New Jersey American Water Begins Elkington Dam Rehabilitation Project

CAMDEN, N.J. – November 6, 2024 – New Jersey American Water announced today that it has begun a multi-phase, long-term rehabilitation project to ensure the viability of the Salem City water system's Elkington Dam located in Quinton, New Jersey. Working in coordination with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), New Jersey Fish and Wildlife, Pioneer Pipe Contractors, and Solitude Lake Management, this project will reduce the risk of overtopping the dam and preserve the current ecological environment while protecting Salem residents and properties downstream.

New Jersey American Water recently acquired the Salem City water (and sewer) system, including the Elkington Dam and the associated reservoir, in June 2024. NJDEP Dam Safety has classified the dam as a Tier 1 Safety Risk, mandating certain repairs be made to ensure the dam's integrity. The initial phase of work began in early November to draw down the reservoir, allowing time to design, permit, and implement a long-term solution.

"The demands and conditions of the Elkington Dam have changed drastically since the dam was designed and commissioned nearly 100 years ago," said Mark Fitzpatrick, Engineering Project Manager, New Jersey American Water. "We're taking proactive steps to ensure the dam is thoughtfully rehabilitated while preserving the current ecological environment. Investing in the long-term viability of critical infrastructure like the Elkington Dam is a core part of our commitment to the residents of the local community."

The reservoir will remain lowered during the evaluation, design and reconstruction process — anticipated to take 2-3 years to complete — to ensure the necessary safety improvements can be made while also taking into account the future operation of the water system. After the initial fish salvage operation is complete, New Jersey American Water will continue to work closely with NJDEP Dam Safety to evaluate the reservoir level and determine if additional lowering is required.

If residents have concerns or additional questions about the project, please contact New Jersey American Water at 1-800-272-1325.

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