

DOCKET NO. D-1999-062 CP-3

DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

Located in Drainage Area to Special Protection Waters

**Easton Suburban Water Authority – City of Easton
Surface Water Withdrawal
City of Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania**

PROCEEDINGS

This docket is issued in response to an Application submitted to the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC or Commission) on September 15, 2025, for renewal of an allocation of surface water and review of a surface water withdrawal project (Application). The surface water withdrawal project was approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) on February 20, 2007 (Permit No. WA48-179B) and January 13, 2011 (Permit No.3480050).

The Application was reviewed for continuation of this project in the Comprehensive Plan and for approval under Section 3.8 of the *Delaware River Basin Compact*. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission has been notified of pending action on this docket. A public hearing on this project was held by the DRBC on February 4, 2026.

A. DESCRIPTION

1. Purpose. The purpose of this docket is to renew the approval of a withdrawal of up to 10.42 million gallons per day (mgd) or 323 million gallons per month (mgm) of surface water to the docket holder’s public water supply distribution system from an existing surface water intake on the Delaware River.

2. Location. The project’s existing intake is located in the Delaware River Watershed in the City of Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania. The Delaware River near the project site is designated by the PADEP as Warm Water Fishes (WWF) and Migratory Fishes (MF).

Specific location information has been withheld for security reasons.

3. Area Served. The docket holder’s distribution system supplies water to the City of Easton, Lower Nazareth Township, and Wilson, West Easton and Glendon Boroughs. Additionally, the docket holder serves water to portions of Williams, Bethlehem, Forks and Palmer Townships, all which are in Northampton County, Pennsylvania. The service area is outlined on a map entitled “Location and Service Area Map” submitted with the Application. For the purpose of defining Area Served, the Application is incorporated herein by reference consistent with conditions contained in Section C. DECISION of this docket.

4. **Design Criteria.** The docket holder's system supplies potable water to an estimated population of approximately 99,312 via 32,679 domestic, 2,129 commercial, 119 industrial and 3 other/institutional connections. The average and maximum water demand for this project are 6.68 million gallons per day (mgd) and 9.87 mgd, respectively. The docket holder projects an average and maximum water demand of 8.51 mgd and 11.92 mgd, respectively, by the year 2036. The allocation of 10.42 mgd or 323 mgm should be sufficient to meet the future demands of the docket holder's water distribution system.

The docket holder's water treatment plant is located along the Delaware River above the confluence with the Lehigh River in the City of Easton. The water treatment plant currently has a capacity of 16.0 mgd.

5. **Facilities.** The docket holder's existing surface water intake has the following characteristics:

INTAKE NO.	WITHDRAWAL WATER BODY	PUMP CAPACITY (GPM)	7Q10 FLOW AT INTAKE (CFS)	YEAR CONSTRUCTED
Delaware River Intake	Delaware River	11,111	800	1932

All water service connections are metered.

The surface water intake is metered.

Prior to entering the distribution system, the raw surface water is treated utilizing two (2) rapid mix basins, two (2) flocculation basins, four (4) conventional sedimentation basins, ten (10) granular activated carbon/sand filters, and chlorine contact disinfection. Treatment chemicals include aluminum sulfate, sodium hypochlorite, sodium permanganate, caustic soda, fluoride, and an orthophosphate corrosion inhibitor.

The project water treatment plant is partially in the 100-year floodplain; the plant is flood proofed above the 100-year flood elevation.

System storage facilities have 23.125 million gallons (mg) of capacity which is equivalent to approximately 3.25 days' supply.

The water system is presently interconnected with the following:

WATER COMPANY	INTERCONNECTION CAPACITY (MGD)	STATUS
City of Bethlehem – Hecktown Road	0.250	Emergency
City of Bethlehem – Green Pond Road	0.500	Emergency
PA American Water – Nazareth District	0.500	Emergency

PA American Water - Palmer	0.250	Emergency
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6. **Other.** Wastewater from the docket holder’s service area is conveyed to on-lot septic systems and three sewage treatment facilities listed below:

- Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority sewage treatment facility most recently approved by DRBC Docket No. D-1987-010 CP-5 on June 11, 2025. The PADEP issued its most recent NPDES Permit No. PA0027235 for this treatment facility. The treatment facility has adequate capacity to receive wastewater from the proposed project.
- City of Bethlehem sewage treatment facility most recently approved by DRBC Docket No. D-1971-078 CP-5 on September 8, 2022. The PADEP issued its most recent NPDES Permit No. PA0026042 for this treatment facility. The treatment facility has adequate capacity to receive wastewater from the proposed project.
- Nazareth Borough Municipal Authority sewage treatment facility, which was most recently approved by DRBC Docket No. D-2002-038 CP-4 on March 8, 2023. The PADEP issued its most recent NPDES Permit No. PA0041742 for this treatment facility. The treatment facility has adequate capacity to receive wastewater from the proposed project.

7. **Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan.** The project was previously included in the Comprehensive Plan by the Commission in Docket Nos. D-1968-031 CP, D-1971-063 CP, D-1999-062 CP and D-1999-062 CP-2, which were approved on October 22, 1968, November 30, 1977, February 28, 2007, and September 14, 2016, respectively. Issuance of this docket will continue the public water supply distribution system in the Comprehensive Plan.

B. FINDINGS

1. Special Protection Waters

In 1992, the DRBC amended its *Water Quality Regulations (WQR)* by the addition of regulations for the protection of Special Protection Waters (SPW), designed to maintain the quality of interstate waters where existing quality is better than the established stream quality objectives. As the result of its initial classifications and subsequent amendments, the Commission has designated the entire non-tidal main stem Delaware River from Hancock, New York to Trenton, New Jersey as SPW. DRBC’s SPW regulations apply within the designated reaches and their drainage area.

The surface water intake providing water supply to the docket holder is located within the drainage area to SPW. Sections 3.10.3A.2.e.1) and 2) of the *WQR* state that projects subject to review under Section 3.8 of the *Compact* that are located within the drainage area of SPW must submit for approval a Non-Point Source Pollution Control Plan (NPSPCP) that controls the new

or increased non-point source loads generated within the portion of the docket holder's service area which is also located within the drainage area of SPW.

Since this project involves the renewal of an approval for existing activities and does not entail additional construction or expansion of facilities or create new or increased non-point source loads, the NPSPCP requirement is not applicable at this time. Condition C.26. of this docket provides that at such time, if ever, as additions to the area served by the docket holder's withdrawals are proposed, the docket holder will be required to demonstrate compliance with an approved NPSPCP in accordance with DRBC's SPW regulations.

2. Water Audits for Public Water Supply Systems Serving Greater than 100,000 gpd

Section 2.1.8 of the *Water Code (WC)* states that it is the policy of the Commission to establish a standardized water audit methodology for owners of water supply systems serving the public to ensure accountability in the management of water resources. Voluntary Water Audits were encouraged for public water supply systems through December 31, 2011 (Section 2.1.8.B.). Effective January 1, 2012, the owners of each public water supply system are required to implement an annual calendar year water audit program conforming to IWA/AWWA Water Audit Methodology (AWWA Water Loss Control Committee (WLCC) Water Audit Software) and corresponding AWWA guidance (Section 2.1.8.C). Water audits shall be submitted annually to the Commission by March 31. The docket holder submitted their most recent Water Audit on March 28, 2025.

3. Surface Water Charges / Entitlement

On July 15, 1976, DRBC issued Certificate of Entitlement No. 113 to the docket holder. The Certificate entitled the docket holder to use, withdraw or divert up to 206.720 mgm non-consumptive use and up to 36.480 mgm consumptive use without charge from its Delaware River intake in Forks Township, Northampton County, Pennsylvania. The docket holder shall pay for surface water use in excess of the consumptive use and non-consumptive use listed in Entitlement No. 113 in accordance with the provisions of 18 C.F.R. Part 420 as described in Section C. DECISION Condition C.3.

4. Other Findings

The DRBC estimates that the project withdrawals, used for the purpose of public water supply, result in a consumptive use of 10 percent of the total water use. The DRBC definition of consumptive use is defined in *Basin Regulations-Water Supply Charges* 18 C.F.R. 420.1(d).

The project is designed to conform to the requirements of the *Water Code (WC)* and *Water Quality Regulations (WQR)* of the DRBC.

The project does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and is designed to prevent substantial adverse impact on the water resources related environment, while sustaining the current and future water uses and development of the water resources of the Basin.

C. DECISION

Effective on the approval date for Docket No. D-1999-062 CP-3 below, the project described in Docket No. D-1999-062 CP-2 is removed from the Comprehensive Plan to the extent that it is not included in Docket No. D-1999-062 CP-3; Docket No. D-1999-062 CP-2 is terminated and replaced by Docket No. D-1999-062 CP-3; and the project and the appurtenant facilities described in in Section A.4. (Design Criteria) and A.5. (Facilities) shall be continued in the Comprehensive Plan. The project and appurtenant facilities as described in Section A.4. (Design Criteria) and A.5. (Facilities) are approved subject to the following conditions, pursuant to Section 3.8 of the *Compact*:

Monitoring and Reporting

1. The docket holder shall continue to report to the PADEP all surface and groundwater sources described in this docket in accordance with the Pennsylvania Regulations (Title 25 - Environmental Protection, [25 PA. CODE CH. 110], Water Resources Planning).
2. The project withdrawals shall be metered by means of an automatic continuous recording device, flow meter, or other method, and shall be measured to within 5 percent of actual flow. Meters or other methods of measurement shall be subject to approval and inspection by the PADEP as to the type, method, installation, maintenance, calibration, reading and accuracy. A record of daily withdrawals shall be maintained, and monthly totals shall be reported to the PADEP annually and shall be available at any time to the Commission if requested by the Executive Director.
3. The docket holder shall pay for surface water use in excess of the consumptive use and non-consumptive use listed in Entitlement No. 113 in accordance with *Basin Regulations – Water Supply Charges 18 C.F.R. Part 420*.
4. In accordance with DRBC Resolutions No. 87-6 (Revised) and No. 2009-1, the docket holder shall continue to implement to the satisfaction of the PADEP, the systematic program to monitor and control leakage within the water supply system. The program shall at a minimum include: periodic surveys to monitor leakage, enumerate non-revenue water and determine the current status of system infrastructure; recommendations to monitor and control leakage; and a schedule for the implementation of such recommendations. The docket holder shall proceed expeditiously to correct leakages and unnecessary usage identified by the program.
5. In accordance with DRBC Resolution No. 2009-1 and Section 2.1.8 of the *Water Code (WC)*, the docket holder shall implement an annual calendar year water audit program conforming to IWA/AWWA Water Audit Methodology (AWWA Water Loss Control Committee (WLCC) Water Audit Software) and corresponding guidance. Water audits shall be submitted annually to the Commission by March 31.
6. The docket holder shall implement to the satisfaction of the PADEP, a continuous program to encourage water conservation in all types of use within the facilities served by this docket approval. The docket holder will report to the PADEP on the actions taken pursuant to this program and the impact of those actions as requested by the PADEP.

7. The docket holder shall continue to implement its Water Conservation Plan as approved by PADEP and shall report to the PADEP on actions taken pursuant to this program and the impact of those actions as requested by the PADEP.

Other Conditions

8. During any month, the withdrawal from the Delaware River intake shall not exceed 10.42 mgd (323 mgm). The intake shall not be pumped above the maximum rate and monthly allocation as indicated below:

INTAKE ID.	MAXIMUM RATE (GPM)*	MONTHLY ALLOCATION (MGM)
Delaware River Intake	11,111	323

* Based on a 24-Hour Average

9. In accordance with 18 C.F.R. 401.8. of the Commission's *Rules of Practice and Procedure (RPP)*, if at any future time the Project is changed materially from the Project as described in this docket, it will be deemed to constitute a new and different project for the purposes of Article 11 of the *Delaware River Basin Compact* and will require Commission amendment of the Comprehensive Plan. In accordance with the same section of the *RPP*, whenever a change to the Project is made, the sponsor must advise the Executive Director, who will determine whether the change is deemed materially for purposes of this provision.

10. This approval shall expire on the expiration date set forth below unless prior thereto the docket holder has applied to the Commission to renew or extend this approval.

11. The docket holder is responsible for timely submittal to the DRBC of a docket renewal application on the appropriate application form including the appropriate docket application filing fee (see 18 C.F.R. 401.43) at least 6 months in advance of the docket expiration date set forth below. The docket holder will be subject to late filed renewal surcharges in the event of untimely submittal of its renewal application whether DRBC issues a reminder notice in advance of the deadline or the docket holder receives such notice. If the docket holder has not applied to renew the docket or the DRBC is unable to reissue the docket before the expiration date below, the terms and conditions of the current docket will remain fully effective and enforceable pending the renewal of the docket .

12. The surface water intake, facility and operational records shall be available at all times for inspection by the DRBC.

13. The surface water intake and facility shall be operated at all times to comply with the requirements of the *WC* and *WQR* of the DRBC.

14. Each new water service connection shall include a water meter in accordance with the DRBC's Resolution No. 87-7 (Revised).

15. No water service connections shall be made to newly constructed premises with plumbing fixtures and fittings that do not comply with water conservation performance standards contained in Resolution No. 88-2 (Revision 2).

16. The docket holder shall implement to the satisfaction of the PADEP, a drought or other water supply emergency plan.

17. No new water service connections shall be made to premises connected to sewerage systems which are not in compliance with all applicable effluent limits contained in State permits and the *Water Quality Regulations* of the Commission.

18. Nothing herein shall be construed to exempt the docket holder from obtaining all necessary permits and/or approvals from other State, Federal or local government agencies having jurisdiction over this project.

19. The docket holder is permitted to provide the water approved in this docket to the areas included in Section A.3. Area Served of this docket. Any expansion beyond those included in Section A.3. Area Served is subject to DRBC review and approval in accordance with Section 3.8 of the *Compact*.

20. The docket holder shall be subject to applicable DRBC regulatory program fees, in accordance with duly adopted DRBC resolutions and/or regulations. (see 18 CFR 401.43).

21. This approval is transferable by request to the DRBC Executive Director provided that the project purpose and area served approved by the Commission in this docket will not be materially altered because of the change in project ownership. The request shall be submitted on the appropriate form and be accompanied by the appropriate fee (see 18 CFR 401.43).

22. The docket holder shall request a name change of the entity to which this approval is issued if the name of the entity to which this approval is issued changes its name. The request for name change shall be submitted on the appropriate form and be accompanied by the appropriate fee (see 18 C.F.R. 401.43).

23. The issuance of this docket approval shall not create any private or proprietary rights in the water of the Basin, and the Commission reserves the rights to amend, alter or rescind any actions taken hereunder to ensure the proper control, use and management of the water resources of the Basin.

24. If the monitoring required herein or any other relevant data or information demonstrates that the operation of this project is interfering with or otherwise impairing existing uses of ground or surface water, or if the docket holder receives a complaint from an existing ground or surface water user within the zone of influence of the withdrawal alleging such interference or impairment, the permit holder shall immediately notify the Executive Director, and unless excused by the Executive Director, shall investigate the demonstrated or alleged impacts. For purposes of this condition, notification shall mean either (a) electronic transmittal of written notice to the Executive

Director via email (using addresses posted on the DRBC website); or (b) written notice to the Executive Director and a telephone call to the Project Review Section at 609-883-9500, ext. 216. (Oral notification must always be accompanied by immediate written notification directed to the Executive Director.) In addition, the docket holder shall provide written notice to all potentially affected water users of the docket holder's responsibilities under this condition. **Any well or surface water supply that is impaired as a result of the docket holder's project withdrawal shall be repaired, replaced or mitigated at the docket holder's expense.** The scope of the options to consider for repair, replacement and/or mitigation shall not be limited solely to those that are owned, operated, or controlled by the project sponsor. An investigation report and/or mitigation plan prepared and certified by a licensed professional engineer and/or a licensed professional geologist shall be submitted to the Executive Director as soon as practicable following notice of the demonstrated or alleged impairment consistent with this paragraph. The Executive Director shall make the final determination regarding the scope and sufficiency of the investigation and the extent of any mitigation measures that may be required. Where ground and surface waters are rendered unavailable, unusable, or unsuitable for the pre-existing use, the Executive Director may direct the docket holder to take interim actions to mitigate such impacts, pending completion of the investigative report and any long-term repair, replacement, or mitigation.

25. The Executive Director may modify or suspend this approval or any condition thereof, or require mitigating measures pending additional review, if in the Executive Director's judgment such modification or suspension is required to protect the water resources of the Basin.

26. Prior to allowing connections from any new service areas or any new developments, the docket holder shall either submit and have approved by the Executive Director of the DRBC a Non-Point Source Pollution Control Plan (NPSPCP) in accordance with Section 3.10.3.A.2.e or receive written confirmation from the Executive Director of the DRBC that the new service area complies with a DRBC approved NPSPCP.

27. Any person who objects to a docket decision by the Commission may request a hearing in accordance with Article 6 of the *Rules of Practice and Procedure*. In accordance with Section 15.1(p) of the *Delaware River Basin Compact*, cases and controversies arising under the *Compact* are reviewable in the United States district courts.

BY THE COMMISSION

APPROVAL DATE: March 4, 2026

EXPIRATION DATE: March 4, 2036