



Association of Environmental Authorities of New Jersey

Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2025

AEA Encourages Members to Review and Comment on NJ's Proposed PFAS Settlement with 3M

Several Members are Requesting an Extension of Comment Period

AEA members are urged to **review and comment** on the proposed settlement between New Jersey and 3M, as detailed in a recently released judicial consent order (JCO). Members are also advised to consider joining AEA and other authorities, including Rockaway Valley RSA, in requesting an extension of the 60-day public comment period that is set to end on Sept. 19.

The proposed settlement with 3M, announced in May, concerns PFAS contamination at 3M sites in Salem County and Middlesex County and its firefighting foam statewide. Terms of the agreement include payment of \$450M over 25 years to the State. The majority of funds are marked for PFAS remediation throughout the state including the Salem County site. Attorneys for several AEA member agencies have expressed concern that the settlement could preclude New Jersey municipalities, authorities, and other local units from future lawsuits to help them recover the cost of PFAS treatment. This is a topic of great importance that may impact each AEA member differently.

On Monday, in the first of two comment letters AEA expects to submit, **the association asked the NJDEP to extend the 60-day comment period to 120 days**. AEA's second comment letter will address the substance of the JCO. Members are encouraged to comment, either through AEA or directly to the NJDEP. (Please copy AEA on comments submitted directly to the NJDEP). **Those wishing to submit through AEA should send their comments to Karen Burris (subject line: PFAS Settlement Comments) by Aug. 22.**

The AEA NJPDES Committee plans to discuss the JCO and finalize AEA's comment at a meeting on **Wednesday, Sept. 3** at 1 p.m. on Zoom. (Email Karen if you want to participate in this meeting.)

In Light of Rising Costs of Electricity, Governors Plan to Convene to Discuss Reforms

Electricity bills in New Jersey and elsewhere have been increasing drastically. **How have these rising costs affected your utility?** Email Peggy to let us know.

Rising electricity costs are getting the attention of elected leaders. New Jersey's Gov. Phil Murphy and the Governors of the other 13 states that comprise the PJM grid have announced plans to hold a **"technical conference"** at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia on **Tuesday, Sept. 23** to explore ways of making PJM Interconnection LLC, the little-known company that manages the regional electrical grid, more accountable and transparent to their ratepayers.

Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia are part of the regional grid. They have agreed to hold the conference to discuss reforms to the wholesale electricity market design and implementation.

Critics hold PJM Interconnection largely responsible for the huge backlog of electricity projects waiting to connect to the grid.

To understand more about PJM, you can read this [explainer from the National Resources Defense Council](#).

Two Former Regulators Criticize Privatization Laws in NJ & PA

The AEA podcast, AEA Stream Line, provides interesting conversation and news about New Jersey water, wastewater, and solid waste issues.

[On the latest episode of AEA Stream Line](#), retired utility regulators James Cawley and Jeanne Fox explain why fair market value laws in NJ (WIPA) and Pennsylvania (Act 12) harm the customers of private water and sewer utilities.

During the podcast, Cawley, retired president of the Pennsylvania Utilities Commission, and Fox, retired president of the NJ Board of Public Utilities, explain that NJ and Pennsylvania fair market value laws upended 100 years of well-functioning investor-owned utility regulation, weakening the power of utilities commissions to protect investor-owned utility water and sewer customers.

Many AEA member authorities, as well as individuals who work at AEA

member organizations, are impacted by this law. Evesham MUA and Mount Laurel Township MUA purchase water in bulk from NJ American Water. WIPA allows NJAW and other water/sewer system buyers to recover the full purchase price in rates.

[Listen here](#) or find *AEA Stream Line* on [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [Player FM](#), [Amazon Music](#), or wherever else you get your podcasts.



Brian Valentino of WMUA Named to NACWA Board

Brian Valentino, AEA 2nd Vice President and Executive Director of Western Monmouth UA was elected on July 24 to the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) Board of Directors.

Brian has expressed gratitude to NACWA members, its nominating committee, and his staff and board at WMUA for the influential honor. Brian's colleagues on the AEA Board and Executive Committee are delighted with his appointment to the NACWA board.

AEA has been a long-time member of NACWA. It is an important conduit to news, events and policy matters affecting AEA members and an important advocate, especially at these particularly difficult times for water/sewer funding and regulation. NACWA represents public wastewater and stormwater agencies of all sizes nationwide and is the nation's leading voice for clean water utilities and the communities it serves. Brian has served as ED and CEO of WMUA for the past 10 years.

"Now we have a seat at the table to help shape the clean water sector's future on a national stage," Brian said in his Linked In post announcing the appointment

Passing of Bob Carlson, ED at Cumberland County Utilities Authority

AEA is very sorry to share news of the sudden passing of Bob Carlson, who was a veteran wastewater professional and a leader in the NJ wastewater sector.

Bob was the Executive Director of the Cumberland County Utilities Authority. He worked at the Atlantic County UA from 1990 through 2018, first as lab assistant and later as Assistant Director of Wastewater Operations. Bob was active in AEA and was instrumental in helping AEA publicize the negative consequences to ratepayers of a proposed CCUA privatization scheme that involved a long-term lease to a private equity firm.

He spoke out about the downside of privatization in other communities, as well. Bob was extremely knowledgeable about wastewater plant operations and had a wealth of industry knowledge.

Our understanding is that Bob's preference was that no formal observance of his passing be held.

Visit AEA's Career Center

Job listings for the public water / wastewater industry. AEA members may submit listings for free. [Check our job listings now.](#)

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Association of Environmental Authorities | 2333 Whitehorse-Mercerville Road, Unit 2, Mercerville, NJ 08619 | (609) 584-1877 | [Join Us](#) | <https://www.aeanj.org/>



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