

NJ I-BANK WATER INFRASTRUCTURE NEWS (WIN): MERCHANTVILLE PENNSAUKEN WATER COMMISSION BORROWS \$7.9 MILLION IN WATER BANK LOANS, SAVING RATEPAYERS APPROXIMATELY \$3.5 MILLION.

NJ I-Bank and NJDEP Helping to Improve New Jersey's Environmental Infrastructure, One Project at a Time



Picture courtesy of Remington Vernick Engineers

The Merchantville Pennsauken Water Commissioner ("MPWC" or "Commission") recently financed drinking water improvements with approximately \$7.9 million in loans from the NJ Water Bank, a low-rate funding program jointly administered by the DEP and the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank ("I-Bank"). Because the project addressed emerging contaminants, it qualified for \$1 million in principal forgiveness ("PF"). Total savings for this project, including PF and low interest costs, is estimated to be \$3,543,335 over the 20-year term of the loan or 44% of the total project costs as compared to the Commission financing it independently. In addition, this project created an estimated 95 direct one-year construction jobs.

The MPWC utilized the loan proceeds to make major upgrades to its National Highway Water Treatment Plant (NHWTP) targeting PFAS and 1,4 Dioxane, two contaminants of concern in drinking water. PFAS ("forever chemicals") are a group of man-made substances that can accumulate in the body over time. Long-term exposure has been linked to increased risk of cancer, liver and kidney problems, thyroid disease, high cholesterol, and impacts to the immune system. 1,4 Dioxane is a synthetic industrial chemical sometimes found in groundwater. It does not break down easily in the environment and is considered a likely human carcinogen.

Plant upgrades included:

- A granular activated carbon (GAC) system to remove PFAS
- An advanced oxidation process (AOP) system using ultraviolet light and hydrogen peroxide to treat 1,4 Dioxane
- Modernized filters, piping, disinfection systems, and a new generator for reliability
- A new treatment building to house state-of-the-art equipment

These investments ensure that residents can trust that their drinking water is clean, safe, and protected in the long term. According to Edward Brennan, Mayor of Merchantville, one of the four communities served by the MPWC, "Clean water is the foundation of a healthy community. By upgrading the plant, the Commission has removed harmful contaminants and ensured that every family can turn on the tap with confidence. Thanks to the support of the New Jersey Water Bank, these critical improvements were financed strategically at the lowest possible cost to our residents. This is an investment in public health, our environment, and the future of our town."

This project was designed by Remington Vernick Engineers. It was installed by MBE Mark III Electric.