



Public Notice

Contact: Pam Marchand
Executive Director and Chief Engineer, BCWA
(401) 245-2022 ext.18 | pmarchand@bcwari.com

Water Restrictions Lifted for All Warren, Bristol, and Barrington Customers

*BCWA has switched back to its East Bay pipeline supply as it continues to address leak.
Water quality and fire supply are stable.*

Warren, RI – May 29, 2019 – The [Bristol County Water Authority](http://www.bcwari.com) (BCWA) has lifted all indoor and outdoor water restrictions for area businesses and residents. This comes as the utility has disconnected from an emergency supply through the City of East Providence and returned to its East Bay pipeline connection. While BCWA is continuing to address the pipeline leak, water supply and pressure, particularly for fire protection, remain stable.

Leak found

The decision comes after BCWA needed to return to its East Bay supply in order to further its investigation into the pipeline leak. The investigation revealed there are two leaks approximately 160 feet under the Providence River. The leaks were found on welds at either end of a 40 foot pipe approximately one-third of the way (1,600 feet) into the pipeline.

The instrument used in the investigation, called a “Sahara,” used video and acoustic sensors to help locate the leak last Thursday. This instrument is propelled by a parachute inside the pipe and was repeatedly pulled out by the force of the second, larger leak. It is believed this action enlarged the leak, which had remained constant at 288,000 gallons per day and is now remaining constant at 400,000 gallons per day since the inspection.

Monitoring and next steps

BCWA continues to monitor the leak closely for any changes. As long as the leak remains stable, the utility intends to remain on the East Bay pipeline supply throughout the summer if feasible. However, if an increase in the leak is detected, BCWA may need to return to its emergency connection with the City of East Providence, at which point an outdoor water ban and indoor conservation order would be implemented and enforced due to its limited supply. This would be in order to prevent low pressure in the distribution systems and protect the availability of fire flow.

BCWA staff and BETA engineers are currently reviewing the findings of the investigation to determine the options available for repair, most likely slip-lining the pipe to seal off the leak. This may take several months, including design, ordering materials, and conducting the repair.

BCWA remains in communication with tri-town leaders as well as the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) as it evaluates and plans for all possible scenarios.



BCWA will continue to provide updates as they become available. Customers can learn more at <https://bcwari.com> or by calling the BCWA Emergency Hotline (401) 245-5071 (after 4 pm) or the Customer Service line (401) 245-2022.

From BCWA’s executive director and chief engineer

“We are glad to be able to lift the water ban for all customers, and we thank everyone for their water conservation efforts over the past month,” said Pamela Marchand, BCWA’s executive director and chief engineer. “We want to emphasize to all businesses and residents that the water they are accessing continues to be safe to use and of high quality. We are also continuing to monitor the leak and develop a repair plan. If at any time we need to reconnect to the East Providence supply, all customers will be notified.”

About BCWA

The Bristol County Water Authority (BCWA) was formed in 1984 by the Rhode Island legislature. In 1986, it began managing the Barrington, Bristol, and Warren water supply system, previously managed by the Bristol County Water Company (BCWC) that traced its origins back to 1883.

Since assuming the responsibility of the region’s water supply, BCWA has made significant investments to maintain and modernize the utility while adapting operational efficiencies. Today, BCWA provides an average of 3 to 3.5 million gallons per day of reliable, quality water to its approximately 17,000 service connections, including its commercial users and 49,875 residents. Learn more at <https://bcwari.com>.