



NEWS RELEASE

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Southern Water Utilities One Step Closer To An Interconnected Water System

Recently the Southern Maine Regional Water Council received a \$100,000 grant to develop a Regional Water System Master Plan. The Council applied for and received the Maine Municipal Bond Bank grant designed to help local governments improve efficiencies and reduce costs.

Wright-Pierce, a Maine based engineering firm, was awarded a contract to do the work. The plan will assess water resources, evaluate existing and proposed water system hydraulics, and recommend the design of new interconnections, water storage, and pumping facilities to accommodate the inter-system transport of water. In addition, the study will identify potential areas for collaborative efforts to further reduce costs without compromising customer service.

"The goal is to create one fully interconnected regional water system to permit resource sharing and emergency back up. This document will be our planning tool to achieve that goal," stated SMRWC President Norm Labbe.

In 2005 utility-sponsored legislation to encourage regional solutions for water utilities was passed, creating Maine regional water councils. The Southern Maine Regional Water Council (Biddeford-Saco Water Company, Kennebunk-Kennebunkport-Wells Water District, Kittery Water District, Portland Water District, Sanford Water District, South Berwick Water District, and York Water District) is the first such council formed. It has already implemented a cost-saving group purchasing program and a comprehensive emergency response mutual aid plan. Combined, these seven utilities serve approximately 375,000 people in 23 communities.

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