M - Distribution System (61%)

1.1 M - Treatment Facility (39%)

2.7 M – PFAS Class Action Settlement

Earmarked for PFAS study of the WTF, Raw Water Main Analysis and potential design upgrades for the WTF to meet the new PFAS regulations in 2031



250 K - GIS Grant - to improve asset identification and management – more accurate hydrant locations for fire department incident command software

750 K - Lead Service Line Inventory Grant – to comply with the revised lead and copper rule to be implemented in late 2027

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

MassDEP MCL = 20 ppt / WRWS Running Average = 5.12 ppt



The Weir River Water System is in full compliance with the current Lead and Copper Rule Requirements. Our continued sampling under the current rule shows that our water system is below the action levels.

The Weir River Water System exceeds the requirements set forth by MassDEP on lead in schools. All public and private schools serviced by the WRWS are sampled during every round of system sampling. This ensures our schools are in compliance with the lead and copper rule.

Year Sampled	Lead Results	Action Limit	Copper Results	Action Limit
2024	0 mg/l	0.015 mg/l	0.47 mg/l	1.3 mg/l
Results based on MassDEP calculated 90th Percentile				

The WRWS meets or exceeds MassDEP sampling requirements as outlined in our three year water quality sampling schedule

Water quality sampling is focused on raw water, finished water leaving the water treatment facility, and distribution system parameters which include total coliform bacteria. These parameters and our own in-house process control sampling provided our operators information on the treatment process.

Periodically our customers will see discoloration in the water system this is caused by several factors and is not an indication of the quality of drinking water leaving the water treatment facility/



Operation and Maintenance Programs including unidirectional flushing, hydrant & valve maintenance and main replacement programs are key factors in reducing these occurrences

Sediment Disturbance: Sediment disturbance and accumulated iron and manganese in the system. Naturally occurring minerals (iron and manganese) settle in pipes over time. Changes in water velocity—such as from hydrant flushing, fire fighting, or heavy demand—stir up these particles.

System Maintenance & Breaks: Water main repairs, valve work, and construction activities can cause sudden pressure changes that dislodge sediments and force them into the system.

Yellow/Brown/Red: Typically indicates rust, iron, or manganese, often caused by sediment disturbance.

Black: Frequently caused by manganese buildup in the water system.

Milky/Cloudy: Usually caused by trapped air in the pipes

**Repair 25-30 Water Main
& Service Leaks Annually**



**1150 Fire Hydrants Inspected
& Maintained Annually**

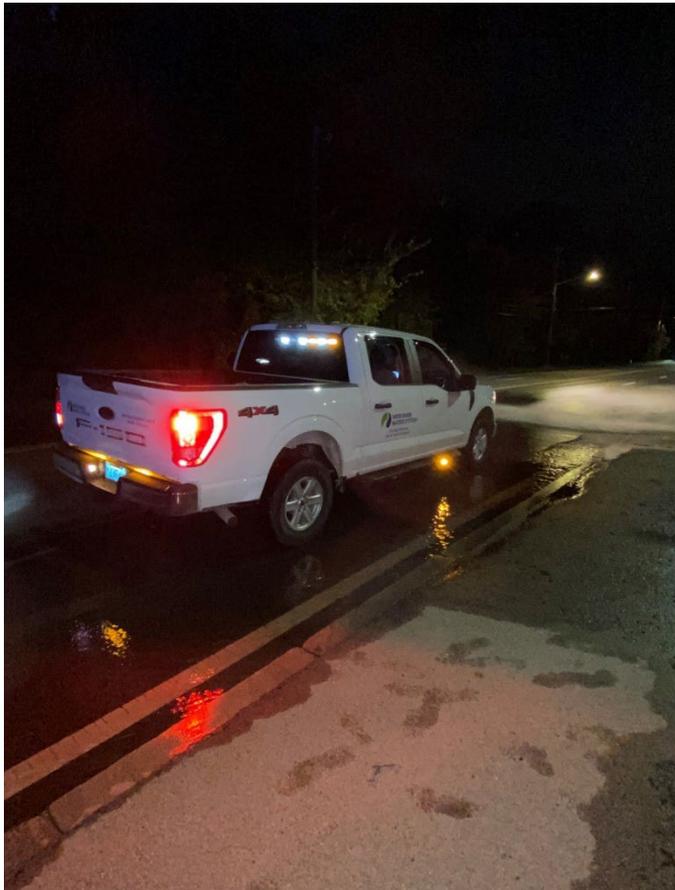


**Replace or Repair 10
System Gate Vales Per Year**

**15 Hydrants Replaced Per Year
100 Replaced Since 2020**

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM O&M

Annual System Wide Uni-direction Flushing Program



**3200 System Gate Valves
310 Annual Gate Valve Inspections**

TREATMENT PLANT O&M



***7.2 MGD Water Treatment Facility (WTF)
900 Main St, Hingham / Built in 1996***

WATER TREATMENT FACILITY

**Treat and Distribute over 1.2
Billion Gallons of Potable Water**



**11 Water Sources
including Accord Pond**



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



Distribution System Capital Improvements



23,500 LF (2.2%)

Water Main Upgrades

12,745 LF

Master Plan Recommendations

6,000 LF

Create Loops

Improve Water Quality

84 – New Hydrants

Improve Fire Protection

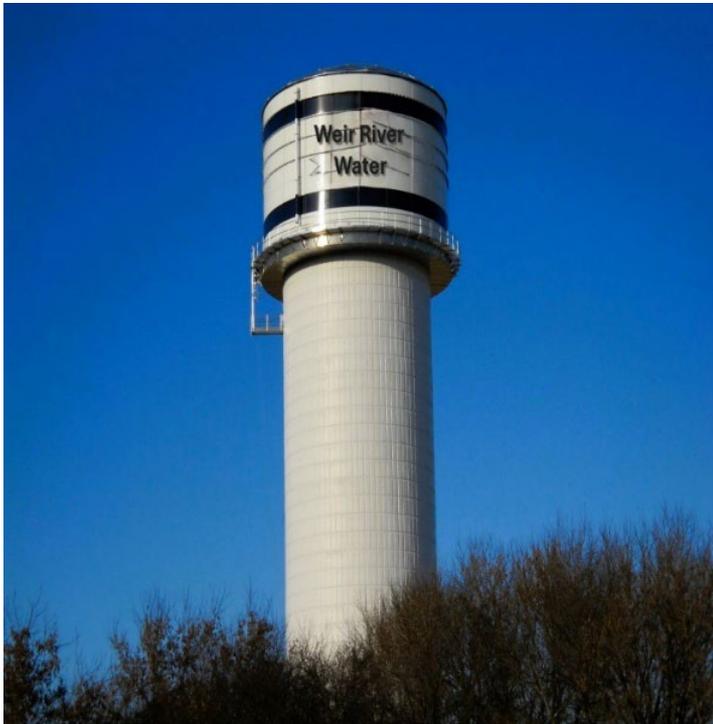
18 – New Gate Valves

Improve System Control



Future Plans / Improvements

The need for a new water storage tank within the WRWS distribution system was Priority 1 in our Master Plan developed in October of 2022. In conjunction a full hydraulic analysis and report was submitted in January 2024. The tank will provide significant benefits to the water system.



- Water System Redundancy
- Significant Increase in Available Fire Flows (AFF) in Hull and N. Cohasset and AFF Safety Margin
- Improved Insurance Service Office (ISO) ratings
- Water Quality Improvements
- Pressure Stabilization
- Additional Flow Capacity for Flushing and High Demands

As we reviewed our updated hydraulic model and ran scenarios for the new tank, it became clear that in order to install a tank on Strawberry Hill and have it function properly we will need a booster pump station. This new station will be key to ensure the system realizes all the benefits of the tank and create a new pressure zone.



- Maximize the tanks use and efficiency
- Eliminate the need to increase water pressure at the Water Treatment Facility
- Pressure Stabilization in the System
- Control and reduce water hammer in the system

Potentially reduce the chlorine levels at the plant and improve taste, odor and other at aesthetic complaints



Route 3A Rotary / Summer St Project

9,650 LF 12 Ductile Iron Water Main

January 2026 - Design / Permitting

March 2026 – Bidding / Award

April 2026– Pre Construction Meetings

May / June 2026 – Construction

Manomet Ave / Samoset Ave

11,200 LF 8” Ductile Iron Water Main

January 2026 - Design / Permitting

February 2027 - Bidding / Award

April 2027 – Pre Construction Meetings

May 2027 – Construction



Main St

6000 LF 12” Ductile Iron Water Main

October 2026 – Design / Permitting

Project in in the beginning phases of discussion and may need to be done two phases dependent on other projects and funding.

PFAS / Capacity Study – Due June 2026

A comprehensive report to redefine our treatment capacity and determine potential upgrades to meet the new PFAS regulations



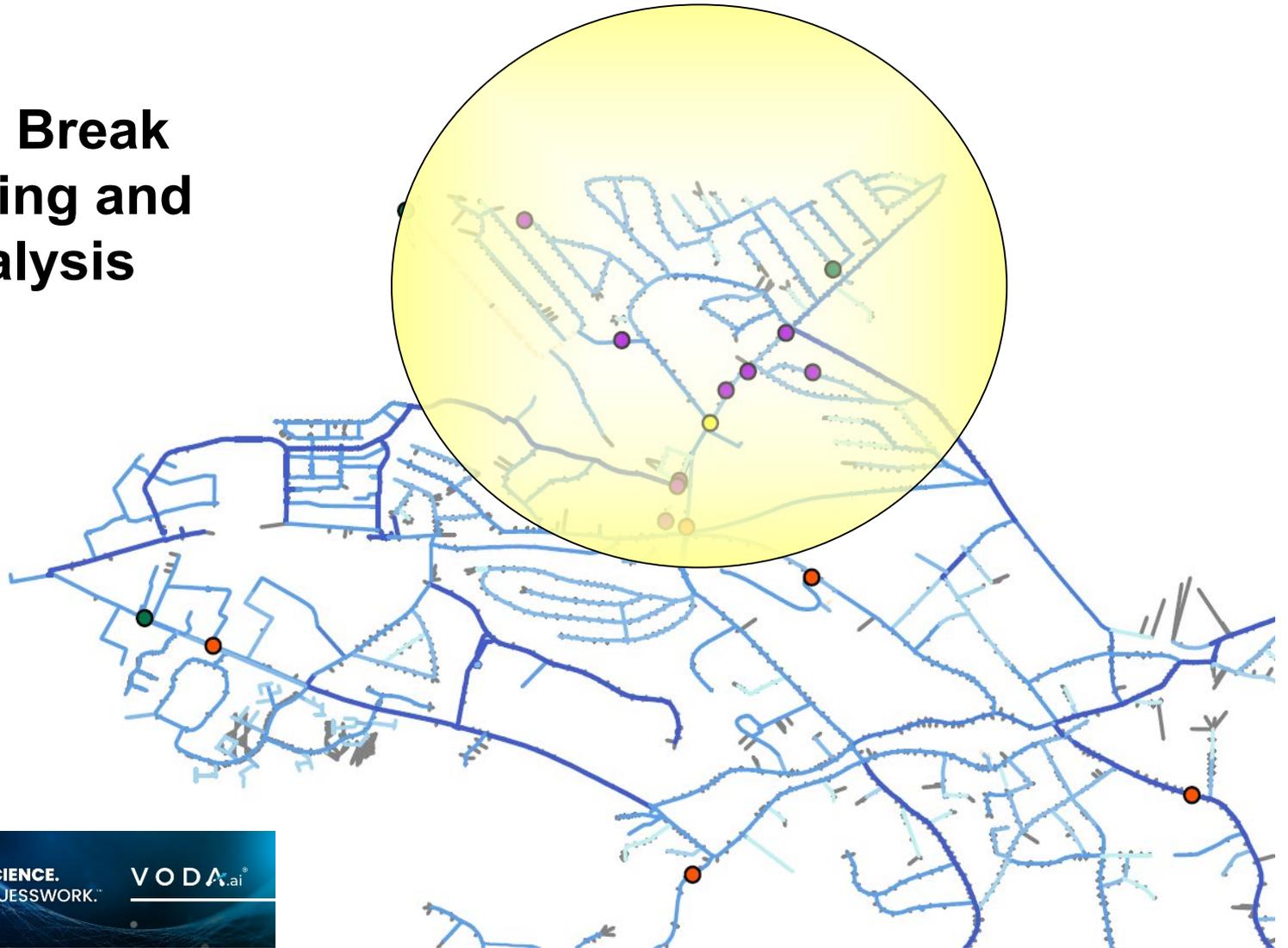
New Intake Accord Pond – Spring 2026

Replace the aged and deteriorating intake line from Accord Pond to improve water quality from the pond to the WTF

Raw Water Main Analysis – August 2026

The raw water mains are used to take water from all our sources and carry it to the WTF. These mains are aging and may need to be upgraded and/or replaced

Main Break Tracking and Analysis





**Pressure Data
Loggers**



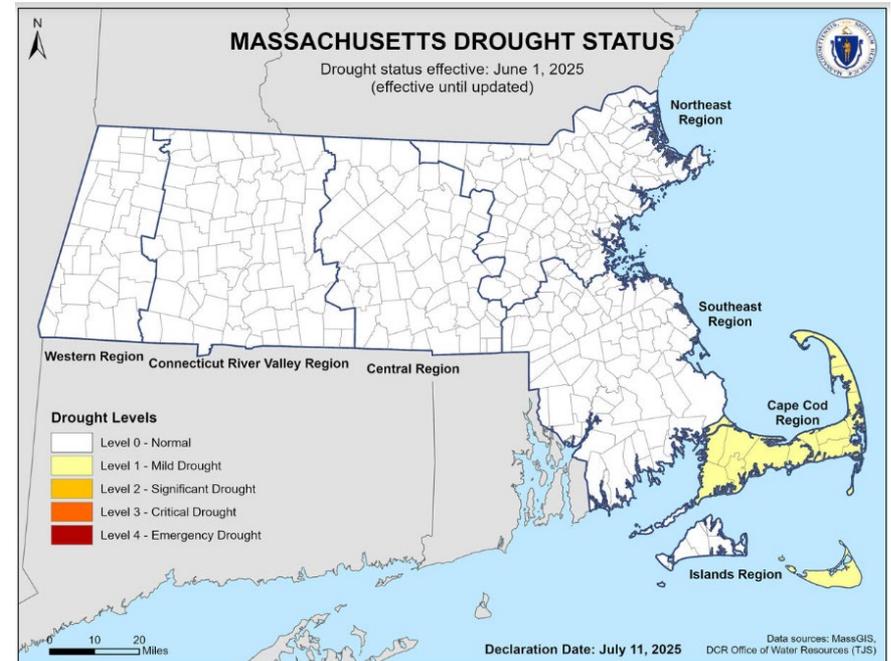
**Pressure
Recording Vaults**

Main Break Tracking and Analysis

Using our GIS system we will improve our monitoring of main break locations by adding loggers in the system. This will allow us to see “clusters” of breaks, and pressure abnormalities at a glance and then work with our consultants to prioritize replacement.

Drought Status / Conservation Measures

Our water sources and “capacity” are in very good shape. Several factors contribute to our decisions when determining what type of water conservation measures we implement. One factor is storage capacity, not overall system capacity. If residents do not follow our recommended and/or mandatory water conservation measures, it can make it difficult for our plant to recover tank elevations to ensure proper fire protection. In other words “we just can’t keep up”. Water storage tanks are not for lawn watering they are for fire protection



Our current “Water Conservation Restrictions” are being revised to match the state’s drought status. This new rule was implemented by the drinking water program for all registered public water suppliers. For example if the Southeast Region enters into a Level 2 – Significant Drought Status, we are required to comply with the conservation efforts outlined by the state no matter our capacity or current local conditions.

Conservation Measures - Drought Status

IF CUSTOMER COMPLY WITH OUR WATER CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS PLAN AND FOLLOW ANY ANNUAL RESTRICTIONS FROM APRIL 15 THROUGH OCTOBER 15, OUR SYSTEM CAN MAINTAIN TANKS LEVELS. TOO MANY RESIDENTS ARE WATERING EVERY DAY!



MANDATORY LEVEL 1 WATERING BAN
As of Monday, July 21, 2025
MODIFIED TWO DAY SCHEDULE

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES ENDING IN ODD NUMBERS
MONDAY & THURSDAY

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES ENDING IN EVEN NUMBERS
WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY

COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS
TUESDAY & FRIDAY

Lawn Irrigation Hours Restricted To
Midnight to 6:00 AM or 6:00 PM to Midnight

NO WATERING ON SUNDAYS
VIOLATIONS & FINES ARE ENFORCED

Every Drop Counts

LEVEL 0 – NORMAL – NO RESTRICTIONS

LEVEL 1 – MILD DROUGHT

LEVEL 2 – SIGNIFICANT DROUGHT

LEVEL 3 – CRITICAL DROUGHT

LEVEL 4 – EMERGENCY DROUGHT

For a healthy lawn, you only need 1.0 to 1.5 inches per week, distributed over 2-3 days. Watering deeply and less frequently encourages strong root growth, making your lawn more resilient.

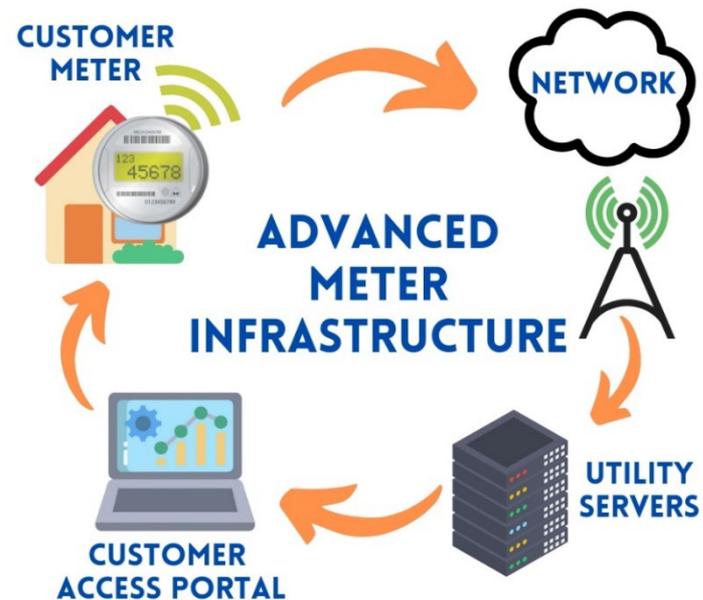
Conservation Measures – Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)

We are currently in the process of finalizing a Request for Proposals to upgrade our existing meter reading system with AMI.

The quantities and final details are being review and we anticipate this being posted in early September.

The program is planned for three phases starting with Hull and North Cohasset, then the following year moving into Hingham.

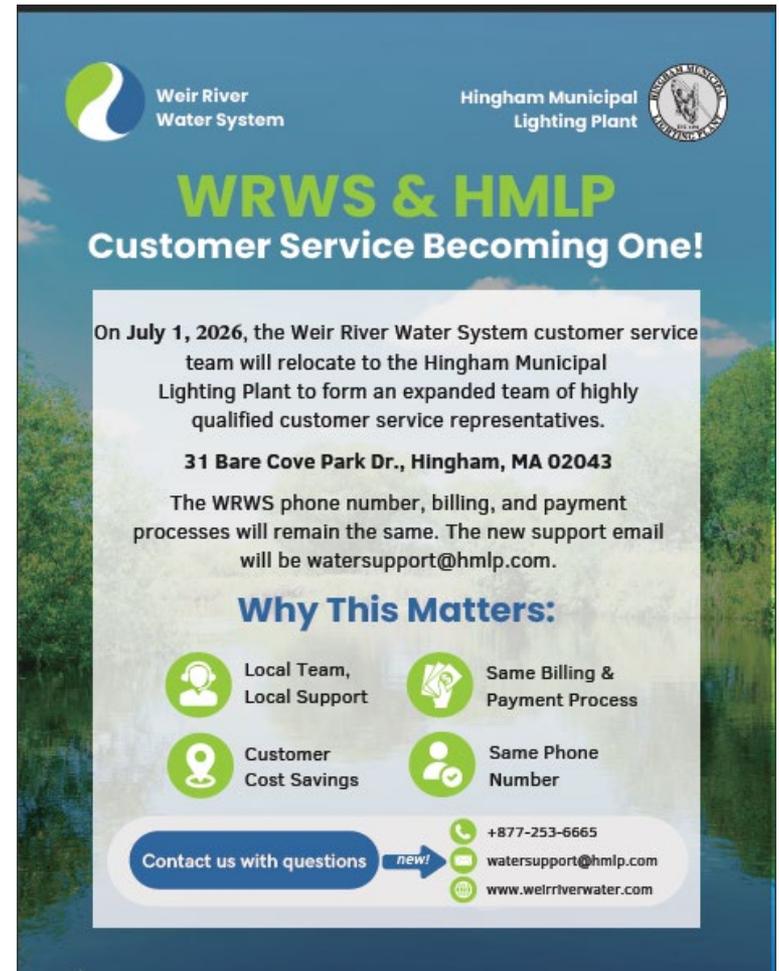
HOW DOES AMI WORK?



By upgrading to a new AMI system we will benefit from daily meter readings from all customers that are on the system. It will allow us to notice abnormalities in water usage in a more timely manner, improve unaccounted for water monitoring, provide notification during water conservation periods, and most importantly reduce the number of estimated water bills.

By July 1, 2026, WRWS will complete a transition of both its customer service and billing functions from Veolia to Hingham Municipal Light Plant. This move to a local team of employees will save on cost (which can be reinvested back into WRWS), and create efficiencies and local control.

We are currently working with our vendors on a combined electric, water and sewer bill. Sewer billing is projected added no later than July of 2027.



Weir River Water System **Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant**

WRWS & HMLP

Customer Service Becoming One!

On July 1, 2026, the Weir River Water System customer service team will relocate to the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant to form an expanded team of highly qualified customer service representatives.

31 Bare Cove Park Dr., Hingham, MA 02043

The WRWS phone number, billing, and payment processes will remain the same. The new support email will be watersupport@hmlp.com.

Why This Matters:

-  Local Team, Local Support
-  Same Billing & Payment Process
-  Customer Cost Savings
-  Same Phone Number

Contact us with questions  **new!**

-  +877-253-6665
-  watersupport@hmlp.com
-  www.weirriverwater.com

In July 1, 2021 (FY22), the WRWS implemented a *ten percent (10%)* rate increase that was including in the information provide during the acquisition and final vote to purchase the water system. There has been a significant cost increase in our operations and maintenance efforts including, but not limited to, supplies, materials and labor. Even with these rising expenses, the proposed rate increase remains well within the range that was anticipated when the system was acquired. This is a result of our continued commitment to operating the system efficiently and responsibly, on behalf of the communities we serve.

Description	% Increase Since 2021
Operations & Maintenance Contract	32%
Water Meters	45%
Water Meter Reading Radios	24%
Brass Materials for Repairs / Installations	20%
Water Service Pipe / Ductile Iron Fittings	38%
Well Testing and Rehabilitation	14%

In order to continue with the needed improvements, upgrades, and operation and maintenance of the Weir River Water System we are proposing the following increases / assessment to take affect on July 1, 2026:

- **3%** - Rate Increase*
- **\$ 65.00 / year** - Capital Debt Service Assessment – Single Family Residential

CDSA is directly related to the new water storage tank, booster station and rehabilitation of the existing Turkey Hill tank.

Multi residential, industrial, commercial and municipal / government customers will also contribute to the capital debt service. We anticipate the average water bill will increase approximately eight percent (8%).

* This includes water usage, prorated service charge and other system surcharges



Bill Example - Before July 1, 2026		Bill Example - On July 1, 2026	
Days of Service	92	Days of Service	92
Total Usage	36 CCF	Total Usage	36 CCF
Prorated Service Charge	\$53.64	Prorated Service Charge	\$55.25
Wtr Chg 12 CCF @ \$3.97 per CCF	\$47.69	Wtr Chg 12 CCF @ \$4.09 Per CCF	\$49.12
Wtr Chg 24 CCF @ \$5.05 per CCF	\$121.12	Wtr Chg 24 CCF @ \$5.19 Per CCF	\$124.75
Treat Fac Fixed Surch	\$34.06	Treat Fac Fixed Surch	\$35.08
Wtr Fac 36 CCF @ \$1.05 Per CCF	\$37.72	Wtr Fac 36 CCF @ \$1.08 Per CCF	\$38.85
MRAM Surcharge	\$4.45	MRAM Surcharge	\$4.58
Wtr Opr 36 CCF @ \$1.17 PER CCF	\$42.13	Wtr Opr 36 CCF @ \$1.21 PER CCF	\$43.39
		Capital Debt Service Assessment	\$16.25
TOTAL CURRENT CHARGES	\$340.81	TOTAL CURRENT CHARGES	\$367.28

MRAM = Main Replacement Adjustment Mechanism (2% of total bill)

WTR CHG = Water Usage Charge (CCF) – based on usage

WTR FAC = Water Treatment Facility Lease Surcharge – based on usage

WTR OPR = Water Treatment Operation and Maintenance Surcharge – based on usage

CDSA = Capital Debt Service Assessment (\$65.00 annually)

CCF – Hundred Cubic Feet

1 CCF = 748 Gallons



The Board of Water Commissioners, Town Administrators Office, Hingham Advisory Committee, Citizens Advisory Board and our staff would like to thank you for your continued support of the WRWS.

We would like also like to thank the Town Managers and Select Boards of Hull and Cohasset for their continued trust and support of the WRWS to provide them with water service.

Contact Info:
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