



REGION 1 SMALL SYSTEMS INITIATIVE

ADDRESSING DRINKING WATER NEEDS
IN NEW ENGLAND

USEPA Region 1 is implementing several new initiatives designed to advance the capabilities and sustainability of small drinking water utilities in New England. The small systems initiative has many components that address the challenges and vulnerabilities of small water systems. Most of the country, including New England, is dominated by small water systems. Approximately 94.3% of drinking water systems serve 3,300 people or less in New England.

State	Number of Systems ¹	Number of systems Less than 3,300 ²
Connecticut	2,700	2,643 (97.9%)
Rhode Island	479	451 (94.2%)
Massachusetts	1,735	1,581 (91.1%)
Maine	1,950	1,916 (98.3%)
New Hampshire	2,412	2,371(98.3%)
Vermont	1,366	1,334 (97.8%)
Total	9,642	9,096 (94.3)

Often the small water systems in New England cannot develop or access the technical, managerial, and financial resources needed to comply with USEPA and state programs and regulations. Small systems lack staff, knowledge of state and federal regulations, have a higher per capita cost of operations as compared to larger systems, and are often unable to update their systems with new and existing technology due to financial constraints. As a result, USEPA is focusing on these small systems.

For more information, contact Jeff Butensky (management and financial questions), (617) 918-1665 or Denise Springborg (technical questions) at (617) 918-1681.

Region 1 Small Systems Initiatives

Revamping Region 1's Small System Website - Numerous brochures and guidance documents produced by USEPA, states, and other organizations are available to help small systems. Region 1 is revising its small systems website to include updated information and links to these

¹ Factoids: Drinking Water and Ground Water Statistics for 2008, USEPA

² Envirofacts - http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/sdwis/sdwis_ov.html

documents covering the wide array of topics in the drinking water program. The region will also continue to find ways to promote and increase awareness of these materials. This webpage is located at http://www.epa.gov/region1/eco/drinkwater/small_dw_initiative.html

Board Training – In partnership with the New England Water Works Association, On-line Board Training is being developed.

Business Owner's guide to Complying with Drinking Water Regulations – Restaurants, hotels, and office buildings are not in business to supply drinking water and are often confused by the numerous regulations associated with being a public water supplier. To assist these small water suppliers, Region 1 is developing a state specific guide for Maine that can also be adapted for use by other New England states.

Pocket Sampling Guide for Transient Non-Community Systems (TNCs) - Based on the widely successful Region 1 funded Small Systems Pocket Sampling Guide, Region 1 in coordination with New England Water Works Association, is adapting the guide for TNCs. The new guide will be limited to sampling for bacteria and nitrate/nitrite and contain emergency preparedness information.

Effective Utility Management (EUM) for Small Systems - In 2011, Region 1 is working with approximately 50 wastewater and drinking water ARRA recipients as part of a pilot project to promote the EUM approach at small utilities. EUM self assessments will be guided by The Cadmus Group and resources provided to assist utilities in key areas such as operational optimization and financial viability. Cadmus will conduct a one day workshop at each utility to identify priority needs and develop customized implementation plans. Approximately 15 systems will receive additional technical assistance to help them implement the plan.

Technical Assistance for At-Risk Small Systems - Many small systems have wells in vulnerable areas and are limited in their resiliency and emergency preparedness. In coordination with the New England states, Region 1 is raising awareness about flooding and other hazards, as well as building capacity for emergency response. Currently, Region 1 and NH DES are identifying at-risk water infrastructure assets based on FEMA flood maps and providing follow-up assistance for those systems. Community based exercises including flood scenarios and WARN workshops will be conducted for the region's at-risk systems. The region is also partnering with USACE and the New England states to conduct generator assessments at priority utilities.

Small Systems & the Schools Initiative – Region 1 is implementing an initiative to support safe drinking water at schools. It includes adopt-a-school case studies, educating school administrators about the importance of drinking water, ensuring safe water at day care facilities, and improving compliance at schools with their own water systems. See project specific fact sheet for more information.

Green Jobs at Small Systems - Region 1 is promoting green jobs for the water sector. This initiative includes a teacher's guide, a drinking water curriculum, a drinking water operator/teacher toolkit, a water boot camp, and an environmental placement partnership internship program. See project specific fact sheet for more information.