

DRINKING WATER



South Carolina **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

for Technical, Managerial & Financial
Sustainability of Public Water Systems

2026

State Capacity Development Program
Triennial Report to the Governor

DES.SC.GOV/CAPDEV



SC DEPARTMENT of
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**



SC DEPARTMENT of
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**

Myra C. Reece
Office of the Director
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

September 8, 2026

The Honorable Henry D. McMaster – Hand-Delivered
Office of the Governor
1100 Gervais Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Re: 2026 Triennial Drinking Water Capacity Development Program Report

Dear Governor McMaster,

Please see the attached 2026 Triennial Report entitled *South Carolina Capacity Development for Technical, Managerial & Financial Sustainability of Public Water Systems*.

The federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), Section 1420(c)(3) stipulates that no later than two years after the date that South Carolina first adopts its capacity development strategy and every three years afterwards, the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services must submit to the Governor of the State a report describing the effectiveness of the SCDES Capacity Development Strategy. The goal of the strategy is to improve the technical, managerial, and financial capacity of the public water systems within the state.

This report will be available for public review on the SCDES website at des.sc.gov/capdev. Additionally, electronic copies are being sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 4 and the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Myra C. Reece".

Myra C. Reece
Director
South Carolina Department of Environmental Services

CC: Vanessa Thomas, U.S. EPA Region 4 - Thomas.Vanessa@epa.gov
Evan Cooper, U.S. EPA Region 4 - Cooper.Evan@epa.com

Executive Summary

The health and economic benefits of having safe drinking water are invaluable assets for South Carolina. A reliable drinking water supply is a prerequisite for economic development in all areas of the state. The federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) to submit a triennial report to the Governor on the efficacy of the Capacity Development Strategy for South Carolina to document how well the state is meeting its goals for providing safe and reliable drinking water. Progress documented within this report covers state fiscal years (SFYs) 2024 through 2026. Submittal of the report also is required for the state to receive the full funding allotment from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for annual Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) capitalization grants.

The goals for the strategy for South Carolina originate within the original strategy approved by EPA in 1999. SCDES continues to utilize this roadmap for our public water supervision program. These goals are designed to assist public water systems in improving sustainability and regulatory compliance performance by enhancing technical, managerial, and financial capacities.

As of June 30, 2026, South Carolina currently has 1,386 active, federally defined public water systems in operation. Small water systems serving populations of less than 10,000 people comprise more than 95% of the total number of water systems, as there are 1,327 small water systems in the state. These small water systems are eligible for technical assistance through State Revolving Fund (SRF) set-aside funds to improve overall operational and financial sustainability and enhance daily operations, management practices, and comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act and State Primary Drinking Water Regulations.

During SFY 2026, 1,335 of the 1,386 federally defined public water systems in the state met compliance requirements for health-based standards established for safe drinking water. This translates to 96% of the systems being compliant. These systems serve a total population of nearly 4.7 million people, or 98% of the population in South Carolina. The SCDES drinking water program continues to provide technical assistance as well as enforcement compliance actions to address the systems that did not receive a satisfactory rating during sanitary surveys. The focus of these actions is to expeditiously return the systems to compliance with state and federal drinking water regulations.

Many small drinking water systems lack the financial capacity to qualify for loan programs like the SRF. In 2010, the legislation governing the SRF in SC was amended to increase the flexibility of the SRF Program by allowing for principal forgiveness loan assistance to be offered to small water systems. This has provided an avenue

for financially disadvantaged systems to fund critical infrastructure improvements. With a principal forgiveness loan, no interest accrues on the loan principal. The balance of a principal forgiveness loan does not require repayment once the project is constructed and placed into operation.

The SCDES Office of Rural Water (ORW) continues to aid small water systems to overcome their inherent challenges to becoming sustainable. This office was created in 2016 due to concerns about lead in drinking water and the water crisis that manifested in Flint, Michigan at the time. The purpose of this office is to facilitate collaboration between SCDES staff, external technical assistance providers, and state and federal drinking water infrastructure funders to help small rural water systems increase the performance of their systems to consistently provide better drinking water while meeting all state and federal standards.

In addition to this triennial report to the Governor, SCDES also provides an Annual Capacity Development Report to EPA. The most recent submission, reporting on SFY 2025, received an approval letter in April of 2026 with the comments below.

“The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed South Carolina’s Annual Capacity Development Program Implementation Report for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025). Mr. Wayne Shealy emailed the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) report to the Region 4 Drinking Water Regulatory Section on September 17, 2025. The report demonstrates that through SFY 2025, the SCDES continued to implement its program to ensure that new community water systems and non-transient non-community water systems adequately demonstrate Technical, Managerial, and Financial (TMF) capacity to comply with National Primary Drinking Water Regulations prior to commencing operation. The report also demonstrates that through SFY 2025, the SCDES continued to develop and implement its Capacity Development Strategy to assist existing systems in acquiring and maintaining TMF capacity.”

The following statement was also included in the letter of approval from the EPA Region 4 Water Division Director Kathlene Butler.

“I appreciate SCDES’s continuing commitment to capacity development and the associated reporting requirements.”

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
A. Introduction.....	1
B. Construction Permitting Program and Design Standards	2
C. Sanitary Survey Program.....	3
D. Water Quality Monitoring and Annual Fee Program.....	4
E. Business Plans.....	9
F. Operating Permit Program	9
G. Develop Benchmarks from Annual Financial Statements from Existing Water Systems to Help Determine the Adequacy of Business Plans.....	10
H. Encourage and Facilitate the Consolidation and Regionalization of Public Water Systems.....	11
I. Encourage and Facilitate the Local Planning Process and Coordination Between State and Local Governments	11
J. Public Education Initiative	17
K. Asset Management.....	23
L. Implementation and Conclusion	25

A. Introduction

Capacity development was introduced to the country by the 1996 revisions to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) as a new requirement for each state to become proactive in helping its regulated public water systems achieve and maintain ongoing operational sustainability. A sustainable public water system will provide its customers with drinking water that complies with state and federal drinking water standards. The SDWA also requires states to develop and implement strategies to ensure that both existing water systems and newly permitted water systems achieve and maintain the needed technical, managerial, and financial capacity to be sustainable. In short, capacity is the ability of a water system to consistently provide safe and adequate drinking water to its consumers. The Capacity Development Strategy for South Carolina is intended to achieve this goal through various programs that aid in prioritizing the three core elements of technical, managerial, and financial capacity.

On July 1, 2024, Act 60 of S.C. law took effect, creating the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) as one of two new state agencies resulting from the dissolution of the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). The State Revolving Fund (SRF) responsibilities previously associated with DHEC were transferred to SCDES at that time. SCDES has primary enforcement responsibility (i.e. primacy) for carrying out the provisions of the SDWA and is the designated state agency to apply for and administer the capitalization grants for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). The drinking water enforcement program, Office of Rural Water (ORW), and the DWSRF Program are all within the SCDES Bureau of Water, which facilitates cooperation and coordination between these programs to address regulatory compliance issues for drinking water systems in the state. The South Carolina Water Quality Revolving Fund Authority (Authority) is responsible for the financial management functions of the DWSRF, including its financial policies, and executes loan agreements with project sponsors. The South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority Office of Local Government (RIA) conducts the staff functions of the Authority.

This report, covering SFY 2024 - 2026, discusses the Capacity Development Strategy goals and presents the progress made by programs and activities SCDES uses collaboratively to accomplish those goals. The previous Triennial Report to the Governor, submitted in September 2023 by DHEC, can be found at: des.sc.gov/capdev.

B. Construction Permitting Program and Design Standards

Maintain an effective construction permitting program. This program ensures that each new public water system (PWS), and additions or modifications to an existing PWS, are designed and constructed in compliance with all permitting regulations. This facilitates the capability by each PWS to consistently comply with all federal and state drinking water standards.

Design and construction standards required by the construction permitting program (Regulation 61-58) continue to hold engineers, contractors, and water system management to high levels of accountability to ensure all newly constructed water systems satisfy regulatory requirements and follow appropriate industry guidelines and best management practices. Modifications to or the extension of water lines, groundwater wells, and treatment facilities for existing public water systems also must comply with these construction standards. The construction permitting program is partially funded by an application review fee that ranges from \$150 to \$2000 based on the complexity and size of the project.

Minimize the proliferation of small water systems and ensure that new systems demonstrate they will have the capacity to be viable water systems. Research shows that small water systems have more difficulty maintaining viability. As such, permitting a new system requires a feasibility analysis to evaluate alternatives to constructing a new water system. A feasibility analysis may compare the pros and cons of new construction connecting to an existing water system versus that new construction developing a new, independent water system. The feasibility analysis must be completed by the consulting engineer for the applicant and approved by SCDES drinking water permitting staff before a new public water system can be permitted and constructed. Additionally, a proposed new system must demonstrate that it will be viable – typically through a detailed business plan which must address the technical, managerial, and financial requirements of owning and operating a public water system.

Consequently, consulting engineers understand that feasibility analyses are a major consideration for most permit application decisions and the results frequently lead their clients toward connecting to an existing, viable public water system rather than submitting a construction application for a new system. Since the inception of capacity development as part of new system permitting requirements, SCDES has permitted less than half of construction permit applications for new community or non-transient-non-community water systems. Many of the remaining applicants either abandoned or withdrew their applications based on lack of demand, or applicants merged with another public

water system. This process has addressed the need for new systems while promoting the development of stronger systems. No new water systems have been added during the past three years.

C. Sanitary Survey Program

Maintain an effective sanitary survey program. The sanitary survey program ensures that each PWS is routinely inspected at a frequency that satisfies federal requirements and state guidelines. These inspections, known as sanitary surveys, are necessary to ensure that each PWS is properly operated, maintained, and meets state and federal standards to protect public health.

The survey format is a rating system based on 39 performance criteria and survey questions that are conducted by SCDES staff periodically for each active water system in the state. Surveys are performed at intervals that are determined by the type classification of the system and compliance rating of its last inspection. There are three sanitary survey ratings available: *Satisfactory*, *Improvement Needed*, or *Unsatisfactory*. When a system receives an *Improvement Needed* or *Unsatisfactory* rating, SCDES will provide technical assistance and/or use enforcement actions to compel the system to address the deficiency or deficiencies that caused the less than satisfactory rating – providing a path to achieve a *Satisfactory* rating. An overall *Unsatisfactory* rating may result in a requirement to prepare a business plan to address how the system will regain and maintain viability through focusing on its technical, managerial, and financial components.

In SFY 2026, 563 community water systems provided over 4.6 million residents with safe drinking water. Of these community systems, 320 systems completed sanitary surveys with 163 receiving *Satisfactory* on their sanitary survey inspection and 140 receiving *Improvement Needed*. Seventeen systems received a score of *Unsatisfactory*. In total, over 98% of the residents served by community systems have a drinking water supply meeting state and federal standards.

Since the 2023 report, SCDES has implemented a new sanitary survey data system. Questions on whether a water system has an asset management program and a capital improvement program are now included as a part of the sanitary survey.

Enforcement

The objective of enforcement is to ensure that timely and effective action is taken whenever a PWS is found to be out of compliance with federal and/or state regulations. While the goal is for systems to maintain compliance, sometimes situations occur requiring enforcement action. In those cases, an appropriate

level of action is taken to document and establish corrective measures to regain compliance. As an alternative to enforcement actions, some systems may be prioritized and referred to the Office of Rural Water or other groups for technical assistance. In lieu of requiring a business plan, SCDES may offer a less costly compliance schedule and technical assistance for small systems.

D. Water Quality Monitoring and Annual Fee Program

Maintain a high compliance rate of bacteriological, chemical, and radionuclide monitoring by public water systems. Routine water quality monitoring ensures that each PWS is properly monitored in accordance with federal and state regulations and that compliance with those federal and state regulations, or any violation thereof, is identified in a timely manner so proper corrective actions can be instituted, if required, to return the PWS to compliance.

SCDES effectively manages its monitoring program through annual fees. These fees allow the agency to collect and analyze samples consistently rather than requiring systems to obtain their own samples. This results in a highly successful compliance rate. The fee program also provides for equitable sampling costs between large and small systems, reducing the financial hardship on smaller systems with subsidies from large systems so more can comply with the program's monitoring requirements. The monitoring compliance rate was 96% for community water systems in SFY 2025, while the compliance rate for all federally defined water systems in the state was 95%, encompassing 98% of the population.

Adequate and safe drinking water begins with a reliable, relatively clean water source. After permitting a new community, non-transient non-community, or transient PWS with a surface water source, SCDES delineates a source water protection area associated with the source water for use by other regulatory programs, such as the South Carolina National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program.

Many programs within SCDES contribute to the monitoring, protection, restoration, and enhancement of source waters in South Carolina. SCDES set aside \$3,752,419 during SFY 2024 - 2026 from associated Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) capitalization grants for source water protection programs. These funds are being used to execute five key activities:

- 1) Development of site-specific nutrient criteria and nutrient Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Models or TMDL alternative restoration plans for impaired waters;

- 2) Development of watershed-based plans to support the protection of source waters;
- 3) Support for water resource studies and programs to protect and preserve source waters in the state including groundwater or surface water resources;
- 4) Monitoring for Hazardous Algal Blooms in South Carolina lakes, especially lakes that have drinking water intakes or are heavily used for primary contact recreation; and
- 5) Assisting with completing the Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment (DWINSA).

Progress on these five activities is summarized below.

1) TMDL Modeling

CATAWBA RIVER NUTRIENT TMDL MODEL

The Catawba Nutrient TMDL Model contract kicked off in January 2023. Model development by Tetra Tech, in coordination with stakeholders, continues. The completion of the model has been delayed by issues with implementation of temperature and stratification / destratification simulations, as well as with discrepancies in measured phosphorus data from different labs being used for model calibration. SCDES, the Lower Catawba River Dischargers Group (LOWCARB), and Tetra Tech are currently working through these issues and anticipate completing model calibration during the second quarter of calendar year 2027.

LAKE MURRAY NUTRIENT TMDL MODEL

Contract for development of a nutrient TMDL model for Lake Murray focusing on impairments in Little Saluda arm and Bush River arm was awarded to Water Environment Consultants (WEC) in July 2025 with a contract end date in June 2027. The model will be used to develop nutrient TMDLs to restore water quality in the impaired lake arms and protect water quality in the main lake.

LAKE HARTWELL NUTRIENT TMDL MODEL

Contract for development of a nutrient TMDL model for Lake Hartwell focusing on impairments in 18-Mile Creek arm was awarded to WEC in July 2025 with a contract end date in June 2027. The model will be used to develop nutrient TMDLs to restore water quality in the impaired lake arm and protect water quality in the lake proper.

2) Watershed Plans

Requests for applications are administered annually by the SCDES Nonpoint Source Program for the development of watershed plans in alignment with EPA watershed-based planning development guidance. Watershed plans address ambient surface water pollutants and their impact on drinking water sources. Applications are accepted from SRF-eligible borrowers, watershed organizations, soil and water conservation districts, regional planning commissions, universities, and public organizations. Completed watershed plans are reviewed and evaluated based upon satisfying the criteria defined within the required EPA nine elements. Approved watershed plans are eligible guidance documents when applying for implementation funding, including the Clean Water Act Section 319 grant.

During SFY 2024 - 2026, funding was awarded for five watershed plan development grants. Upstate Forever, a non-profit conservation organization, received a grant to evaluate watersheds spanning portions of Oconee and Anderson counties that impact multiple rural water systems. The Richland County Conservation Commission was awarded funding to update an outdated watershed management plan for urban portions of Richland County that includes multiple source water intakes servicing large populations. Grants for watershed plan development were also awarded for the Little Allison Creek watershed in York County, the Guerin Creek and Copahie Sound watersheds in Charleston and Berkeley Counties, and to compose an addendum to an existing watershed plan encompassing regions of Lexington and Richland counties.

The next request for applications for watershed plan development grants will be announced in February 2027.

3) Water Resources Studies

SRF funds are used to collect and evaluate water use data for surface water and groundwater to better manage water resources in the state. A capacity use area (CUA) is a region within the state where the groundwater aquifer(s) are vulnerable to overuse and/or saltwater intrusion. An evaluation was produced for the Pee Dee Capacity Use Area in preparation for the groundwater use permit renewal cycle in 2025. The Waccamaw and Western Capacity Use Areas went through the groundwater use permit renewal process in 2024. In 2025, the Pee Dee Capacity Use Area went through the groundwater permit renewal process. Surface and groundwater withdrawal data were used to develop models and projections used in the 2025 South Carolina State Water Plan. The Plan was a combined effort from

stakeholders, SCDES staff, and others to develop strategies for water resource management to ensure the state has continued access to this essential resource. Evaluations for the Santee-Lynches and Lowcountry CUAs were started in early 2026 and will be completed in mid SFY 2027.

4) Harmful Algal Bloom Studies

During 2024 and 2025, SCDES staff collected and analyzed samples taken from approximately 100 monthly-monitored sites across South Carolina reservoirs, estuaries, and influent streams for the harmful algal bloom (HAB) cyanotoxin microcystins. Samples for microcystins are collected during the typical growing season for algae, which is May through October. Of the 1,421 total samples that were successfully analyzed for microcystins in 2024 and 2025, approximately 72% of them had quantifiable concentrations present ($\geq 0.016 \mu\text{g/L}$). Toxin concentrations in all monthly-monitoring samples were less than the state recreational standard of $8 \mu\text{g/L}$ for microcystins.

Three lakes were sampled for microcystins from May through October of 2024 and 2025 as close as practical to drinking water intakes to serve as drinking water source samples. Sites were selected based on previous algal issues and complaints of taste and odor issues. Microcystins were detected at all drinking water intakes, with one of these three lakes exceeding the state recreational standard in 2024. This exceedance was at Lake Rabon, which serves as the primary water source for Laurens County. A recreational advisory for Lake Rabon was issued in September of 2024 and was lifted on October 10, 2024, after two consecutive samples had toxin concentrations less than $8 \mu\text{g/L}$.

In April of 2025, a recreational watch was issued for the entirety of Lake Hartwell due to the presence of a widespread cyanobacteria bloom. A HAB watch is issued when a potential toxin producing bloom has been identified but is not producing toxins that are greater than state recreational standards. Five full lake sampling events were conducted on Lake Hartwell. During these events, more than 55 samples were analyzed for microcystins. The highest concentration during this period reached $2.4 \mu\text{g/L}$. As a result, the recreational watch lifted in July 2025. This bloom and the associated watch spurred a significant amount of public interest and concern, as more than 300 calls and emails were received specifically regarding this Lake Hartwell bloom. This represents a 1000% increase in reports compared to the average number of reports received annually by SCDES. The [SCDES HAB online mapping tool](#) usage also reported an average of 588 unique views per

day during April and May of 2025, which was a 131% increase in views compared to the entirety of the 2024 annual HAB monitoring season.

5) Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment (DWINSA)

The 8th Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment has been slowed by delays on the federal level. Data collection for the 8th DWINSA is expected to occur during SFY 2027.

Wellhead Protection Program

In addition to source water protection, SCDES utilized \$3,933,141 in DWSRF set-aside funds in SFY 2024 - 2026 to assist South Carolina public water systems in developing and implementing their wellhead protection programs and to protect groundwater resources throughout the state.

- 1) For new wells in community and non-community public water systems, SCDES performs a complete wellhead assessment which includes the delineation of the protection area, inventory of potential contamination sources, a susceptibility analysis, and preparation of an assessment report that will be made available to the public. During SFY 2024 - 2026, SCDES delineated protection areas and completed susceptibility analyses for 45 proposed wells serving public water systems.
- 2) SCDES provides technical assistance to public water systems that are beginning their voluntary wellhead protection programs.
- 3) SCDES provides technical assistance to public water systems that have a known and existing drinking water quality problem or that have just learned of an emerging drinking water quality problem.
- 4) SCDES conducts studies and collects data to evaluate groundwater resources in the state. This information is used to better manage groundwater resources in the state, especially in areas of the state where groundwater overuse or saltwater intrusion threatens the long-term viability of the resource.

Area Wide Optimization Program (AWOP)

SCDES initiated participation in the EPA National Area-Wide Optimization Program (AWOP) in 1997 and values this successful program for its role in providing the citizens of South Carolina with drinking water that meets or exceeds state and federal standards. This program continues to attain its goal of maximizing public health protection by the optimization of particulate removal at each of the 61 surface water treatment plants within the state, while reducing microbial and disinfection by-product (DBP) formation in all water systems.

Surface water plants and facilities (water systems whose source is a lake or river) are encouraged to voluntarily join the program because the established treatment goals exceed drinking water quality standards established in the State Primary Drinking Water Regulations R.61-58. The AWOP Program is partially funded by the DWSRF capitalization grant set-aside for public water system supervision.

The AWOP Program has a priority ranking system for evaluating and scoring the success of a surface water system in reducing microbials in its water. This prioritization lets the system and SCDES apply resources and optimization tools in areas with the most need. In the most recent report dated 2025, approximately 3.5 million of the approximately 5 million residents of the state received drinking water from surface water plants, with approximately 3 million receiving drinking water from plants that have been optimized for microbial protection. By contrast, when the AWOP Program began in 1998, only 49,000 state residents received drinking water from plants that met settled and filtered optimization goals.

Another AWOP Program task is using its priority ranking system to score and evaluate the success of a surface water plant in reducing DBPs in its system. In 2025, 2.2 million of the 3.5 million residents using water from surface water plants received drinking water from DBP-optimized plants.

Other initiatives for the SCDES AWOP team include conducting workshops to teach specific requirements for microbial and DBP optimization, implementing the Revised Total Coliform Rule, implementing a strategy to monitor PFAS in public water systems, and continuing to be a leader in AWOP innovation for SC and nationally. Annually, water systems achieving AWOP goals are recognized for their accomplishments, providing incentives and pride in demonstrating to their management and consumers the benefits of exceeding drinking water standards.

E. Business Plans

A business plan for a water system is developed with the intent of demonstrating how a proposed water system will be operated and maintained as a viable entity. This business plan consists of three subplans: a facilities plan, a management plan, and a financial plan. The plan may be developed by new or existing water systems. A plan may also be utilized as a self-assessment tool or as a means to correct issues resulting in enforcement action. These uses assist systems in the improved management of system assets.

F. Operating Permit Program

The operating permit program began in 1998 to ensure compliance with amendments to the State Primary Drinking Water Regulations. Operating permits

are issued to active water systems. When a system is slated to change ownership, operating permit transfers must be approved by SCDES before ownership of a public water system can be legally transferred. This process prevents the transfer of a water system to an owner lacking the adequate technical, managerial, or financial capacities to operate and maintain a system in compliance with state and federal regulations. Likewise, proposed new systems must follow a similar process and demonstrate that it is not feasible to connect to another existing system. In addition, a system with an unsatisfactory sanitary survey rating may be required to submit a business plan addressing the technical, managerial, and financial requirements needed to bring the system into compliance.

G. Develop Benchmarks from Annual Financial Statements from Existing Water Systems to Help Determine the Adequacy of Business Plans

The SCDES SRF Program has a complement of financial accountants tasked with tracking expenditures, verifying the accuracy and validity of submitted draw requests, reviewing business plans, and conducting Utility Sustainability Assessments (UtSAs). These assessments are reviewed when a system requests SRF loan assistance and updated every three years to ensure that the system is sustainable. Each UtSA remains valid for a period of three years before a new assessment is required to quantify the current sustainability of a system. These assessments are reviewed when a system requests SRF loan assistance. This process includes a review of SCDES information to evaluate the ability of the system to operate within its permitted parameters. If it is determined that a system is not sustainable, it may be referred to a technical assistance provider or other group to help build capacity and strengthen the sustainability of the utility. SRF financial assistance may also be provided if it is determined the proposed project will help increase the sustainability of the system.

During SFY 2024 - 2026, eight water systems applying for DWSRF funding were identified as being unsustainable through UtSA scoring at the time of their application submission and took significant steps to become sustainable through technical assistance efforts or SRF project funding. These systems struggled to adequately satisfy UtSA criteria utilized for quantifying sustainability and were initially ineligible for DWSRF funding based on not being sustainable for factors such as:

- Annual expenses being greater than the total annual revenue;
- Insufficient inventory of system assets;
- Lack of planning documents; and/or
- Absence of an operations and maintenance manual.

Sustainability improvements are in progress through ongoing technical assistance efforts or SRF project funding, resulting in increases to the corresponding UtSA scores for:

- Bamberg County;
- Draytonville Water Works;
- Town of Allendale;
- Town of Johnsonville;
- Town of Lane;
- Town of Lincolnville;
- Town of Olanta; and
- Town of Ridgeway.

H. Encourage and Facilitate the Consolidation and Regionalization of Public Water Systems

Many smaller municipal systems face rising operational costs and a rate of growth in their customer base that is incapable of generating the additional revenues required to meet those increased costs. Sharing or consolidating services, personnel, and/or water system equipment through a regionalization relationship is one possible solution for these systems.

SCDES cooperates with local government entities and other state agencies to explore opportunities for water utilities to regionalize or consolidate. The SRF Program offers loan incentives for drinking water systems who are exploring regionalization or consolidating operations. Additional priority ranking points for such efforts range from 10 points for two or more systems joining together and up to 40 additional points if a viable system is willing to take over a non-viable system to correct operational, maintenance, and/or financial issues that are causing the non-viable system to be out of compliance with safe drinking water regulations.

I. Encourage and Facilitate the Local Planning Process and Coordination Between State and Local Governments

SCDES continues to participate in the Infrastructure Funders Coordinating Committee (IFCC), comprised of representatives from SCDES SRF, S.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA), U.S. Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Program, and the Community Development Block Grant within the S.C. Department of Commerce. This group discusses water infrastructure projects in the state and collaborates to direct water systems to the funding agency or agencies best suited to meet their needs. Additionally, these agencies often work together to co-fund projects. The communication and collaboration between these funding agencies have resulted

in regionalization and consolidation projects benefitting many communities. ORW partners with many statewide organizations and agencies along with other internal SCDES divisions to provide assistance to small and underserved communities. Some of these partnerships are listed below.

- Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project (SERCAP)
 - Financial and technical assistance (COMMUNITY/INDIVIDUALS)
- South Carolina Rural Water Association (SCRWA)
 - Financial and technical assistance (COMMUNITY)
- State Revolving Fund (SRF)
 - Financial assistance (COMMUNITY)
- South Carolina Water Associations (WEASC/SCAWWA)
 - Managerial and operational assistance (COMMUNITY)
- Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA)
 - Financial assistance (COMMUNITY)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
 - Managerial, operational, and financial assistance (INDIVIDUALS)
 - Water and Environmental Programs
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
 - Financial assistance (INDIVIDUALS)
 - Funding Opportunities
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD)
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (COMMUNITY)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Managerial and operational assistance
 - Water Finance Clearinghouse
- Local Councils of Governments (COGs)

One such example of this collaboration includes ORW participating as a member of the RIA Sustainability Advisory Committee. RIA hosted a sustainability forum in September 2021. The forum focused on the viability and sustainability of public utility systems in South Carolina. RIA hired a contractor to perform an in-depth look at this important and challenging issue in our state. The outcome of the study and forum provided tools for assessing the viability of utility systems and explored possible long-term solutions for nonviable utilities such as partnerships and regionalization.

SCDES and RIA SRF Partnership

SCDES and RIA work closely together to fund and oversee various projects to build capacity in systems throughout the state. RIA manages the financial resources needed and the loan process to administer the funds, including conducting financial reviews on potential recipients. SCDES SRF staff review the technical

engineering reports, plans & specifications, permitting, inspections, and jointly track project invoices.

SC Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP)

Following the enactment of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), the South Carolina General Assembly allocated nearly \$1.5 billion to RIA for use in drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and related infrastructure and study projects. In SFY 2023, RIA awarded over 200 grants through this ARPA-funded program, called the South Carolina Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP). Most SCIIP projects are multimillion dollar improvements, and all have strengthened fundamental services for residents and businesses, creating more resilient communities and building capacity for long-term growth and development. RIA also issued State grants to 37 entities totaling \$15.3 million. In a complementary effort, RIA and SCDES SRF offered principal forgiveness loans to 15 systems that did not receive SCIIP funding or only partial funding of their grant requests to allow them to move forward with addressing water and/or sewer needs.

SCDES Bureau of Water staff partner closely with RIA to review and permit SCIIP projects. In addition, \$6 million of the ARPA funding allocated to RIA was designated to fund SCDES inspections of project construction. SCDES completed on-site inspections of 119 construction contracts during SFY 2024 - 2026.

This collaboration of federal, state, municipal, and other public agencies has resulted in the largest water infrastructure investment in South Carolina history, benefiting numerous facilities in every county of the state and helping them to build capacity in all areas. During SFY 2024 - 2026, RIA has worked to keep projects on track to meet strict federal deadlines requiring all funds to be expended by December 2026. At the end of SFY 2026, \$1.17 billion had been disbursed for work completed on SCIIP projects. Two examples of water systems that realized significant water system improvements are highlighted below.

CHESTER METROPOLITAN DISTRICT WATER TREATMENT PLANT RENOVATION

Key components of the water treatment facility for this water district in rural Chester County, South Carolina were nearing the end of their useful life. Through the combined resources of a \$10 million SCIIP grant, a \$9 million DWSRF loan, and \$3 million in local funding, the district was able to rehabilitate and upgrade critical drinking water treatment equipment, including its vital raw water pumping manifold. The total of \$22 million in funded improvements has resulted in a more reliable treatment facility, allowing the water district to continue to provide clean, safe drinking water for its existing customers. These improvements were purpose-built to ensure expandability in the future, which will aid in meeting the needs of the growing residential and industrial customer base found in this part of the state.



New raw water pumping manifold at the Chester Metropolitan District water treatment facility. (Photo provided by RIA.)

TOWN OF BATESBURG-LEESVILLE AND JOINT MUNICIPAL WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION WATER INTERCONNECTION

The Town of Batesburg-Leesville built over five miles of water main and a booster pump station that connects to the nearby Joint Municipal Water and Sewer Commission (JMWSC). A \$10 million SCIIP grant and \$4.25 million from a DWSRF emerging contaminants principal forgiveness loan funded the infrastructure completed by the Town. Simultaneously, JMWSC constructed the waterline, a booster pump station, and an elevated water tank needed to complete the connection on its side. JMWSC leveraged a \$10 million SCIIP grant, a \$12.5 million DWSRF loan, and a \$5.2 million DWSRF emerging contaminants principal forgiveness loan to fund its portion of the project. This collaboration addresses long-standing



Elevated water tank built through a partnership between JMWSC and the Town of Batesburg-Leesville. (Photo provided by RIA.)

issues in the Town with water supply and storage, which were cited in a consent order from SCDES, as well as elevated PFAS levels being faced by the Town.

Interagency Collaboration

The SCDES Bureau of Water and RIA both participate in regular meetings of two interagency working groups. The IFCC, mentioned above, helps to streamline co-funded projects, efficiently allocate limited funds, and avoid duplicating efforts. The Viability Assistance Network, established during SFY 2024, includes SCDES and RIA, as well as a membership comprised of government agencies and non-profit organizations that provide technical assistance to drinking water and wastewater utilities. This group works to develop joint ventures and provide targeted support where needed to help utilities attain or maintain long-term viability.

Supporting Stronger Utilities

In consultation with the Viability Assistance Network, RIA has developed a comprehensive training manual for utility board and council members. This manual will be available to all South Carolina utilities and technical assistance providers. It is designed to complement the diverse backgrounds and skills of policymakers, facilitating informed decision-making and responsible oversight of critical drinking water and wastewater services.

Another initiative that has been developed with input and support from the Viability Assistance Network is the Viability Improvement Program. RIA launched this pilot program in SFY 2026. It offers a unique combination of tailored technical assistance and capital improvement funding to public water and sewer utilities that have experienced viability challenges and are committed to building a stronger future. Participants move through three steps, beginning with a rapid assessment of managerial, financial and technical needs. Next, more in-depth planning studies are conducted to develop a full plan of action. Finally, grant funding is provided to implement the highest priority capital improvements. To remain in the program, participants must show continuing progress on implementing the actions recommended at each step. Three communities have been selected to participate in the program to date.

RIA also offers planning grants to fund studies needed to improve long-term viability. In SFY 2026, the program was narrowed to focus specifically on facilitating implementation of regional partnerships that will provide more efficient and effective utility services. During SFY 2022 - 2026, RIA awarded 52 planning grants totaling \$14.2 million. One example of how these funds have been utilized is discussed below.

TOWN OF SWANSEA UTILITY SYSTEM EVALUATION

The Town of Swansea, being a very small community of less than 800 residents, had long struggled to operate its aging water and sewer system. It depended heavily on informal assistance from the neighboring Joint Municipal Water and Sewer Commission. The condition assessments and capital improvement plan, developed with a SCIP planning grant for \$850,000, highlighted the need for long-term assistance and put the Town and the Commission in a position to be able to enter a long-term contract to operate the Town of Swansea system without putting an undue financial burden on its customers (pictured). The Commission is now using a state-funded RIA grant to carry out the highest priority improvements for the Town.



Town of Swansea Mayor, Viola McDaniel and JMWSC CEO, Jay Nicholson sign a long-term operations agreement in November 2025. (Photo provided by RIA.)

Operator Certification Licensing Program

SCDES provides support to the SC Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (SCLLR) for implementation of the operator certification licensing program. A senior SCDES drinking water program manager currently serves on the LLR Board of Environmental Certification that oversees the operator certification licensing program. SCDES also assists with operator training and compliance monitoring activities. Properly trained and licensed system operators are key to having drinking water systems capable of meeting state and federal drinking water standards. To be a licensed operator, licensees must pass tests on the proper operation of water systems and applicable drinking water regulations and maintain continuing education credits. Not employing a certified operator with the appropriate certification grade is a violation of state drinking water regulations. There are currently approximately 1,677 Water Treatment and 2,548 Water Distribution operators, along with 412 trainees, in South Carolina. With an aging work force, emphasis has been placed on work force development programs in recent years.

J. Public Education Initiative

Provide technical assistance through support of public water system education and outreach initiatives for improving the technical, managerial, and financial capacity of public water systems. SCDES provides education and outreach for technical assistance and training using internal and external capacity development programs.

Outreach Coordinator

Outreach is an integral part of the SCDES SRF Program in communicating SRF information to water systems and potential sponsors as well as building the project funnel for each funding cycle. SRF has a dedicated Outreach Coordinator to help organize and enhance outreach efforts. SRF provides outreach through direct contact to sponsors as well as attendance at regional water association meetings and participation in informational booths at conferences. The SRF Program provides outreach directly to contacts and potential SRF sponsors via emails, calls, and meetings to further enhance outreach and knowledge of SRF funding. During each call for projects period, SRF assists sponsors with SRF project questionnaires and understanding SRF eligibility requirements. After project scoring and final project selections, SRF publishes Intended Use Plans (IUPs) on the SRF website and the SCDES Public Notice website, as well as notifies sponsors of their funding for candidate projects, while providing guidance documents and project manager information.

SRF also hosts webinars including *Call for Projects* and *Understanding the SRF Process* for new projects. All SRF information, guidance documents, forms, webinar slides, and other helpful information is updated regularly on the SRF website at des.sc.gov/SRF.

Monthly and quarterly meetings are held with contracted technical assistance providers to expand SRF outreach through those partners to the communities in need across the state. Outreach support is also provided through preparation of reports, data, and other SRF / Capacity Development functions.

Office of Rural Water

The primary objective of the Office of Rural Water (ORW) is to foster healthy living in healthy communities; with a particular emphasis on smaller, underserved, and historically disadvantaged communities. SCDES staff endeavor to facilitate access to the SCDES vision and mission by instilling a culture of collaborative problem-solving and fostering regional partnerships. ORW embodies this mission by encouraging innovative local and regional solutions through cooperation and the shared pursuit of excellence. Science becomes actionable, equipping operators

and staff with knowledge about regulatory requirements and impending regulatory shifts.

ORW believes in an inclusive approach, working with smaller communities in a cooperative spirit by leveraging a comprehensive network of partners to disseminate a range of financial assistance resources. These include funding aid, rate analyses, grant writing resources, and viability studies. This allows SCDES to concurrently address and find solutions for communities plagued by longstanding compliance management issues on operational and scientific fronts.

Moreover, ORW sets an example by administering and coordinating grant programs aimed at testing, educating, and remediating lead contamination in drinking water in schools across the state, thereby protecting our most vulnerable citizens, children. As a non-regulatory branch, ORW develops trust between the SCDES and its public water systems, resulting in pride by all parties to significantly influence the quality of drinking water for citizens throughout the state, effecting change in various ways.

Areas of focus for the ORW include the following listed below.

- Training water operators on SC water regulations
- Participation at local and regional conferences and workshops to inform operators, engineers, and others on the latest regulations and programs
- Promoting the regionalization or mergers of smaller systems
- Providing education on establishing an adequate rate structure and how that alone can significantly improve operational and financial viability
- Offering collaborative and innovative solutions to problems inherent with aging infrastructure issues
- Engaging communities about the benefits of water system partnerships
- Educating communities on technical or financial assistance opportunities for which they may be eligible
- Providing outreach to local schools regarding water quality issues such as disinfection by-products, microbial growth, and lead in drinking water
- Assisting water systems to maintain or regain compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule
- Conducting cross-connection control classes to certify local plumbers, contractors, and utility staff on the proper use, installation, and testing of backflow prevention devices.

During SFY 2024 - 2026, ORW worked on approximately 30 projects that required technical, managerial, and/or financial assistance. In the pursuit of infrastructure improvement and sustainable practices, ORW staff have made noteworthy

accomplishments in multiple communities around the state. The ORW, through a grant from EPA, has worked alongside two water utilities to provide drinking water lines in communities providing clean, safe drinking water to over 50 homes. One project is complete and the other is currently under way.

ORW also administers the state Lead Testing in School and Child Care Program Drinking Water Grant established by the Federal Water Infrastructure Improvements (WIIN) Act. Guides to assist schools with reducing potential lead in school water lines are available online at des.sc.gov/programs/bureau-water/lead-testing-schools-and-child-care-programs.

Small Water System Technical Assistance

The objective of this program is to provide assistance to small public community water systems (systems serving less than 10,000 people) to improve their daily operations, which in turn will help increase their sustainability, ability to qualify for SRF project assistance, and regulatory compliance under the Safe Drinking Water Act and State Primary Drinking Water Regulations. The SCDES SRF Program contracts with the South Carolina Rural Water Association (SCRWA), the state affiliate of the National Rural Water Association (NRWA), to provide technical assistance and professional training to small systems.



SCRWA staff work with operators in the Town of Allendale to maintain non-operational fire hydrants. (Photo provided by SCRWA, June 2025)



SCRWA staff assist the Town of Lockhart by teaching the proper technique for large water meter replacement. (Photo provided by SCRWA, April 2026)

SCRWA provides more than technical assistance by partnering with utilities to improve operations, strengthen financial sustainability, maintain regulatory compliance, and protect public health. SCRWA staff work directly with systems to achieve results that provide incredible cost savings.

Through technical expertise, education, and long-term partnerships, SCRWA helps the water utilities of South Carolina provide safe, reliable, and sustainable service to their communities through the operations evaluations listed below.

- Reducing water loss
- Increasing revenues
- Meeting regulatory requirements
- Planning for future infrastructure needs
- Preparing for emergencies
- Building a sustainable and well-trained workforce

Qualifying for SRF loan assistance can be a challenging task for small systems; however, SCRWA staff are available to help systems satisfy SRF sustainability

requirements. SCRWA also offers water system board member training focusing on effective water system management practices. SCDES staff often attend and participate in SCRWA training sessions. A total of \$600,000 for SFY 2024 - 2026 was set aside for SCDES technical assistance activities from DWSRF capitalization grants.

SCRWA staff provide a number of different services and training opportunities for small water systems statewide. They also work with small systems who have applied for SRF funding but need to improve their sustainability scores to become SRF eligible. This work is often one-on-one and on-site with the system. SCRWA frequently consults and collaborates with SCDES Drinking Water Compliance staff. Successful outcomes are being derived from the SCRWA contract as SCDES continues this relationship with SCRWA.

SCRWA provides comprehensive assistance encompassing many aspects that enhance water system performance, included those listed below.

- Operations, maintenance, and optimization training
- Regulatory compliance assistance
- Asset management planning
- American Water Works Association (AWWA) Water Audits
- Rate studies and financial sustainability
- Utility operations assessments and troubleshooting
- GIS mapping and infrastructure inventories
- Workforce Apprenticeship Programs
- Board governance and leadership training
- Funding and grant assistance
- Emergency preparedness and response
- South Carolina Water / Wastewater Agency Response Network (SCWARN) Mutual Aid coordination
- On-site technical assistance and operator mentoring

Direct Assistance

TOWN OF CALHOUN FALLS

SCRWA staff provide on-site assistance to help solve system problems and improve overall capacity. One example is emergency assistance provided to the Town of Calhoun Falls during a major distribution system failure that left portions of this nearly 2,500 residential customer community with inadequate water pressure. SCRWA assisted with the services listed below to facilitate a productive outcome.

- Leak detection and emergency response
- Valve locating and infrastructure assessment

- GIS mapping support
- Water audit assistance
- Lead and Copper Rule compliance assistance
- Revenue enhancement recommendations
- Meter management and operational improvements

These services provided by SCRWA resulted in locating and repairing a significant hidden water main break. While this repair restored system pressure, assistance from SCRWA also yielded additional benefits for the Town of Calhoun Falls water system, highlighted below.

- Identified and located more than 20 buried valves, improving operational control
- Initiated GIS mapping to improve future maintenance and emergency response
- Assisted with Lead and Copper Rule notifications and sample collection
- Completed AWWA Water Audit assistance
- Identified opportunities to increase annual utility revenue by:
 - Approximately \$35,000 through apartment billing modifications
 - More than \$25,000 through revised minimum billing practices
- Identified significant revenue losses caused by non-functioning meters and recommended operational improvements to increase billing accuracy and reduce water loss

SCRWA continues to provide ongoing technical assistance to improve system reliability, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability.

TOWN OF LYNCHBURG

The Town of Lynchburg, a small Lee County community with a water system serving less than 400 residents, faces ongoing regulatory compliance issues and a need to satisfy SCDES consent order requirements. SCRWA has engaged with Lynchburg through the services listed below to improve overall system capacity and sustainability.

- Meter inventory development
- Regulatory compliance assistance
- Coordination with state and national partner organizations
- Community engagement support
- Utility operational planning

SCRWA assistance is generating significant progress for the water system in Lynchburg, highlighted through the endeavors highlighted below.

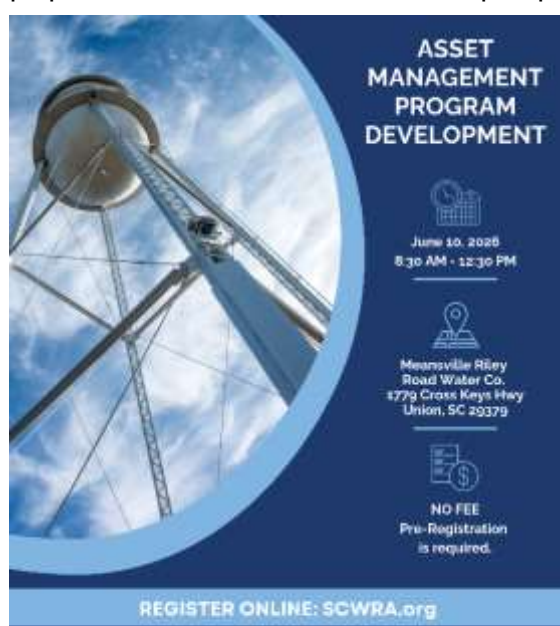
- Substantial progress toward completing a comprehensive water meter inventory required under the consent order
- Coordinated technical assistance efforts with the U.S. Water Alliance, engineering consultants, utility partners, and town officials
- Public meetings held to communicate progress and future improvements to residents
- Continued support for efforts by the Town of Lynchburg to restore compliance and improve long-term water system operations.

K. Asset Management

Following the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (AWIA), the SC Capacity Development Strategy was amended in November 2022 to include Asset Management as a key element in insuring a sustainable water system. SCDES has and continues to encourage and assist public drinking water systems with asset management planning and the preparation of asset management plans. Activities supporting asset management planning and plan development are listed below. The focus is on systems having an asset management plan and adopting asset management practices to improve and enhance overall system capacity and sustainability.

Asset Management Training

The DWSRF utilizes a technical assistance contractor to conduct asset management training workshops for small public drinking water systems serving populations of less than 10,000 people in the state. These workshops continue to



emphasize the benefits of asset management planning and having an asset management plan. The training curriculum includes all aspects of asset management planning including tools that systems can use to assist with preparing an asset management plan. The training incorporates the best practices of asset management, including the five core elements that EPA recommends a system consider when preparing an asset management plan:

- 1) Current state of assets;
- 2) Level of service;
- 3) Critical assets;
- 4) Minimum life cycle costs; and
- 5) Long-term funding plans.

An ongoing challenge that systems face is maintaining an asset management plan and its data after one is initially developed. Asset management training emphasizes the importance of maintaining an asset management plan. In addition to SRF funded training, SCDES works with other organizations, government agencies, and vendors to identify asset management resources.

Three key obstacles limit the ability of small systems to prepare, implement, and maintain an asset management plan.

- 1) A lack of resources to guide the preparation of the plan
- 2) Possessing the system information necessary for preparing a plan
- 3) Turnover of leadership and staff positions

Direct assistance to small systems helps overcome these obstacles. While direct assistance does not address turnover directly, it may have indirect positive effects on this ongoing challenge by allowing key staff to become better equipped to manage the system. DWSRF funds are used to fund a technical assistance contractor capable of providing small public systems with the guidance needed to facilitate the planning, data collection, and preparation of an asset management plan. Assistance focuses on incorporating the five core elements recommended by EPA. The technical assistance contractor may provide direct assistance to small systems for other activities that can support asset management planning – such as mapping system assets, leak detection testing to identify system assets in need of repair, rate setting to make sure capital resources are available to fund future repairs and upgrades, and the identification of user-friendly and reasonably priced asset management tools. Small systems are identified for direct assistance based on needs identified by the SCDES sanitary survey, monitoring data, or a request to the agency for assistance by the system. The technical assistance contractor may receive direct requests for assistance by a system or identify a system needing assistance during training sessions or a system visit. SCDES contracts with the SCRWA to provide small systems with asset management training and technical guidance to assist them in preparing asset management plans.

Funding for Asset Management Plans

Small and disadvantaged systems preparing asset management plans often struggle with the financial resources needed to prepare a plan. The SC DWSRF Program aims to address this need by offering funding to public drinking water systems to prepare planning documents, including asset management plans. Funding is offered as low interest loans or as principal forgiveness funds to public drinking water systems; depending on factors such as the system size, median

household income of the service area, and the ability of a system to afford a DWSRF loan.

L. Implementation and Conclusion

Many of the goals and objectives of the South Carolina Capacity Development Strategy are closely aligned and implemented under the umbrella of the Public Water System Supervision Program (PWSS). PWSS incorporates several SCDES Bureau of Water activity areas, noted earlier, whose overall responsibility is to ensure all public water systems are permitted, constructed, monitored, operated, and maintained in compliance with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and the State Primary Drinking Water Regulations, R.61-58, protecting the health and well-being of all citizens.

The funds allocated to PWSS are taken as set-asides from an annual DWSRF capitalization grant. A total of \$4,852,432 was set aside from DWSRF capitalization grants for SFY 2024 - 2026 to fund PWSS activities. These activities include construction permitting, water quality permitting, water quantity permitting, groundwater protection, drinking water protection / surface water system sanitary surveys, capacity development / new water system permitting and operating permit program, drinking water enforcement, AWOP, and technical assistance.

SCDES continues to implement supportive measures to enhance the technical, managerial, and financial capacities of the drinking water systems within the state, while also implementing additional new federal guidance and regulations as they are released. The goal of the capacity development strategy is to ensure the drinking water systems within South Carolina achieve sustainability while providing customers with an adequate, safe water supply satisfying all state and federal standards. SCDES routinely seeks out new approaches to support systems, such as creating the ORW and working with independent partners such as SCRWA. ORW provides SCDES with a non-regulatory avenue to help systems address compliance, technical and financial challenges, and explore alternate methods to achieve compliance and sustainability, such as partnering or combining with other water systems. SCRWA provides a full array of services for small systems to improve their capabilities, resulting in successful improvements to systems facing challenges.

Federal initiatives such as Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) establishing domestic procurement requirements, Lead Service Line Replacements, and the Congressional transfer of funds away from State Revolving Fund programs to direct federal allotments for projects have brought new challenges for public water systems and the states. The evolving regulatory environment demonstrates

the need for programs like Capacity Development to facilitate the management of this growing number of requirements. As projects funded through SCIIP and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act are reaching their conclusion, SCDES will monitor the impact these infrastructure projects have overall on drinking water quality in the state.

This report is publicly available on the SCDES Capacity Development website: des.sc.gov/capdev.

The next report to the Governor will be due September 30, 2029.