

2025 -- H 5845

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

RELATING TO WATERS AND NAVIGATION -- PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SUPPLY  
SYSTEM PROTECTION

Introduced By: Representatives Read, Noret, Nardone, Serpa, Santucci, Shallcross Smith,  
Solomon, McNamara, Paplauskas, and Chippendale

Date Introduced: February 28, 2025

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 46-15.3 of the General Laws entitled "Public Drinking Water Supply  
2 System Protection" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3           **46-15.3-5.2. Water supply systems flood resilience plans.**

4           (a) Effective January 1, 2026, all parties involved in the supply, transmission, and/or  
5 distribution of drinking water shall prepare, maintain, and carry out a water supply resilience plan  
6 as described by this section. The purpose of the resilience plan is to identify risks and provide  
7 assessments and emergency response plans to address the resilience of water supply systems to  
8 natural hazards and environmental related impacts. This requirement applies, without limitation,  
9 to:

10           (1) All municipalities, municipal departments and agencies, districts, authorities or other  
11 entities engaged in or authorized to engage in the supply, treatment, transmission, or distribution  
12 of drinking water on a wholesale or retail basis, referred to herein as "water suppliers" or "water  
13 supplier", and which obtain, transport, purchase, or sell more than fifty million (50,000,000) gallons  
14 of water per year.

15           (b) The initial risk assessment required pursuant to this section shall be completed no later  
16 than July 1, 2026, and the results of the assessment shall be provided to the governor, speaker of  
17 the house, president of the senate, the director of the department of health and the director of the  
18 department of environmental management. The assessment shall include without limitation:

1           (1) The risk to the water supply system from natural hazards and environmental related  
2 impacts including, but not limited to, floods, hurricanes and earthquakes;

3           (2) The resilience of the pipes and constructed conveyances, physical barriers, source  
4 water, water collection, intake, pretreatment, treatment, storage and distribution facilities, and  
5 electronic, computer, or other automated systems (including the security of such systems) which  
6 are utilized by the water supplier to address and mitigate natural hazards;

7           (3) The financial infrastructure of the water supplier;

8           (4) The use, storage, and handling of chemicals by the water supplier and the vulnerability  
9 of such chemicals to natural disasters; and

10          (5) The operational monitoring and maintenance practices and procedures of the water  
11 supplier.

12          (c) The assessment required by this section shall also include an evaluation of capital and  
13 operational needs to address risk and resilience management for the water supplier, and anticipated  
14 sources of funds shall be identified.

15          (d) The resilience plans of water suppliers shall document that coordination has been  
16 accomplished with other water suppliers in the vicinity and with operators of wastewater treatment  
17 and disposal facilities serving all or part of the same area or that a good faith effort to do so has  
18 been made. Plans shall be consistent with applicable local comprehensive plans and shall be  
19 integrated into the water supply plans of the municipality or municipalities in which the service  
20 area is located.

21          (e) Water supplier resilience plans shall designate the person or organization responsible  
22 for taking each necessary action, others who must participate, and the time period in which each  
23 action is to be taken.

24          (f) Water suppliers shall utilize methods to implement measures necessary to achieve the  
25 objectives of this section. A water supplier shall be required to document the validity or  
26 effectiveness of any measure, implementation method, or other provision or action included in its  
27 plan.

28          (g) Within six (6) months of any assessment required pursuant to subsection (b) of this  
29 section, every water supplier governed by this section shall provide the director of the department  
30 of health and the director of the department of environmental management with a response plan to  
31 address the issues raised in the assessment.

32          (h) The assessment and response plan required pursuant to this section shall be updated  
33 every three (3) years from the initial assessment pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, with a  
34 report on the updated assessment delivered to the governor, speaker of the house, senate president,

1 [and director of the department of health.](#)

2 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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- 1           This act would require Rhode Island water suppliers to prepare a resilience assessment and
- 2 a response plan for the risk of natural hazards.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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