

Protecting New Jersey's Rivers, Reservoirs and Watersheds Starts at the Source

CAMDEN, N.J., Sept. 25, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- In recognition of [American Water Works Association's \(AWWA\) annual Source Water Protection Week](#), Sept. 27-Oct. 3, New Jersey American Water is highlighting the importance of protecting the natural resources that provide safe, clean, reliable water to communities across the state.

Every glass of water starts somewhere. Source water protection begins upstream, where proactive efforts help identify potential risks, engage stakeholders and reduce threats before they can affect drinking water supplies. Through its source water protection program, New Jersey American Water works with partners across the state to strengthen watershed resilience and help safeguard the water resources communities depend on every day.

"The watersheds and aquifers that provide our drinking water are among New Jersey's most valuable natural resources," said **Mark McDonough, president of New Jersey American Water**. "Source Water Protection Week reminds us that protecting those resources begins long before water reaches a treatment plant and requires a shared commitment from all of us."

New Jersey American Water supports organizations advancing source water protection work through the [American Water Charitable Foundation's Water and Environment Grant Program](#). Earlier this year, the Foundation awarded more than \$179,000 to grants to 10 New Jersey organizations advancing projects that directly support cleaner waterways and healthier watersheds. As part of this year's program, a **\$35,000 grant to The Watershed Institute** is helping expand watershed stewardship and environmental education programs, while a **\$15,000 grant to the Raritan Headwaters Association** supports efforts to better understand how PFAS move throughout the Raritan River watershed. Additional funding awarded to organizations such as the Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space, Great Swamp Watershed Association and Camden's Charter School Network is helping to restore habitat, monitor water quality, expand environmental education and engage the next generation of environmental stewards. Together, these projects demonstrate how local action can make a lasting impact on water quality and watershed health across the Garden State.

During Source Water Protection Week, New Jersey American Water encourages residents and businesses to incorporate the following practices into their year-round routines:

- Plant landscaping around homes or businesses with more permeable surfaces, such as mulch, that allow water to soak into the ground.
- Do not overapply chemicals to plants and avoid application immediately before it rains.
- Keep litter, pet waste and yard waste out of streets and storm drains. Pet waste contains bacteria that can find its way into waterways through runoff.
- Select non-toxic or less toxic alternatives to typical household products, such as cleaning agents.
- Dispose of pharmaceuticals through collection programs where available rather than flushing them down the toilet.
- Use hazardous waste collection sites and services to dispose of items such as chemicals, paint, motor oil and batteries. Report hazardous material spills, illegal dumping or suspicious activity to local or state authorities.

"Protecting source water requires much more than treating water after it reaches a plant. It means understanding potential risks across an entire watershed, building strong partnerships and taking proactive steps to help prevent water quality challenges before they occur," said **Sean Quinn, senior program manager of Source Water Protection for New Jersey American Water**. "By combining science, planning and collaboration, we can strengthen the resilience of the water."

American Water's Source Water Protection Program provides a structured framework for assessing risks, engaging stakeholders and implementing proactive measures to help safeguard drinking water supplies. In New Jersey, those efforts include participation in a multi-agency Harmful Algal Bloom Discussion Group formed

following a significant harmful algal bloom event in the Millstone River. The group brings together water utilities, regulators, researchers, wastewater agencies and watershed partners to share monitoring data, satellite imagery, response protocols and emerging technologies, helping strengthen regional coordination and improve resilience throughout the Raritan Basin.

These efforts are part of a broader companywide approach highlighted in American Water's report, "[**Leading Upstream: How Private, Regulated Water Utilities Are Protecting Drinking Water at Its Source**](#)," which showcases how the company is using advanced monitoring technologies, watershed planning, source water assessments and data-driven decision-making to identify potential risks before they impact water quality.

"Every resident and business can play a role in protecting our waterways," said **Shealynn O'Toole, senior source water protection program manager for New Jersey American Water**. "Whether it's properly disposing of household chemicals, picking up pet waste or helping reduce stormwater runoff, individual actions can collectively have a meaningful impact on the rivers, streams and reservoirs that support our drinking water supplies."

Protecting source water requires a collective effort. By working together, utilities, governments, businesses, community organizations and residents can help preserve New Jersey's waterways and ensure reliable drinking water supplies for generations to come.

Learn more about New Jersey American Water's [source water protection](#) efforts at newjerseyamwater.com.

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 and celebrating 140 years in 2026, We Keep Life Flowing® by providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable drinking water and wastewater services to approximately 14 million people with regulated operations in 14 states and on 19 military installations. American Water's approximately 7,000 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 New Jersey American Water

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility in the state with approximately 875 dedicated employees working to provide safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services to approximately 3 million people. For more information, visit www.newjerseyamwater.com and follow New Jersey American Water on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#).

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