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NEW JERSEY BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2021

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New Jersey Board of Public Utilities Approves Acoustic Testing Pilot Program

*Leak detection program will use state-of-the-art technology to
save water, energy, and money, especially in overburdened communities*

TRENTON, N.J.—The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) today approved the Acoustic Testing Pilot Program, a new \$1.5 million grant program for water utilities to install state-of-the-art leak detection technology to aid in identifying water leaks throughout their infrastructure. Identifying and correcting leaks throughout a system results in water and energy savings for New Jersey’s water utilities and their customers. Qualifying water utilities in New Jersey can apply for a grant within the Pilot Program starting on March 15.

“Water leaks waste money, energy, and a precious resource – especially at a widespread infrastructure level. By using advanced acoustic leak detection technology, utilities that participate in this pilot will be able to identify and remediate leaks more quickly and with greater insight as to where the worst leaks exist,” said NJBPU President Joseph L. Fiordaliso. “Older infrastructure in overburdened areas often account for some of the leakiest systems. With a more focused approach to leak detection, we can ensure equitable solutions are available where they are needed most.”

The Pilot Program is an example of how NJBPU has worked to implement the recommendations of Governor Murphy’s landmark [Energy Master Plan \(EMP\)](#), which includes looking for “new energy-saving opportunities in complementary sectors, such as the water sector.” Monitoring and replacing leaking water supply pipelines could be critical in driving energy reductions, as the EMP notes.

The Pilot Program, which will be funded by the Societal Benefits Charge (SBC), will last 18 months and provide grants up to \$500,000 for water utilities to install internal sensors throughout

their water systems in places like fire hydrants. The sensors collect acoustic data that provide utility system operators and repair personnel information to pinpoint where to focus investigation and repair efforts.

If implemented statewide, permanent acoustic leak detection technology could save tens of billions of gallons of water, tens of millions of kilowatt-hours of energy, and millions of dollars per year, based on current statewide estimates for water and energy loss.

To qualify for NJBPU's Pilot Program, a water system must have Unaccounted for Water (UAW) or Non-Revenue Water (NRW) greater than 15 percent. Priority will be given to projects in overburdened communities and where the technology is being used for the first time. Additional information about the program and the grant application itself will be available on March 15, with applications due May 15. At the conclusion of the Pilot Program, NJBPU will review the results from the pilot to investigate the benefit of creating a permanent leak detection program for the State.

Later this month, NJBPU will also recognize "Fix-a-Leak Week," taking place March 15 to 21, by sharing techniques for how New Jersey residents, businesses, non-profits, schools, and local governments can save water. Spring and summer are the heaviest water usage seasons, making March an ideal time to fix household leaks and save an average of 10 percent on water bills. Nationally, household leaks can waste nearly one trillion gallons of water each year. Encouraging citizens to save water improves efficiency by reducing the energy needed at water treatment facilities.

Fix-a-Leak Week is part of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) WaterSense Initiative, in which NJBPU is a Promotional Partner. [WaterSense](#) offers videos, leak detection guides, and more information to help locate costly indoor and outdoor leaks.

About the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU)

NJBPU is a state agency and regulatory authority mandated to ensure safe, adequate and proper utility services at reasonable rates for New Jersey customers. Critical services regulated by NJBPU include natural gas, electricity, water, wastewater, telecommunications and cable television. The Board has general oversight and responsibility for monitoring utility service, responding to consumer complaints, and investigating utility accidents. To find out more about NJBPU, visit our website at www.nj.gov/bpu.

About the New Jersey Clean Energy Program (NJCEP)

The NJCEP, established on January 22, 2003, in accordance with the Electric Discount and Energy Competition Act (EDECA), provides financial and other incentives to the State's residential customers, businesses and schools that install high-efficiency or renewable energy technologies, thereby reducing energy usage, lowering customers' energy bills and reducing environmental impacts. The program is authorized and overseen by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), and its website is www.NJCleanEnergy.com.

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