

# **Supporting Decentralized Wastewater Systems: Funding and Technical Assistance**

**Sept. 3, 10-11am PT / 1-2pm ET**



# Supporting Decentralized Wastewater Systems Funding and Technical

Q&A

**You ask:** 13:05  
How do I use these awesome tools?

**Joshua Jones answered:** 13:06  
You are already using one of the most awesome tools. We'll discuss the rest right away.

Please input your question

☐ Send Anonymously Send

Sept. 3, 10-11am PT / 1-2pm ET



Mute



Chat



Raise Hand



Q&A

Leave Meeting

# Certificate of Completion

This session has **NOT** been submitted for pre-approval of Continuing Education Credits, but eligible attendees will receive a certificate of attendance for their personal record.

## **To receive a certificate:**

- You must attend the entire session
- You must register and attend using your real name and unique email address - group viewing credit will not be acceptable
- You must participate in polls
- Certificates will be sent via email within 30 days

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact [smallsystems@syr.edu](mailto:smallsystems@syr.edu).

# About EFCN

The **Environmental Finance Center Network (EFCN)** is a university- and non-profit-based organization creating innovative solutions to the difficult how-to-pay issues of environmental protection and water infrastructure.

The EFCN works collectively and as individual centers to address these issues across the entire U.S, including the 5 territories and the Navajo Nation. The EFCN aims to assist public and private sectors through training, direct professional assistance, production of durable resources, and innovative policy ideas.





WaterNow is:

- A network of water leaders advancing resilient and sustainable water management strategies.
- A nonprofit consultancy demonstrating the viability and value of distributed, green, and nature-based approaches.
- A resource for water leaders, providing guidance and expertise on policy, funding, and implementation for innovative water solutions.

We are committed to empowering local water leaders and helping communities thrive.



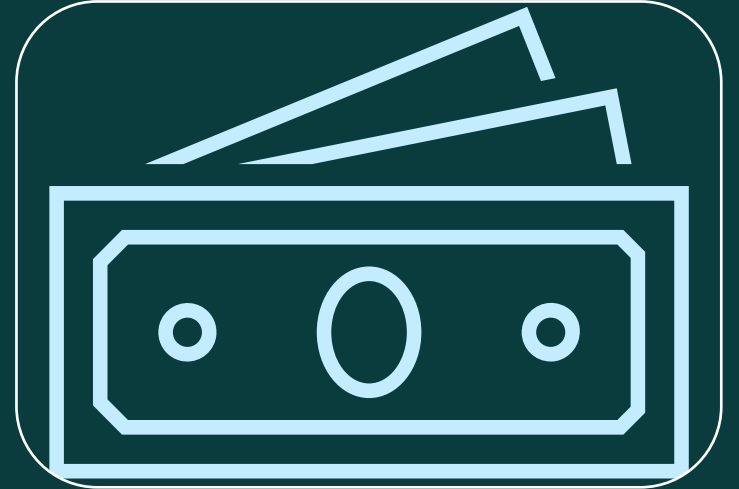
# Webinar Objectives



Highlight the opportunity to support homeowners with onsite wastewater systems in small and rural communities.



Explore methods of delivering support to private owners of onsite wastewater systems.



Highlight funding and technical assistance available to support clean water projects and programs in small communities.

# Today's Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Financial Assistance for Wells & Septic Systems in Wake County, NC
- Enhancing Lives in SC: Mount Pleasant Waterworks' Septic Maintenance Program
- Moderated Discussion and Q & A
- Technical Assistance Opportunities



# Today's Speakers



**Evan Kane**  
Director, Onsite Water  
Protection  
Wake County, NC



**Guinn Wallover**  
Water Quality and Environmental  
Program Specialist  
Mount Pleasant Waterworks, SC



**Allan Clum**  
General Manager  
Mount Pleasant  
Waterworks, SC

# Today's Speakers



**Emerson O'Donnell**  
Senior Program Manager  
WaterNow



**Amy Weinfurter**  
Director of Strategic Projects  
WaterNow

# Financial Assistance for Wells & Septic Systems in Wake County, NC

WaterNow Webinar

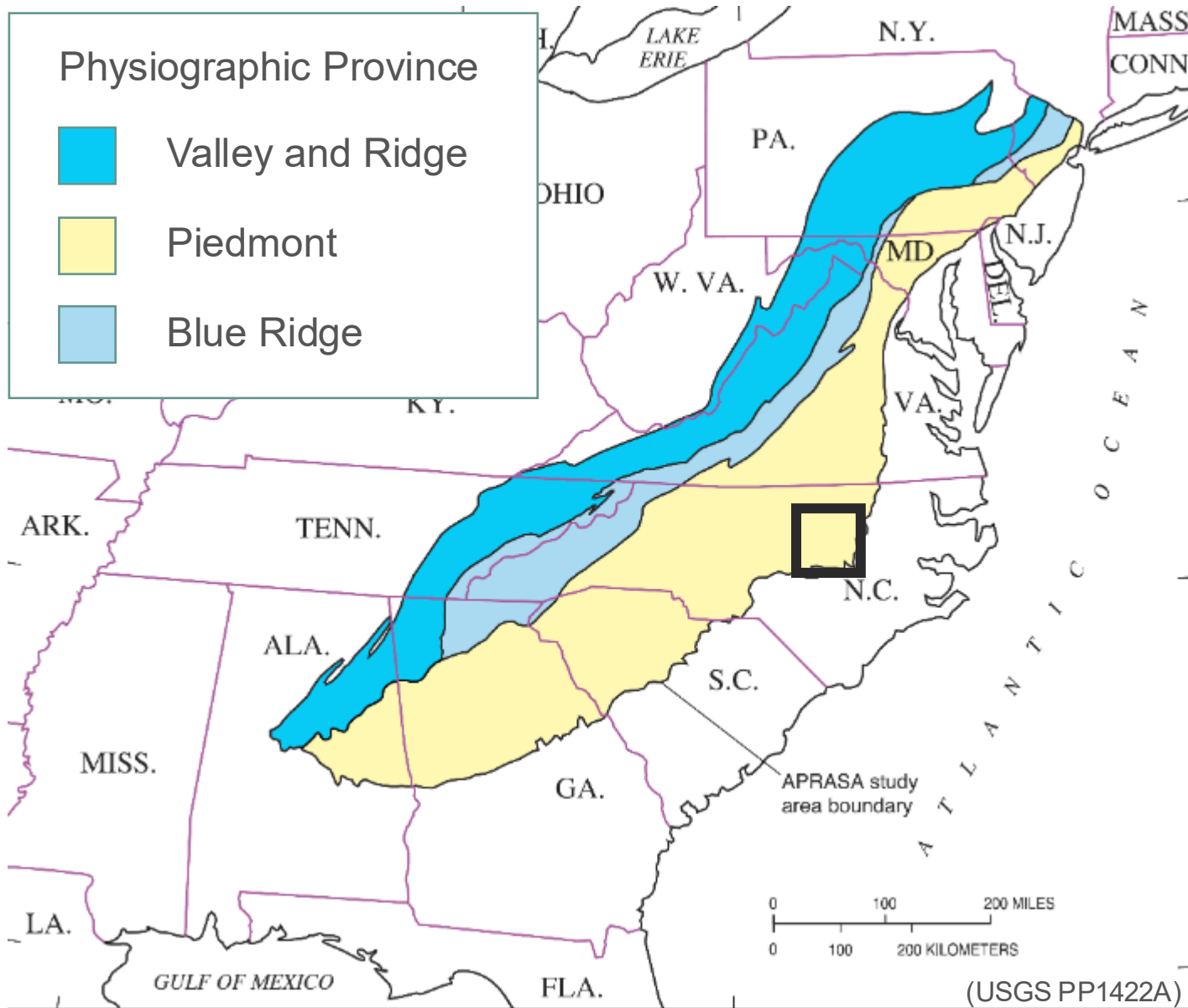
Evan O. Kane, P.G.

September 3, 2026



@wakegov    

wake.gov

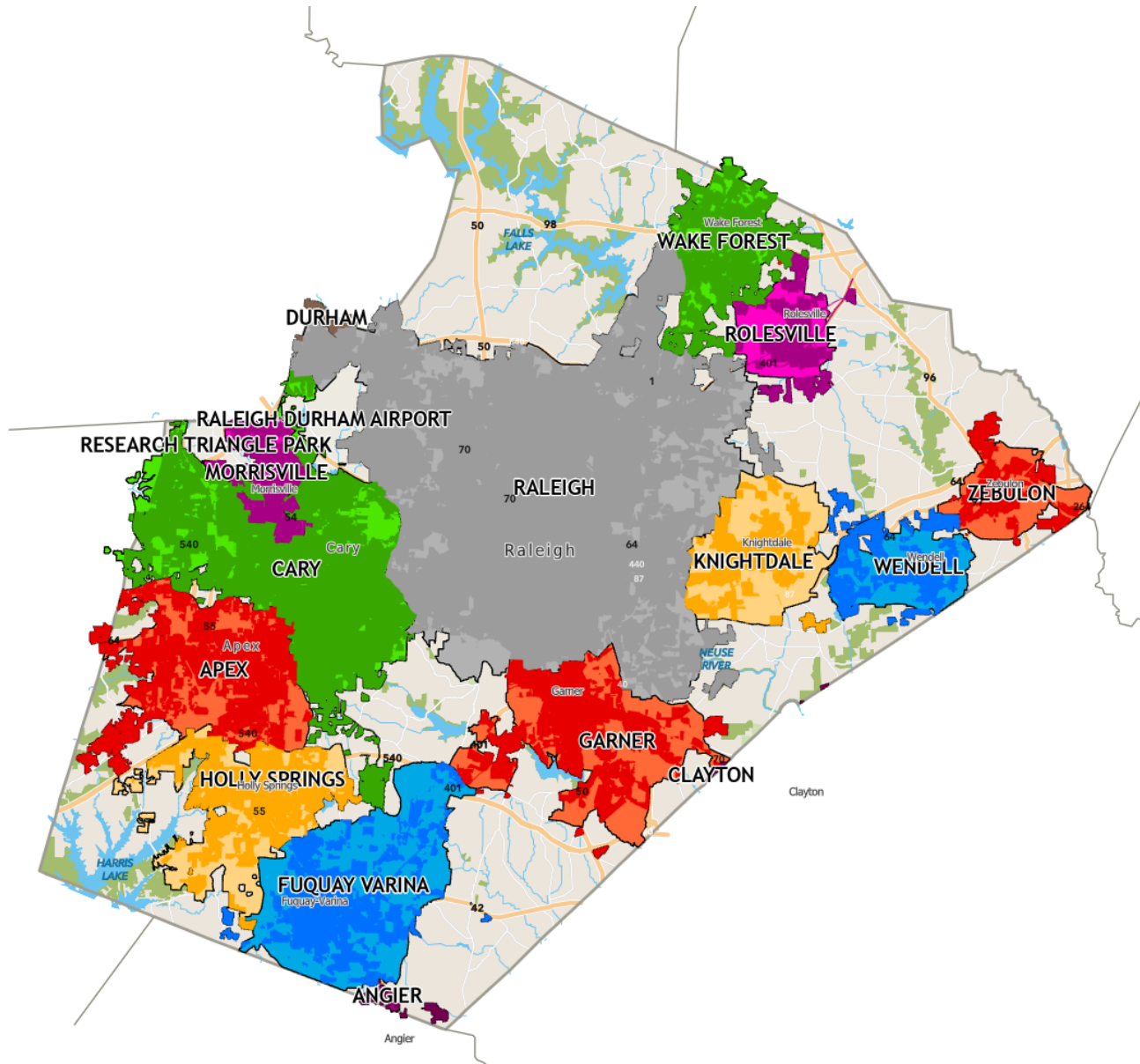


# Wake County

- 1.2 M residents
- 66 new residents/day
- 835 sq. mi.
- No countywide water or sewer

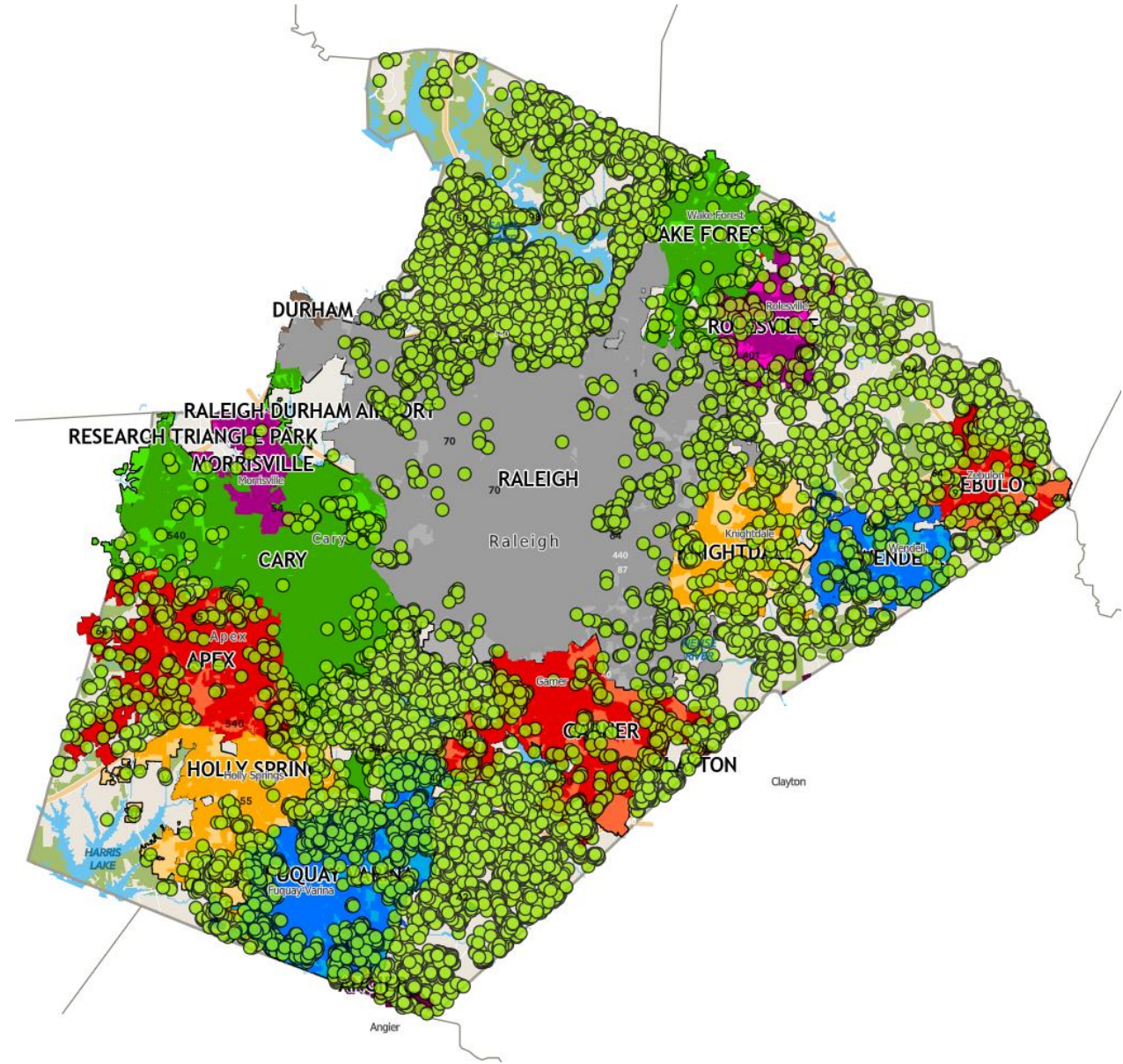
# Wake County

- 1.2 M residents
- 66 new residents/day
- 835 sq. mi.
- No countywide water or sewer



# Decentralized Systems in Wake

- ~80,000 septic systems
- ~40,000 private wells
- 100s of new systems annually
- Homeowner is the system operator
- Wake County Public Health: regulator and assistance provider

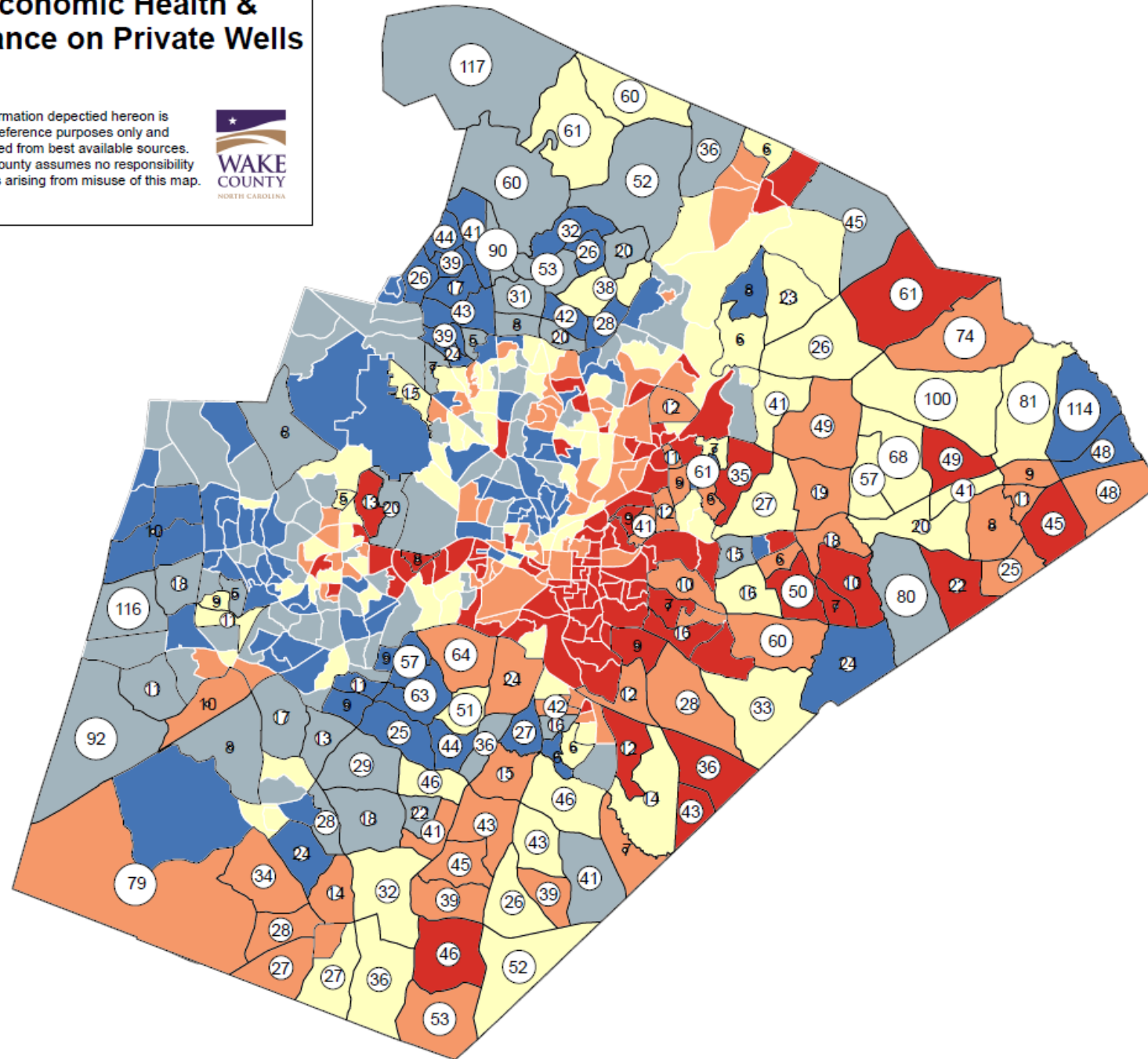


# Decentralized Systems in Wake



# Economic Health & Reliance on Private Wells

Information depicted hereon is for reference purposes only and is derived from best available sources. Wake County assumes no responsibility for errors arising from misuse of this map.



## Legend

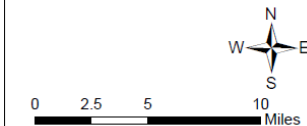
### Percent Served by Private Wells

- 5 - 10
- 11 - 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 67
- >67

### Economic Health Rank

- 1 - 91
- 92 - 182
- 183 - 273
- 274 - 364
- 365 - 455

The number of private wells in each census block group is inferred from property attributes and extent of public water systems. Percent of properties served by private wells may exceed 100% in some census block groups. Economic Health and Community Vulnerability data from Wake County Planning.



# **Initial Forays into Financial Assistance**

# Well Testing Fee Discounts

| Household Size<br>(Persons) | Income up to<br>Federal Poverty<br>Guideline | Income up to 250% of<br>Federal Poverty<br>Guideline |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                           | \$15,650                                     | \$39,125                                             |
| 2                           | \$21,150                                     | \$52,875                                             |
| 3                           | \$26,650                                     | \$66,625                                             |
| 4                           | \$32,150                                     | \$80,375                                             |
| Fee                         | Pay 20%<br>(\$73)                            | Pay 50%<br>(\$182.50)                                |



# Well Testing Fee Discounts

- Simple, two-sided form
- Self-attestation to income
- Notary required
- Forms online and in Regional Centers
- Free notaries in Regional Centers & Wake County Office Building

## Wake County Onsite Water Request for Well Water Complete BOTH SIDES of this form. The

1. Name of individual requesting well water testing (print name): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Phone number of primary contact: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Email address of primary contact: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Property owner (if different from #1 above): \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I understand that all well water test results will be recorded.
6. Address of property where well is located: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Mailing address (if different from #6 above): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Please describe any fences, locks, animals, or other access restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Wake County recommends a package of tests that includes Pesticides, Gross Alpha & Gross Beta radioactivity, and Total Hardness.

9. To apply for fee reduction, a completed Affidavit must be submitted with this form (see reverse) and include payer's income information:
  - Income below the Federal Poverty Guideline
  - Income between 100% and 250% of the Federal Poverty Guideline
  - Income greater than 250% of the Federal Poverty Guideline
10. Payment Method (check one)
  - ☐ Check enclosed.
  - ☐ Invoice me for online payment (if applicable).
  - ☐ Call me to discuss other testing options.

**ALL FEES MUST BE RECEIVED PRIOR TO SANITIZATION**

I certify by my signature below that I am the individual requesting the analysis of the well water samples described above and I authorize Wake County representatives to collect the samples.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this completed form to:  
Wake County Onsite Water Protection  
Well Testing  
P.O. Box 550  
Raleigh NC 27602

## WAKE COUNTY ONSITE WATER PROTECTION DIVISION AFFIDAVIT IN THE MATTER OF: Well Water Testing – Eligibility for Income-Based Fee Reduction

(Applicant Name) \_\_\_\_\_, being duly sworn, hereby deposes and says:  
1. I am/We are the occupant and/or owner of property generally referred to as \_\_\_\_\_, in Wake County.

2. I am the (initial one): \_\_\_\_\_ Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Renter \_\_\_\_\_ If other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_ (Address, City/Town)

3. I am/We are applying for reduction of fees for testing of the well water at the above-referenced property.  
4. I/We hereby certify, under the pains and penalties of perjury, that my/our household gross income for calendar year 2025 is (initial one): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ not greater than 250% of the current federal poverty guidelines determined by the US Department of Health and Human Services, as listed below.

\_\_\_\_\_ less than the current federal poverty guidelines determined by the US Department of Health and Human Services, as listed below.

### 2025 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia

| Household Size (Number of Persons) | Federal Poverty Guideline (\$ per year) | 250% of Federal Poverty Guideline (\$ per year) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                  | 15,650.00                               | 39,125.00                                       |
| 2                                  | 21,150.00                               | 52,875.00                                       |
| 3                                  | 26,650.00                               | 66,625.00                                       |
| 4                                  | 32,150.00                               | 80,375.00                                       |
| 5                                  | 37,650.00                               | 94,125.00                                       |
| 6                                  | 43,150.00                               | 107,875.00                                      |
| 7                                  | 48,650.00                               | 121,625.00                                      |
| 8                                  | 54,150.00                               | 135,375.00                                      |
| 9                                  | 59,650.00                               | 149,125.00                                      |
| 10                                 | 65,150.00                               | 162,875.00                                      |
| 11                                 | 70,650.00                               | 176,625.00                                      |
| 12                                 | 76,150.00                               | 190,375.00                                      |

5. I understand that I am applying for a reduction in well testing fees, and that this qualification process does not serve as a qualification for any other assistance programs. I understand that Wake County may require proof of household income to verify my eligibility.

6. I understand that if I have misrepresented any information on this statement, the full cost of testing must be returned to Wake County and if not returned shall be a collectible debt.

Affiant further saith not.

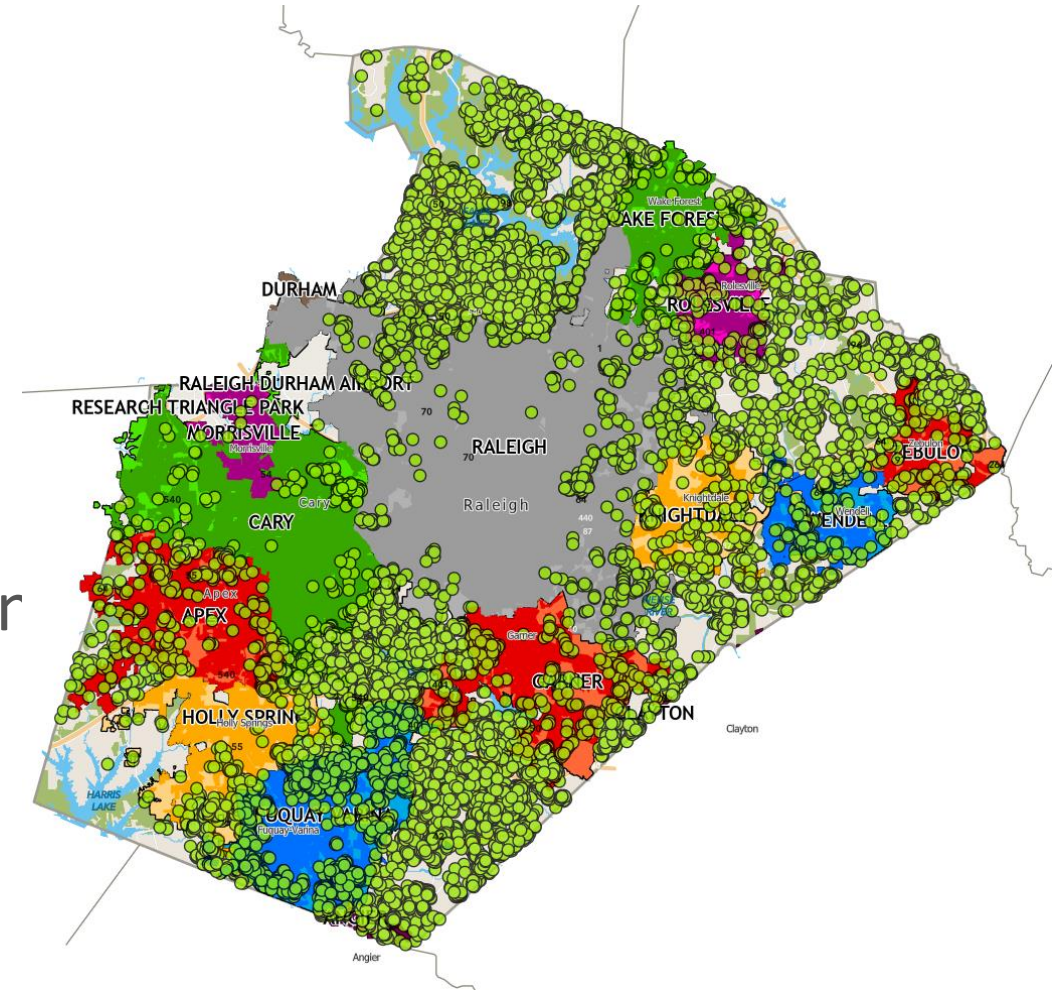
Signature and Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn to and subscribed before me \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Housing Rehabilitation Assistance from Wake County

- Household income less than ½ of AMI (\$66,350 for 4)
- \$20,000 cap
- Federal HUD funds
- Not available within City of Raleigh or Town of Cary



# External Financial Assistance

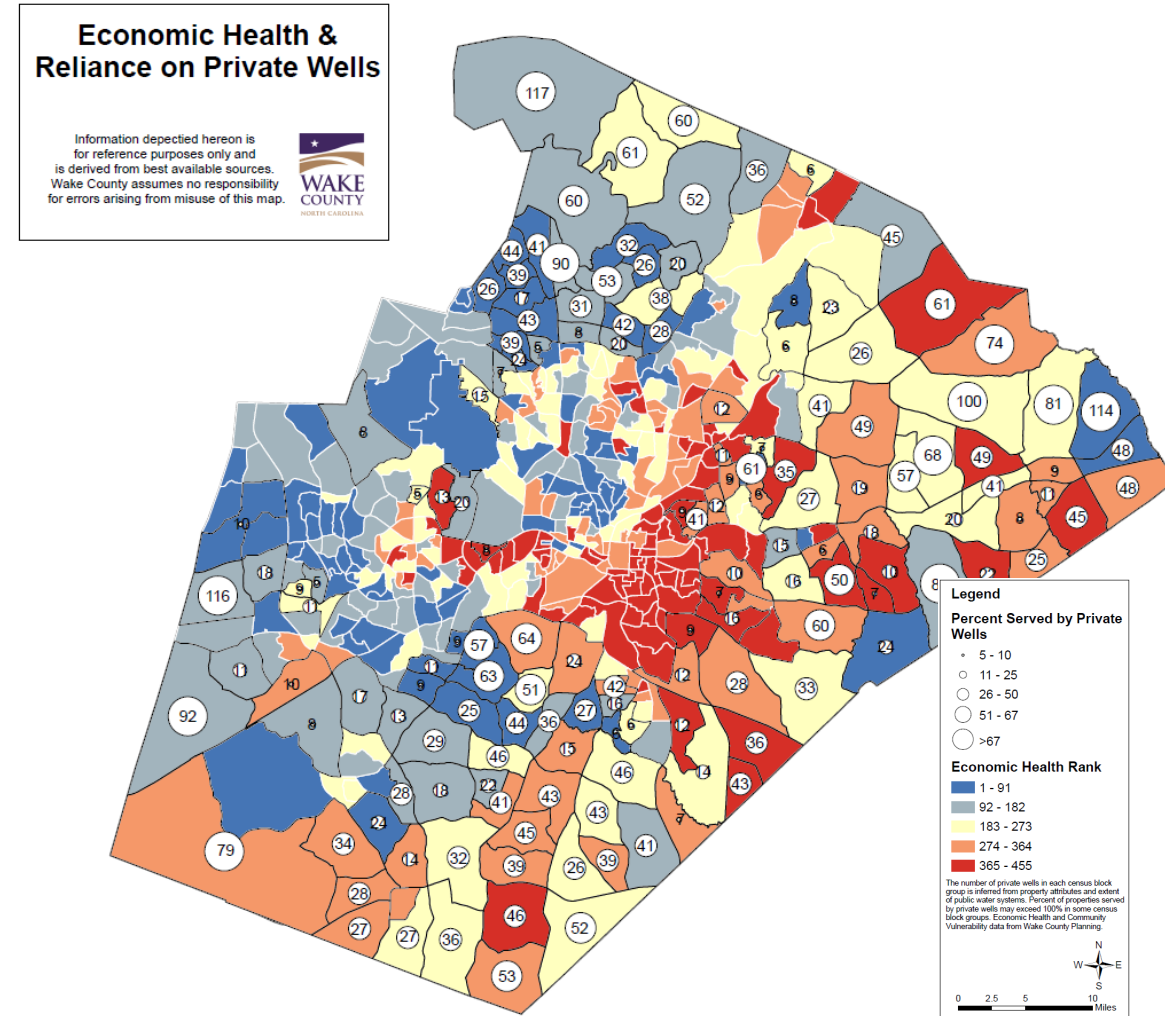
- **Low-Interest Loans:**
  - SERCAP Individual Loan Program
    - [sercap.org](http://sercap.org)
  - Water Well Trust
    - [www.waterwelltrust.org/apply/](http://www.waterwelltrust.org/apply/)
- **Contaminated Wells:**
  - NC DEQ Bernard Allen Drinking Water Fund

# **Building a Financial Assistance Program for Onsite Systems**

# Well & Septic Assistance Pilot

## Goals:

- Recognize high cost of well & septic repairs
- Make it collaborative
- Keep it simple

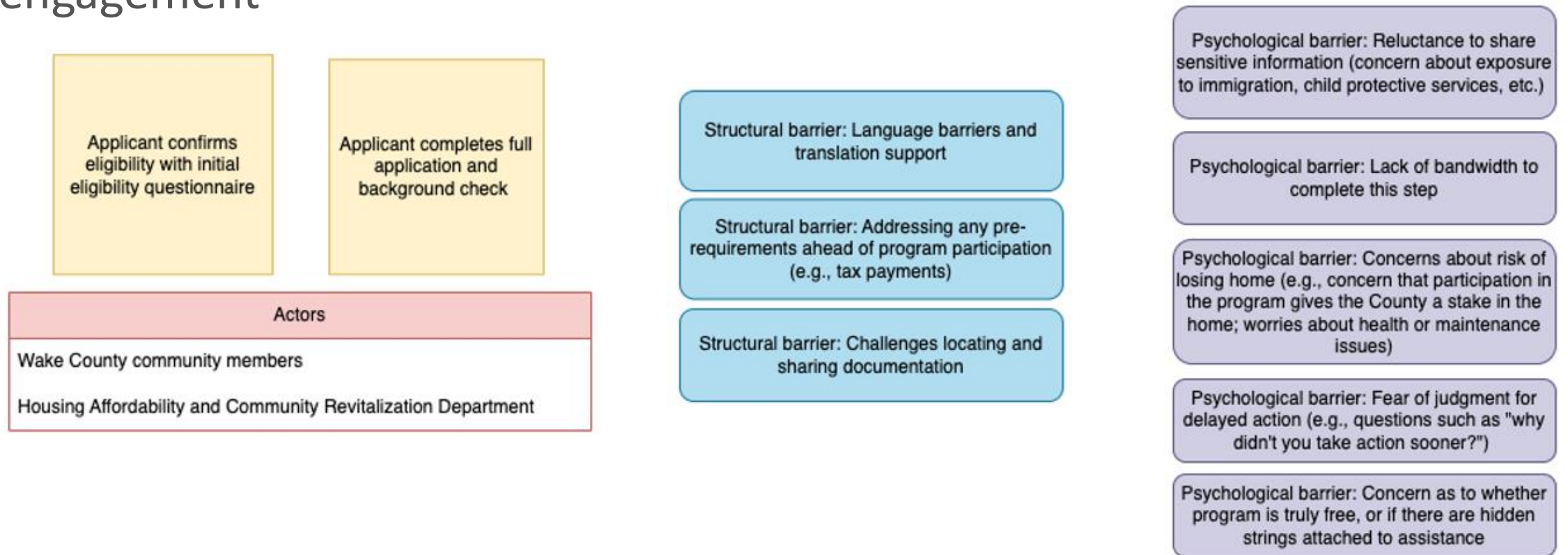


# Well & Septic Assistance Pilot

- Three-year pilot program (FY23-25)
- \$300,000 target
- Administered by Wake County Housing
- Use established rehab grant eligibility criteria
- Financial assistance information provided with NOVs
- ARPA funds

# WaterNow Engagement Strategy

**Behavioral Blueprint** identifying specific barriers to and opportunities for engagement



# WaterNow Engagement Strategy

## Opportunity areas identified:

- (1) Expansion of existing partnerships with community organizations
- (2) Targeting outreach to areas with high need and/or eligibility
- (3) Integrating well and septic information into broader messaging
- (4) Incorporating storytelling into informational content

[Full report here](#)

# Pilot Program Results

- >\$330,000 in assistance granted
  - ~\$100,000/year
- 34 homeowners assisted
  - Septic repairs/replacements
  - New wells
  - Well repairs/rehabs
  - Connection to city water/sewer
- Increased connection with housing affordability orgs



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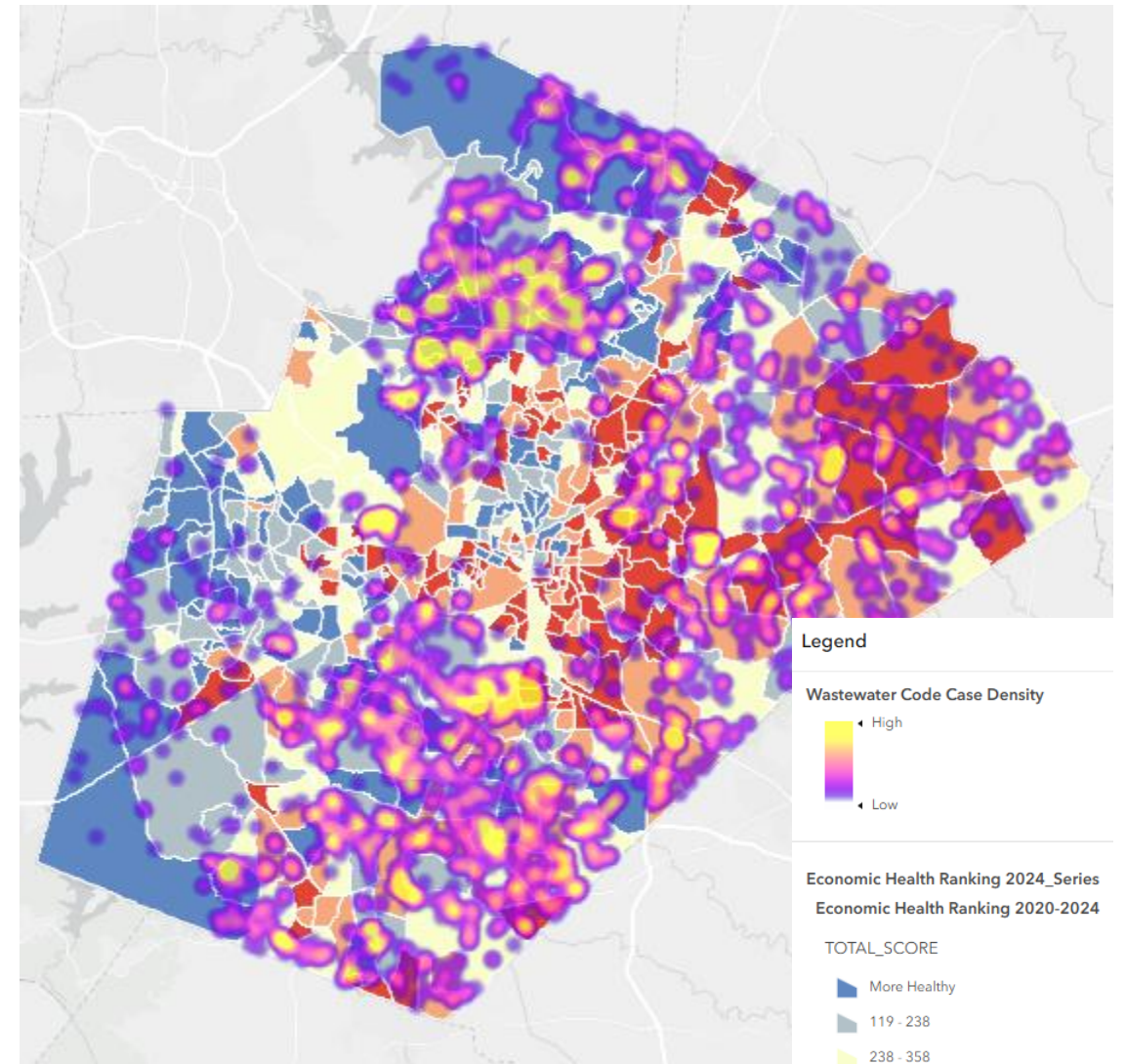


# Continuing Well & Septic Assistance

- **\$100,000 in county appropriations**
- **Shift to contract with Preserving Home**
  - Eligibility assessments
  - Subcontracting with licensed professionals for installation
  - Networking with other assistance funds

# Looking Ahead

- **CAWAG Technical Assistance Grant**
  - NC Clean Water SRF Grant Application
  - Risk mapping & prioritization
  - Solutions plan



**wake.gov/waterhelp**



# Enhancing Lives in SC: Mount Pleasant Waterworks' Septic Maintenance Program

Presented by:  
F. Allan Clum and Guinn Wallover  
Mount Pleasant Waterworks  
September 3, 2026



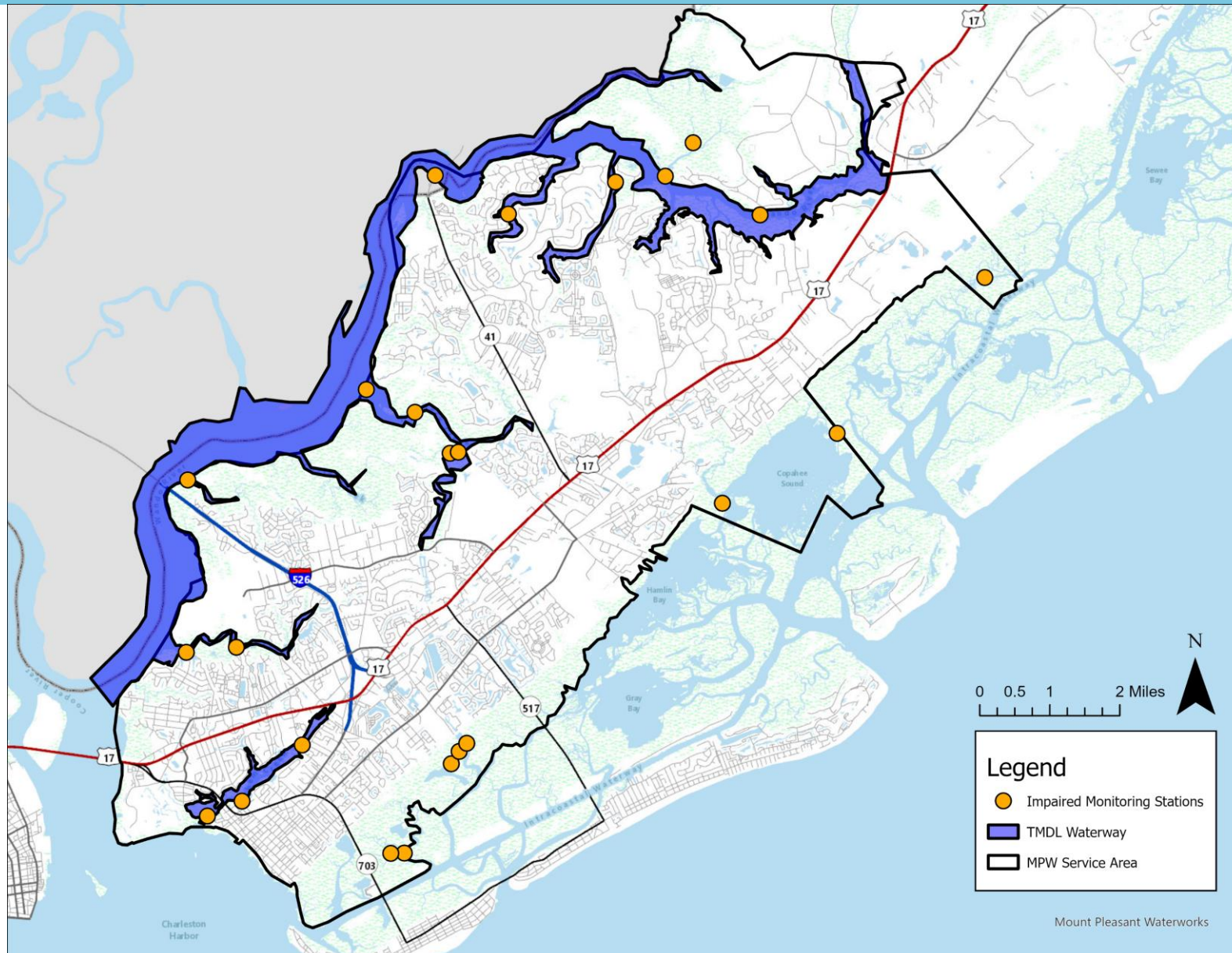


# Mount Pleasant Waterworks





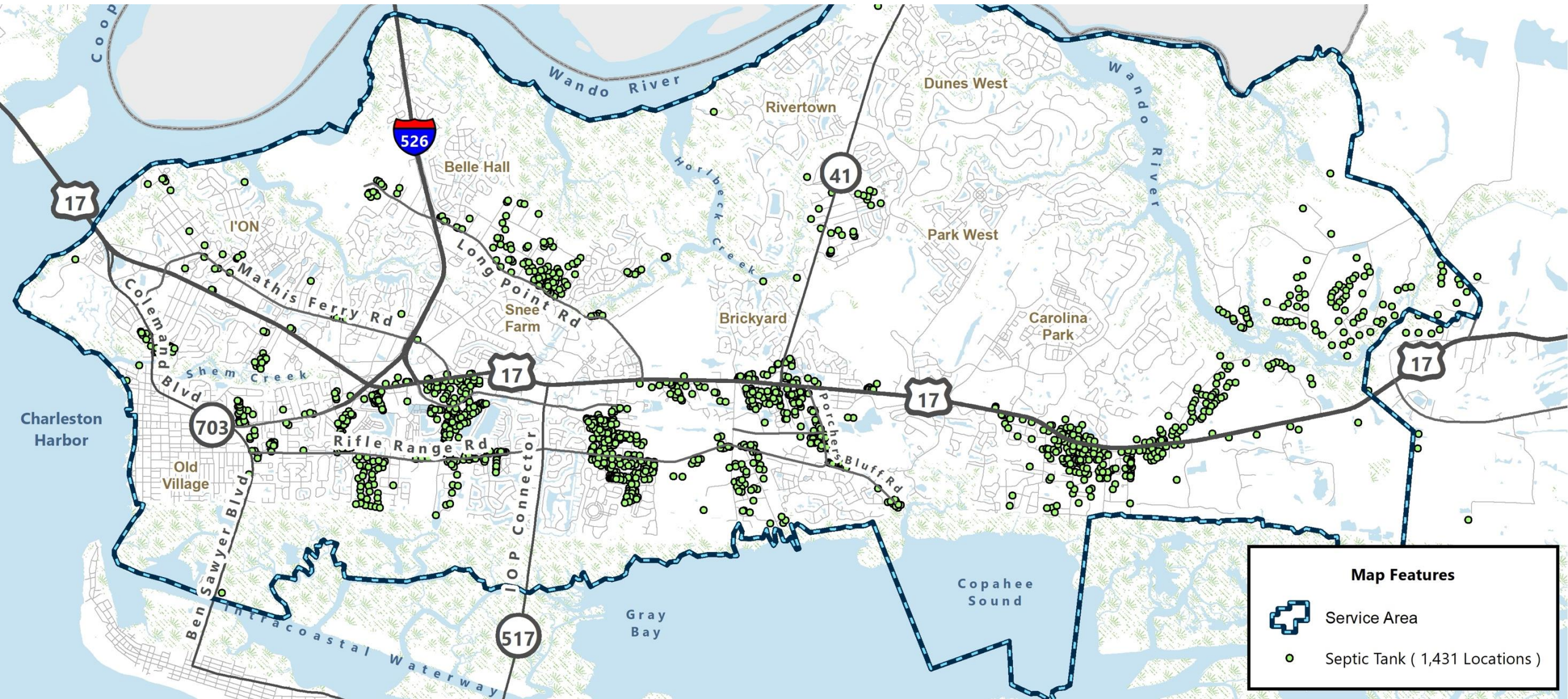
# Waterway Health in Our Service Area





# Existing Septic System Locations

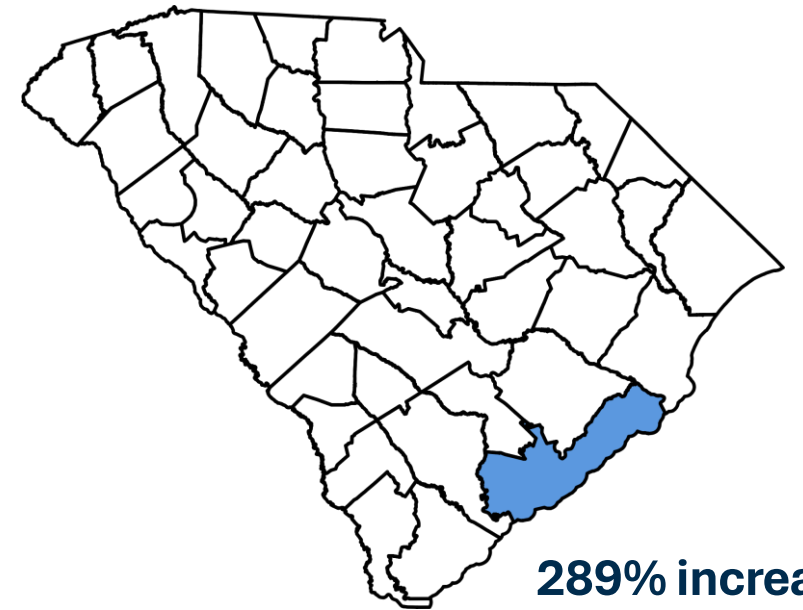
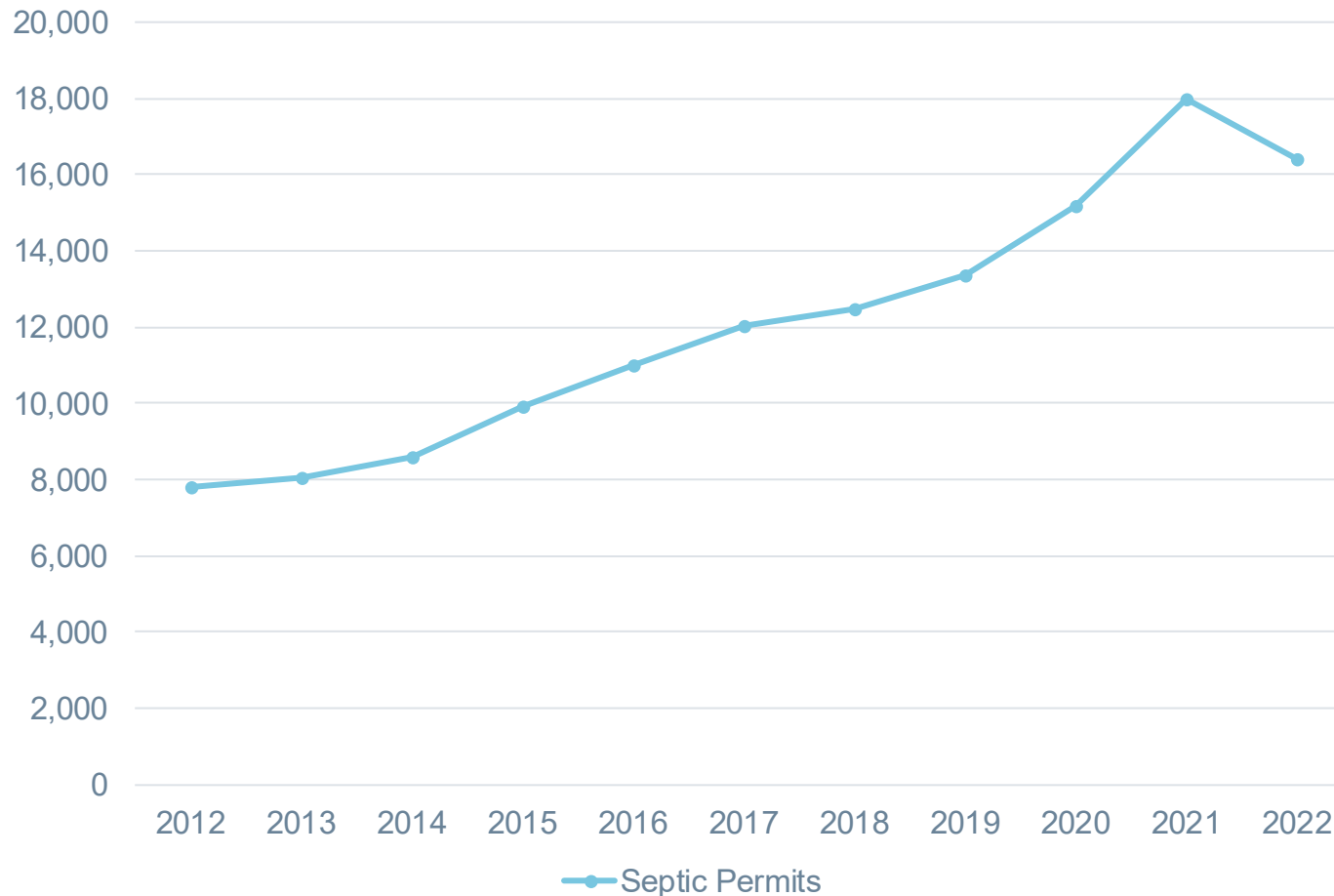
**TOTALS IN MPW SERVICE AREA = 1,468 (2024) / 1,431 (Current)**





# Septic System Regulation in SC

Septic Permits Issued Annually in SC Since 2012



**289% increase  
since 2012**



# Septic System Regulation in SC



SC DEPARTMENT *of*  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES**

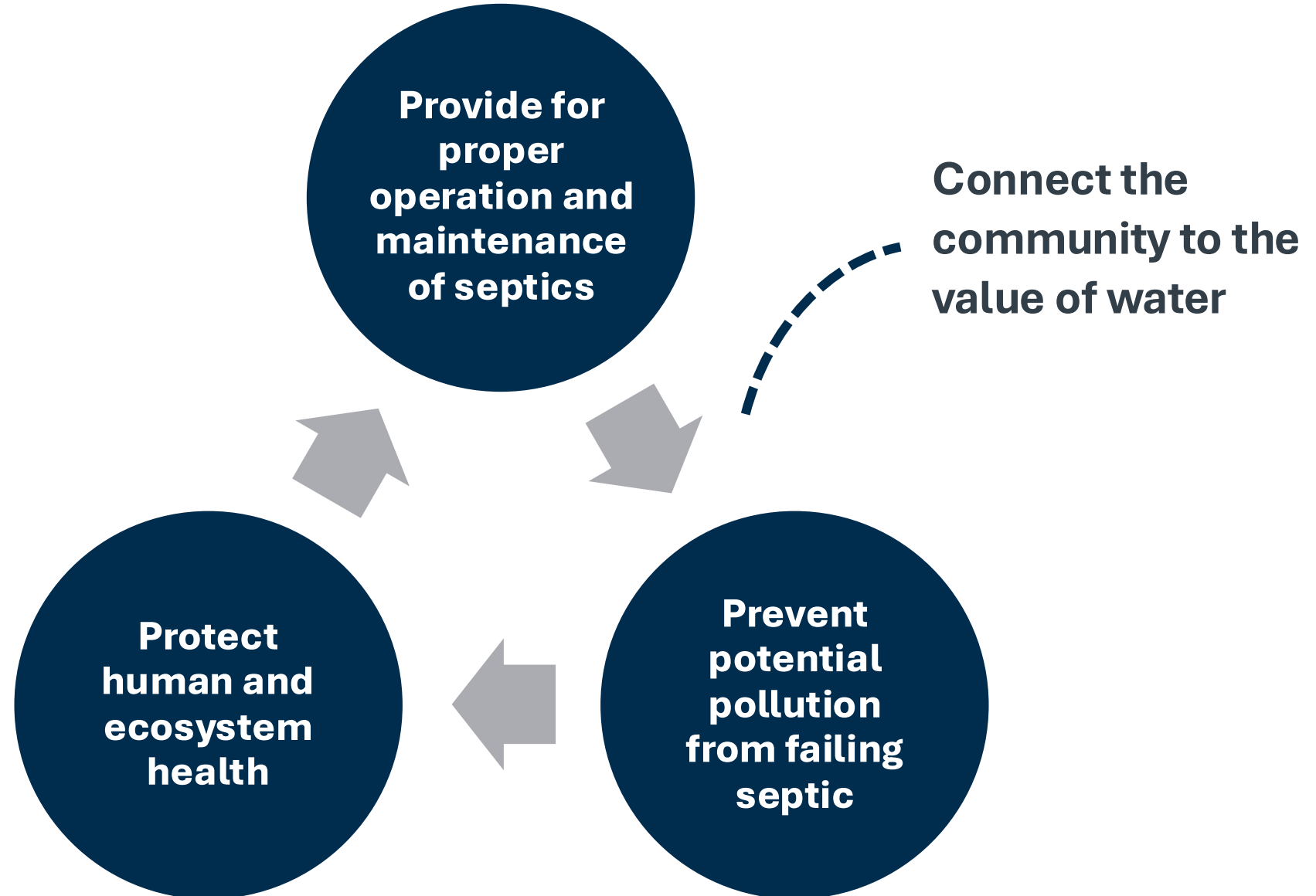
SCDES regulates septic system  
**permits and installations.**



Who regulates septic system  
**maintenance?**



# MPW's Goal





# PROTECT YOUR HOME & OUR ENVIRONMENT

SEPTIC MAINTENANCE  
MADE EASY!



## MPW SEPTIC SYSTEM MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

*Peace of Mind for*

**JUST \$15  
PER MONTH**

- ▶ **ANNUAL INSPECTIONS**  
by Certified Professionals
- ▶ **PUMP-OUTS EVERY 5 YEARS**
- ▶ **UP TO \$3,000 REPAIR COVERAGE**

VISIT [MOUNTPLEASANTWATERWORKS.COM/SEPTICCARE](https://mountpleasantwaterworks.com/septiccare) -OR- CALL 843.884.9626 TO ENROLL



# Benefits for MPW and Customers

## Customer Benefit

## MPW Benefit

### Working together to protect community health and the environment

Regular inspection and pump-out of septic system

A reliable program to ensure septic maintenance

Assistance with repair coordination

Opportunities to establish new relationships with community

Assistance with repair costs

Staff training and professional growth

Maintain septic function and protect property values

Assistance with identifying needs for wastewater extensions in the community



## Two-Option Structure

| <b>Program Cost:<br/>\$15 Monthly<br/>Fee</b> | <b>Benefit</b>                             | <b>Option I</b> | <b>Option II*</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
|                                               | Annual Inspections                         | ✓               | ✓                 |
|                                               | Septic pump-out every five years           | ✓               | ✓                 |
|                                               | \$3,000 repair coverage per pump out cycle |                 | ✓                 |
|                                               | Assistance with repair coordination        |                 | ✓                 |

\*Baseline inspection is required for enrollment in Option II



# Voluntary vs. Required Participation

## Existing Homeowner

(Existing MPW Customer Account)



**Voluntary**

## Existing Home Sale or New Home

(Transfer or New MPW  
Customer Account)



**Required  
July 1, 2025**



# Community Impact



51

Enrolled  
Customers



13

Annual  
Inspections



67

Initial  
Inspections



11

Septic Tanks  
Pumped

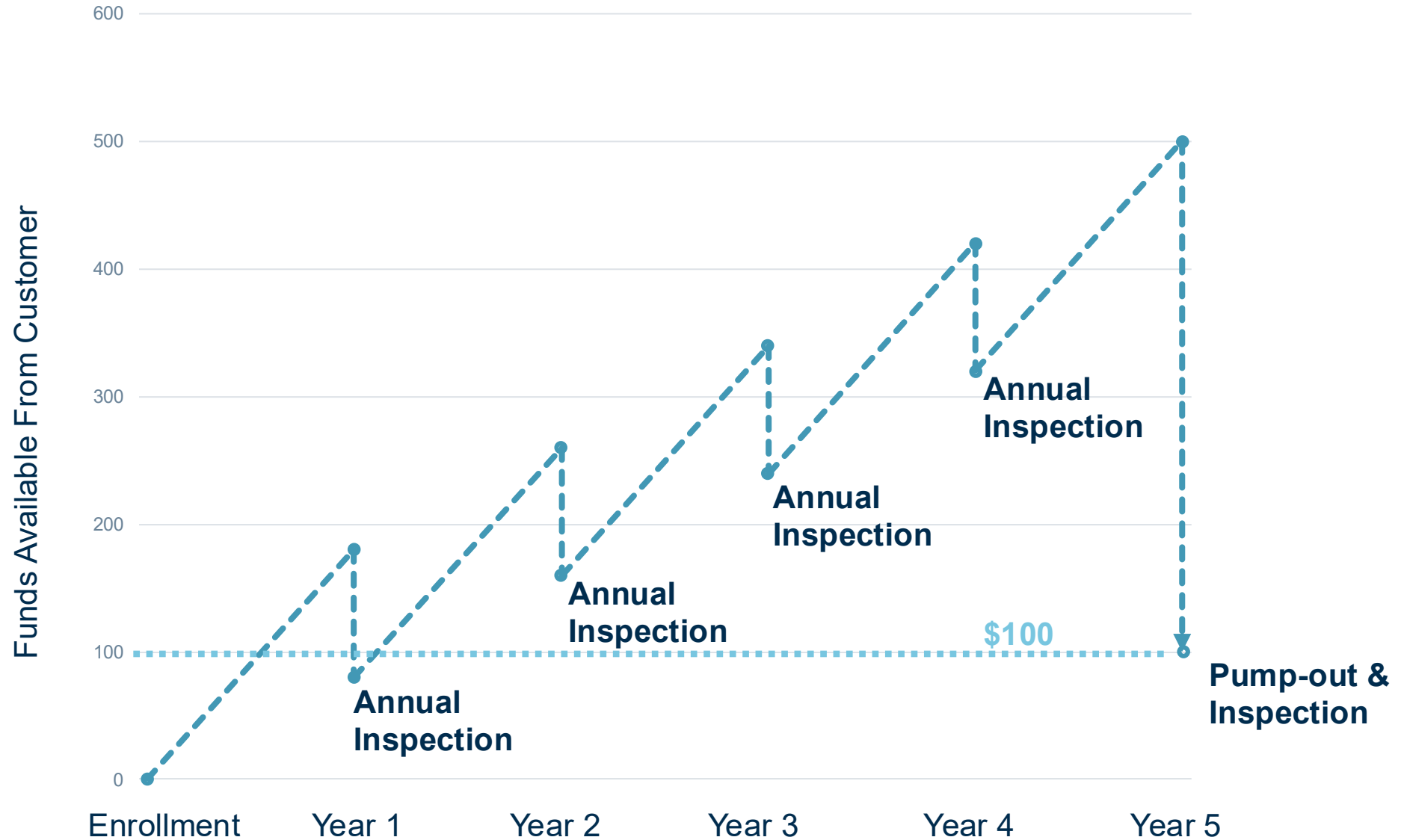


4

Septic Systems  
Repaired

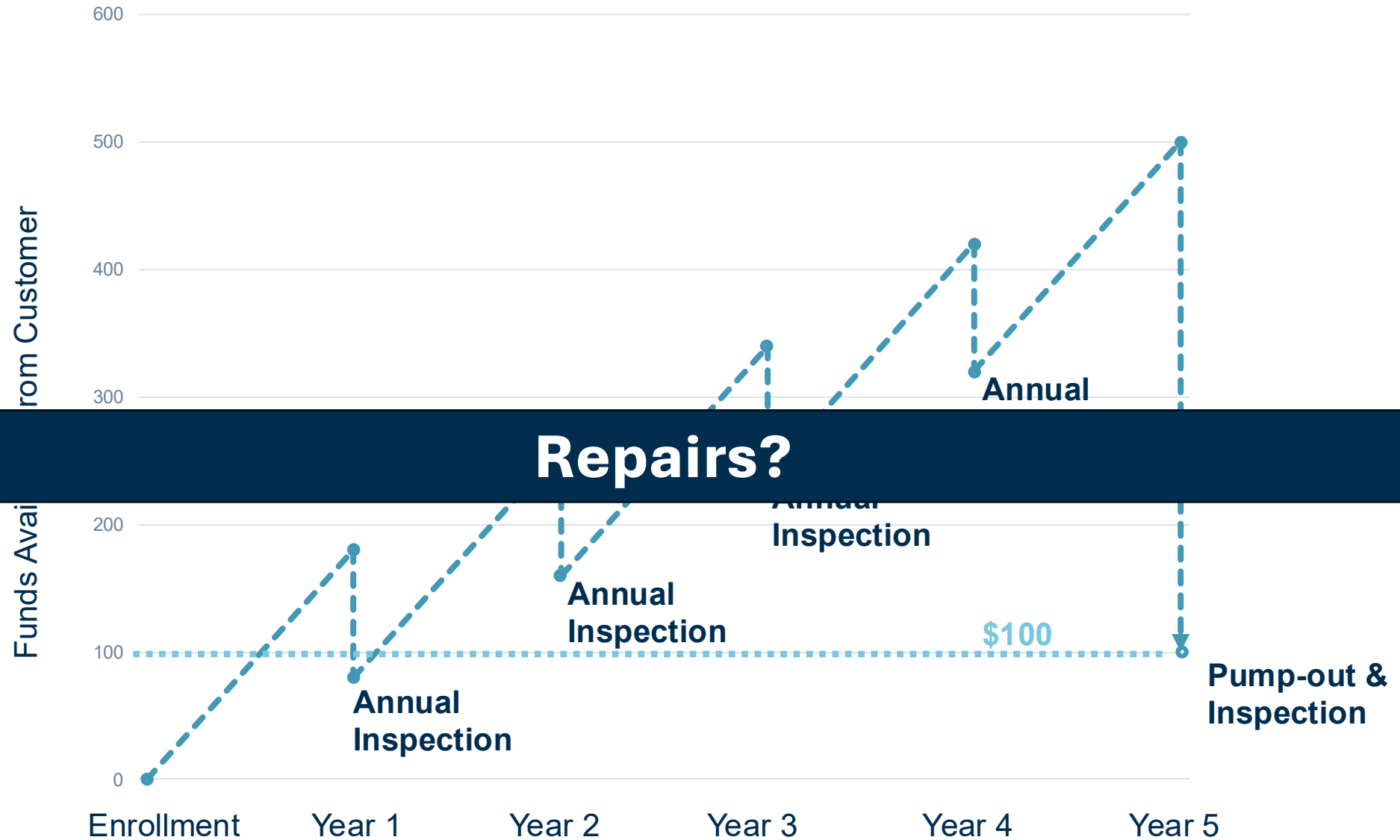


# Funding Mechanism





# Funding Mechanism





# FY25 and FY26 Financial Summary

|                                                   | FY26              | FY25             |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| <b>REVENUES</b>                                   |                   |                  |
|                                                   | \$4,350           | \$55             |
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b>                               |                   |                  |
|                                                   | \$18,346          | \$7,643          |
| <b>Revenues Over<br/>(Under)<br/>Expenditures</b> | <b>(\$13,996)</b> | <b>(\$7,588)</b> |



# Lessons Learned & Opportunities

## Specialized Engineered Systems

- Ineligible for program
- Maintain O&M Plan  
with Tier III contractor



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## Strengthened Partners & Trust

- Provided opportunities for MPW, regulator, and community partnerships



# Lessons Learned & Opportunities

## Specialized Engineered Systems

- Ineligible for program
- Maintain O&M Plan with Tier III contractor

## Strengthened Partners & Trust

- Provided opportunities for MPW, regulator, and community partnerships

## Failing Systems

- Low-income families
- Novel funding mechanisms



# Healthy Harbors Grant

## Healthy Harbor Grant

**\$38,500.00** awarded for septic  
repair for low-income residents

Partnership between MPW and  
Charleston Waterkeeper



# VISION



**DELIVERING  
EXCELLENCE**



**PRESERVING  
TRUST**



**ENHANCING  
LIVES**





# Moderated Discussion

A close-up photograph of a maple seed pod (samaras) with two winged seeds, one of which is slightly open. The background is a soft-focus green and yellow, suggesting foliage and sunlight. A dark teal horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image.

# Questions?

# Accessing Technical Assistance for Small, Rural & Tribal Systems



# What support is available?

WaterNow can provide technical assistance for rural, small and tribal systems in a variety of ways:

- Support for **planning and assessing system needs**
- Building **technical, financial, and managerial capacity**
- Support for engaging the community to **map challenges and assets**
- Identifying **funding and financing opportunities**
- Navigating **grant and loan application processes**



# Specialized Technical Assistance: Rural, Small, & Tribal Systems

Pro bono support for **wastewater and stormwater systems** across the U.S., serving communities of **10,000 people or fewer**.



The screenshot shows the EFCN (Environmental Finance Center Network) website. The header includes the EFCN logo, navigation links for 'About Us', 'Training & Events', 'Resources', 'Our Initiatives', and 'Contact', a 'Get Help' button, and a search icon. The main content area features a large blue banner with the text 'Get Help'. Below this, a section titled 'Tackle Your Technical, Managerial, and Financial Challenges: Services from the EFCN' describes the organization's services. At the bottom, a blue arrow points to a 'Request Help Now' button, which is next to a text box containing the URL <https://efcnetwork.org/get-help/>.

**EFCN**  
environmental finance center network

About Us ▾ Training & Events Resources ▾ Our Initiatives Contact **Get Help** 🔍

## Get Help

### Tackle Your Technical, Managerial, and Financial Challenges: Services from the EFCN

We offer free, customized support services to water and wastewater systems, decentralized systems, local governments, and others seeking technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) solutions to environmental infrastructure challenges. Our team of experts work hand-in-hand with operators, elected officials, utility directors, and other utility staff to identify barriers and address challenges head-on.

**Request Help Now** <https://efcnetwork.org/get-help/>

# What to expect?

- 1 Dedicated team of **subject matter experts** to help answer your questions
- 2 **Step-by-step assistance** to help rural, small, and tribal water systems address storm and wastewater challenges
- 3 **Resources & guidance** to ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations

The **technical assistance process** includes:



Additional technical assistance programs and resources can be found at the [WaterTA website](#)

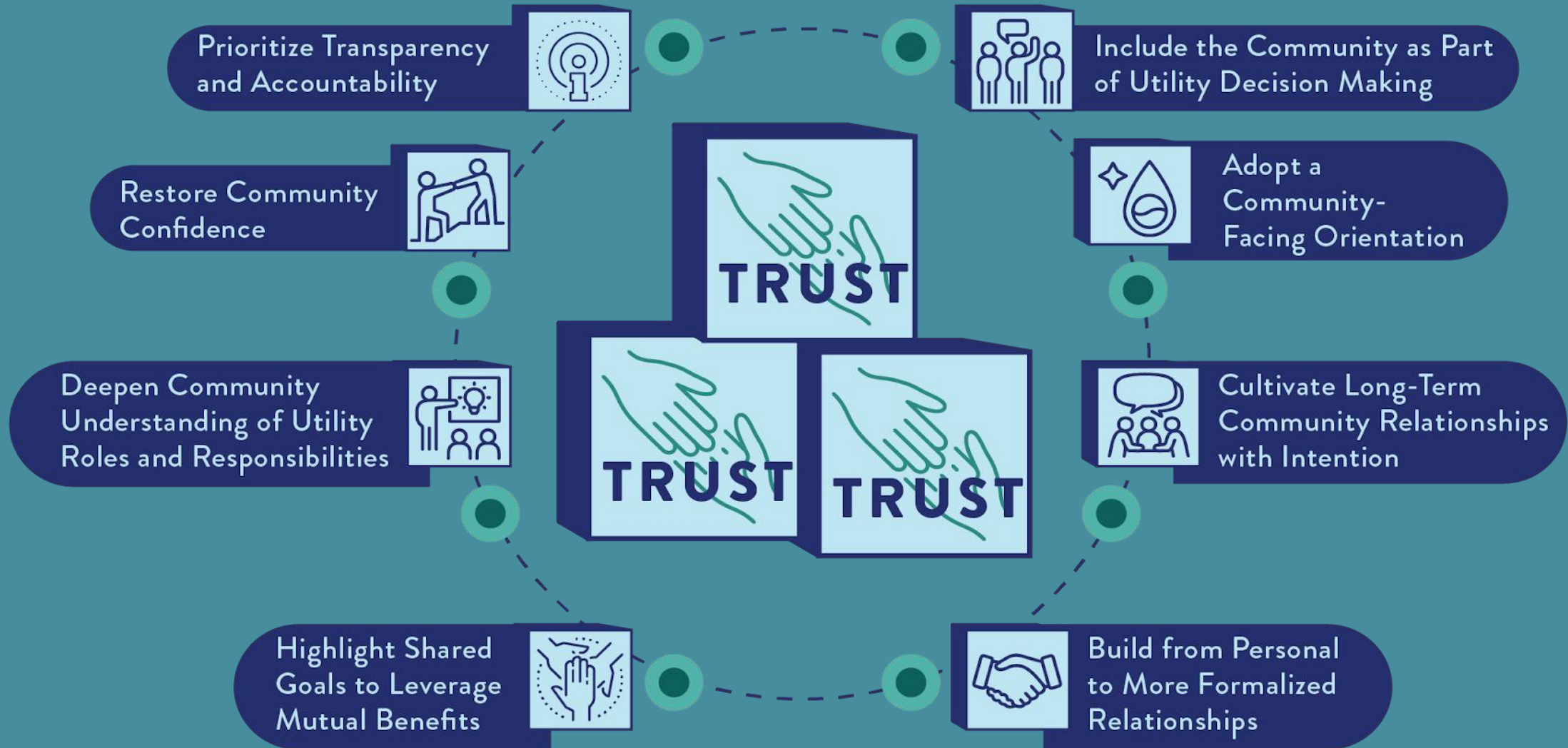
# Project Accelerator and Tap Into Resilience

- 250 hours of **pro bono technical assistance**
- Over a **6-12 month** period
- City/Agency identified project, driven by **local priorities**
- **Jump start** innovative water management initiatives

## FEATURED PROJECTS



# Building Blocks of Trust: Best Practices for Authentic Partnerships & Community Engagement



# Building Blocks of Trust Training Series

## Building Blocks of Trust Training Series

Based on the Building Blocks of Trust report, this online, self-paced training series covers the 8 "Foundations of Trust." Created to support community groups and water utilities in building strong relationships for clean and safe water, this training aims to uplift long-term partnerships with mutual benefits.

Sign Up Now



[bit.ly/BBoTTraining](https://bit.ly/BBoTTraining)



### Building Capacity through Partnerships

Water utilities across the country are increasingly, and successfully, turning to partnerships with community groups, NGOs, and other cities and utilities to build capacity and advance greater water resiliency in their communities.

Click through the sub-sections below to learn how to **identify main capacity challenges** facing utilities serving frontline communities, how to **identify local partners** who can help overcome those challenges, and what **best practices** to follow when building capacity through partnerships. Partnerships can also include "public-private partnerships," and the precise meaning of "public-private partnership" is often a source of confusion. This term is used to describe a variety of arrangements between governments and private sector organizations from full privatization of formerly public municipal water providers, to outsourcing, grants, leases, asset sales, and others. Check out the Partnership vs. Privatization sections of the Toolkit to explore the **most common types of public-private partnerships** formed in the water sector and several **key considerations** for determining whether to enter into any of these arrangements.

Identifying Internal Utility Capacity Challenges



Identifying Partners Who Can Add Value



Best Practices for Building Trusting Partnerships



Hosting a Community Water Academy



[tapin.waternow.org/toolkit](https://tapin.waternow.org/toolkit)



[bit.ly/3UxjQYr](https://bit.ly/3UxjQYr)

Please Complete our Post-Webinar Survey!

# Join WaterNow



**LEARN MORE AND SIGN UP**

<https://waternow.org/become-a-member/>

# Thank You!



**For more information,  
email:**

**Amy Weinfurter**

[aw@waternow.org](mailto:aw@waternow.org)

**Emerson O'Donnell**

[eo@waternow.org](mailto:eo@waternow.org)

**Resources:**

<https://efcnetwork.org/>

<https://waternow.org/>

<https://giexchange.org/>