

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Commissioner



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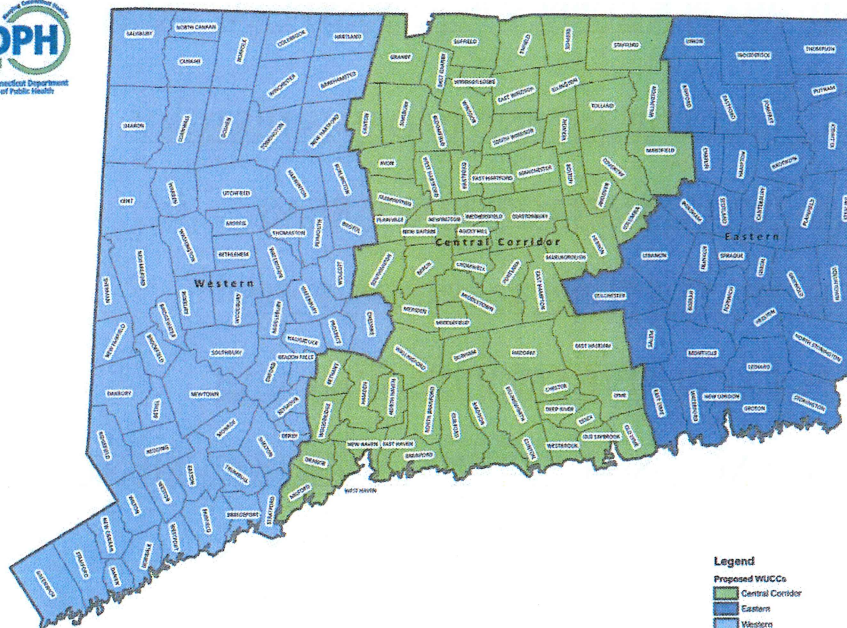
Nancy Wyman
Lt. Governor

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WATER UTILITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE (WUCC) PLANNING PROCESS FOR PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS (PURSUANT TO CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTE § 25-33n)

Report Period: July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017



Final Altered Boundaries of the Public Water Supply Management Areas



January 2, 2018

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I) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Pursuant to § 25-33n of the Connecticut General Statutes (*Conn. Gen. Stat.*), the Commissioner of Public Health (Commissioner) is required, on or before the second Wednesday after the convening of each regular session of the General Assembly, to submit a report to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the environment and public utilities, which describes the status of, for the year ending the preceding June thirtieth, the water planning process established under *Conn. Gen. Stat.* §§ 25-33g to 25-33j, inclusive, and efforts to expedite the process (WUCC Annual Report). This report, which covers July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017, will describe the status of the water planning process established under *Conn. Gen. Stat.* §§ 25-33g to 25-33j, inclusive, and efforts to expedite the process. The three WUCCs were convened by DPH Commissioner Raul Pino in June of 2016, which initiated the two year planning process.

II) WUCC PLANNING PROCESS STATUS/PROGRESS JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017:

The three WUCCs completed the Final Water Supply Assessment and Final Recommended Exclusive Service Area Boundaries document during the reporting period. These two major milestones are discussed within this section.

The *Water Supply Assessment* (WSA), the first of the four components of the area-wide supplement was completed for all three WUCCs. The purpose of the WSAs are to evaluate existing conditions and deficiencies within the Public Water Supply Management Areas (PWSMA). Per statute, the Final WSA and associated mapping were completed within the mandated six months of the convening of the WUCCs. Per statute and regulation, the following six topics are discussed within the WSAs:

1. Description of existing water systems, including:
 - a. History of water quality, reliability, service, and supply adequacy.
 - b. General firefighting capability of the utilities.
 - c. Identification of major facilities that need to be expanded, altered, or replaced.
2. Availability and adequacy of any future water source(s).
3. Existing service area boundaries and public water system limits established by statute, special act, or administrative decision, including a map of established boundaries, and identification of systems without boundaries.
4. Present and projected growth rates, including population data, land use patterns and trends, and identification of lands available for development.
5. Status of water system planning, land use planning, and coordination between public water systems.
6. A discussion of regional issues, needs, and deficiencies.

These and other issues that may arise during the Coordinated Water System planning process will be evaluated in the Integrated Report, including existing and future projected population, existing and alternative water supplies, source protection, water conservation, existing and potential interconnections, system ownership and management, satellite management/

ownership issues, minimum design standards, financial considerations, potential impacts on other uses of water resources, and land acquisition for source water protection. Delineation of *Exclusive Service Areas* (ESA), the second part of the area-wide supplement, was conducted on a statewide basis during this reporting year. An ESA is defined as an area where public water is supplied by one system. Numerous factors are considered in determining ESA designations in accordance with the regulations, including the following:

- Existing service areas;
- Land use plans, zoning regulations, and growth trends;
- Physical limitations to water service;
- Political boundaries;
- Water company rights as established by statute, special act, or administrative decision;
- System hydraulics, including potential elevations or pressure zones; and
- Ability of a water system to provide a pure and adequate supply of water now and into the future.

Establishment of boundaries for ESA holders is intended to ensure that safe and adequate drinking water is available to areas of the state where public water supply is needed. ESA designations are established based on the regulatory criteria noted above and are based upon the agreement by a utility or municipality to serve, as necessary, previously identified unserved areas in accordance with applicable state statutes and regulations. Existing service areas (i.e., areas where service is currently being provided) were maintained and automatically received ESA designations via the delineation process. As part of this process, each public water system and municipality in the PWSMAs was provided the opportunity to request ESA designations beyond their existing system boundaries that cover areas currently unserved by public water supply.

III) DPH PLAN TO COMPLETE THE WUCC PROCESS:

The WUCCs are currently halfway through the statewide coordinated water system planning effort for the first time since the law passed in 1985. To date, the process has been on-time and on-budget. Once completed, the area-wide supplement that includes the water supply assessments, exclusive service area boundaries document, and integrated report will assist communities in planning for public water supply and will equip municipalities to deal with public drinking water supply issues.

The lack of WUCC management area coordinated plans for all areas remains a basic need that must be addressed for state drinking water planning success. The legislation envisioned that the WUCCs would revise their coordinated plans every ten years. The coordinated plans of previously convened WUCCs were not updated primarily due to a lack of available state funds and staff to administer the process. The WUCC planning process requires constant vigilance and regular updates to reflect change.

Current accurate coordinated plans are needed to reflect changes over the past two decades to the economy, individual public water system plans, local and regional planning, and environmental impacts to supply adequacy. The work that will form these plans continues to be a critical component of Connecticut's state water plan, currently under development pursuant to *Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22a-352*.

The former Southeastern Connecticut WUCC had a DPH-approved plan. That plan led to the creation of a regional Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments Water Committee (Committee) that was led by local leaders who worked together locally to promote and implement numerous water supply projects. Notably, the Committee initiated a regional water supply pipeline and regional energy plan. The major regional pipeline initiated by the Committee currently provides cost-effective, reliable water service to several municipalities in the region. The DPH hopes to ensure drinking water supply planning is carried out similarly across the state with the WUCCs continuing to work with local and regional leaders on water supply planning projects.

In 2011, a WUCC advisory group was convened to discuss historic problems, current shortcomings, and make recommendations for improvements. Recommendations provided were to sizably increase stakeholder and municipal involvement and to improve coordination between public water systems and the municipalities served. Management area consolidation was also recommended given the costs associated with preparing WUCC management area coordinated plans for the state's small footprint. The group recommended that WUCC consolidation efforts consider the state's regional planning boundaries to encourage increased municipal involvement and that current, accurate technical data be used to demonstrate system adequacy prior to the establishment of ESA boundaries by the WUCCs.

On October 27, 2014, the Commissioner altered the boundaries of the public water supply management areas thereby reducing the number of areas from seven to three. The Commissioner then convened the three WUCCs in June 2016. The DPH and Milone & MacBroom, Inc., are working toward completing the WUCC process in accordance with the statutory and regulatory framework. The final parts of the area-wide supplement, the Integrated Report and Executive Summary, will be completed throughout the next year and are discussed in further detail in Section IV.

IV) NEXT STEPS:

With the next report period that began on July 1, 2017, each WUCC continues to prepare the Coordinated Water System Plan and area-wide supplement by completing the Integrated Report and Executive Summary for their public water supply management area. Per regulation, the Integrated Report shall contain at least the following:

- An area-wide overview which integrates individual water system plans.
- Discussion of the relationship and compatibility of the coordinated water system plan with proposed or adopted land use plans and growth policies, as reflected in local, regional and state plans. Consideration should be given to both protection and development of public water supply sources and to availability of public water service.
- Evaluation and identification in priority order of alternative water sources recommended to supply future area-wide water system needs. Include appropriate ground or surface water studies, safe yield estimates and arrangement for development and delivery of the water supply.
- Plans for any necessary interconnection of both raw and treated water between public water systems for both daily and emergency water supply use.
- A plan for joint use, management or ownership of services, equipment, or facilities.
- A plan for satellite management or transfer of ownership.
- Provisions for minimum design standards applicable to all water system improvements and all new public water systems within the management area. Any minimum design

- standard established by a WUCC shall be at least as stringent as those standards recognized by the department.
- Presentation of financial data as related to area-wide issues such as interconnections, shared or joint use facilities, regional projects, and information not included in individual water system plans.
 - Consideration of the potential impacts of the plan on other uses of water resources, including water quality, flood management, recreation, hydropower, and aquatic habitat issues.

Following completion of the Integrated Report, an Executive Summary will be prepared by the WUCCs to serve as an abbreviated overview of the coordinated water system plan for each PWSMA. The summary will be factual and concise, and will summarize the major elements of the coordinated water system plan.

Following the completion of the area-wide supplement, the Coordinated Water System Plan will be compiled. A Coordinated Water System Plan consists of the individual water system plans of each public water system within a public water supply management area, filed pursuant to *Conn. Gen. Stat. § 25-32d*, and an area-wide supplement to such plans developed pursuant to *Conn. Gen. Stat. § 25-33h* that addresses public water system concerns pertaining to the public water supply management area as a whole. *Conn. Gen. Stat. § 25-33d(f)*. The WUCCs are required to submit the coordinated plan to the Commissioner for the Commissioner's approval not more than two years after the first meeting of the WUCC.

The WUCCs coordinated plan is required to promote cooperation among public water systems and include, but not be limited to, provisions for: (1) integration of public water systems, consistent with the protection and enhancement of public health and well-being; (2) integration of water company plans; (3) exclusive service areas; (4) joint management or ownership of services; (5) satellite management services; (6) interconnections between public water systems; (7) integration of land use and water system plans; (8) minimum design standards; (9) water conservation; (10) the impact on other uses of water resources including water quality, flood management, recreation and aquatic habitat issues; and (11) acquisition of land surrounding wells proposed to be located in stratified drifts. A WUCC is required to review and update its coordinated plan at least every ten years or sooner. *§ 25-33-l(i)(l)* of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

Any permit issued by the Commissioner is required, to the extent feasible, to be consistent with any coordinated plan. *Conn. Gen. Stat. § 25-33i(a)*. In addition, *Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22a-352* requires the Water Planning Council (WPC) to consider WUCC plans in developing the state water plan.

V) CONCLUSION:

With the completion of the Water Supply Assessments and the Exclusive Service Areas, the Western, Central Corridor and Eastern WUCCs initiated and made significant progress toward completing this critical statewide planning process. This important planning effort has seen water utilities, state and local governments, stakeholders and the public work together to ensure that smart planning decisions are made and formalized for Connecticut's public water supplies. The resulting plans will maximize efficient and effective development of the state's public water supply systems, promote public health, safety and welfare, and work to ensure an adequate supply of public drinking water for the next 50 years.