Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Pennsylvania American Water Celebrate 25 Years of Sponsoring Community Gardens at Indiana Event

Private, Community, Public and Corporate Groups Collaborate to Revitalize a Community Garden, Advance Beautification Efforts in Indiana

INDIANA, PA (Oct. 23, 2025) - Despite brisk air and the threat of rain, seven volunteers joined staff from the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy to plant shrubs, small trees and perennial flowers Tuesday at the new site of the Conservancy's community garden, near downtown Indiana.

The planting event brought together volunteers from the Democratic Women of Indiana County and Pennsylvania American Water Company, celebrating a new collaborative partnership meant to sustain the community garden for years to come.

The community garden's history in Indiana began in 1998 at Route 286 and Indian Springs Road, when the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy provided a community flower garden thanks to the long-time sponsorship of Pennsylvania American Water. Over the past 25 years, American Water has sponsored multiple Conservancy community flower gardens, contributing over $300,000 in funding since 2000.

However, road reconstruction by PennDOT on Route 286 rendered the original site inaccessible in 2020. After work concluded in 2023, PennDOT determined the site was no longer suitable for a garden and helped the Conservancy identify a new location three miles away, at Route 286 and E. Pike Road.

The new location was already a community garden managed by the Democratic Women of Indiana County through PennDOT's Adopt & Beautify Program. Following a year of collaboration among the Conservancy, Pennsylvania American Water, PennDOT and Democratic Women of Indiana County, the garden is now enrolled in the Conservancy's community flower garden program. The new location also recognizes Pennsylvania American Water, which funds flowers, mulch, garden materials and water irrigation.

Volunteers planted a variety of native species Tuesday, including wild geranium, butterfly weed, rhododendron, switchgrass, mountain laurel and perennial bulbs set to bloom next spring.

Sara Steelman, the garden's steward with the Democratic Women of Indiana County, expressed enthusiasm for the partnership.

"We are so pleased and grateful to be part of this partnership to help continue making this a welcoming habitat for our native pollinators and a beautiful garden for the Indiana community," Steelman said.

Joel Hilliard, senior superintendent of operations for Pennsylvania American Water, emphasized the shared commitment to environmental stewardship.

"The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's impact reaches far beyond the beauty of gardens like Indiana," Hilliard said. "For over 25 years, our partnership has grown through shared goals and hands-on collaboration. Events like this one highlight the power of working together to create healthier, more sustainable communities."

In addition to supporting community greening efforts, American Water supports the Conservancy's watershed restoration work spearheaded from the Conservancy's Indiana office, along Philadelphia Street. The company's long-standing sponsorship is recognized on signage at 12 of the Conservancy's gardens across Western Pennsylvania, including gardens in Allegheny, Butler and Fayette counties.

For more information about the Conservancy's community gardens and other greening efforts, the public can visit WaterLandLife.org/community-greening.

About the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) enhances the region by protecting and restoring exceptional places. A private nonprofit conservation organization founded in 1932, WPC has helped establish 11 state parks, conserved more than 290,000 acres of natural lands, protected or restored more than 3,000 miles of rivers and streams, and assessed thousands of wildlife species and their habitats. The Conservancy owns and operates Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, which is on the UNESCO World Heritage List and symbolizes people living in harmony with nature. In addition, WPC enriches our region's cities and towns through 130 community gardens and other green spaces and thousands of trees that are planted with the help of more than 7,000 volunteers. The work of the Conservancy is accomplished through the support of more than 10,000 members. For more information, visit WaterLandLife.org or Fallingwater.org.

About American Water
American Water (NYSE: AWK) is the largest regulated water and wastewater utility company in the United States. With a history dating back to 1886, We Keep Life Flowing® by providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable drinking water and wastewater services to more than 14 million people with regulated operations in 14 states and on 18 military installations. American Water's 6,700 talented professionals leverage their significant expertise and the company's national size and scale to achieve excellent outcomes for the benefit of customers, employees, investors and other stakeholders.

For more information, visit amwater.com and join American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X and Instagram.

About Pennsylvania American Water

Pennsylvania American Water, a subsidiary of American Water, is the largest regulated water utility in the state, providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services to approximately 2.4 million people.

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