New Jersey American Water Announces New Vice President of Business Development, Government Affairs and External Affairs

CAMDEN, N.J. – APRIL 23, 2025 – New Jersey American Water is pleased to announce that Kimberly Schalek Downes has joined the company this month as Vice President of Business Development, Government Affairs and External Affairs. In this role, Schalek Downes will lead the company's strategic outreach, legislative engagement, and growth efforts across the state. She will oversee the Business Development, Government Affairs, and External Affairs teams, reporting directly to the company president.

Schalek Downes brings more than 35 years of experience in government relations, strategic consulting, and public policy. Most recently, she served as President and CEO of Salmon Ventures Limited (SVL), a consulting firm she founded in 2003. At SVL, she managed a wide range of client relationships spanning utility companies, government bodies, and public institutions, and led the creation of the New Jersey Energy Coalition. Her extensive experience in public affairs, combined with her strategic vision, will help New Jersey American Water continue to grow and strengthen relationships with stakeholders across the state.

"I'm thrilled to welcome Kim to the leadership team," said Mark McDonough, President of New Jersey American Water. "Her deep roots in policy and government, along with her commitment to community engagement and infrastructure advancement, make her the ideal person to lead this integrated team at such a critical time for the company."

In addition to Schalek Downes' appointment, the company is pleased to announce the following recent promotions within the department:

Chelsea Kulp has been promoted to Director of Communications and External Affairs, where she will lead strategic communications, digital engagement and community outreach across the state. Since joining the company in 2015, Kulp has advanced through multiple roles, most recently serving as Senior Manager. She has been instrumental in initiatives like the Lead Service Line Replacement Program and has helped the company earn top rankings in customer satisfaction. Chelsea is an active leader in the water industry, serving as a Trustee for the American Water Works Association New Jersey Section and contributing nationally through her appointment to the AWWA Public Affairs Council, where she helps shape water policy and communication strategies.

Lee Mueller has been promoted to Director of Business Development. Since joining the company in 2019, Mueller has led communications and stakeholder engagement in both New York and New Jersey. Her background includes more than a decade of public affairs work with federal agencies, and she is a certified Project Management Professional.

David Mayer continues to serve as Director of Government Affairs, a position he has held since June 2019. In this role, Mayer leads legislative strategy and municipal engagement throughout the company's service areas. He brings decades of experience in state and local government, including previous roles as a New Jersey Assemblyman, Camden County Clerk, and Senior Director of Government Affairs for Comcast. Mayer is also the current mayor of Gloucester Township and an adjunct professor.

These strategic appointments reflect New Jersey American Water's ongoing commitment to leadership development, community partnership, and providing solutions to water and wastewater challenges. Together, Kim, Lee, Chelsea, and David will guide the company's efforts to invest in infrastructure, support affordability and conservation initiatives, and enhance stakeholder trust across New Jersey.

About New Jersey American Water

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and wastewater services to approximately 2.9 million people.

Media Contacts

Erin Banes
Specialist, External Affairs
New Jersey American Water
erin.banes@amwater.com

---

https://newsroom.amwater.com/2025-04-23-New-Jersey-American-Water-Announces-New-Vice-President-of-Business-Development,-Government-Affairs-and-External-Affairs