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## Governor 's Budget Package Water-Related Provisions

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Governor Lamont released his [budget](#) package yesterday, which includes some provisions affecting public water suppliers.

### Safe Drinking Water Assessment

#### **HB-6443- An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget, Section 24**

Continues the Safe Drinking Water Assessment, which was scheduled to sunset July 2021. Under the bill, the assessment becomes permanent. The bill also changes the method for calculating the assessment, as follows. In FY 2022, the following rates shall be assessed by the Department:

- Community water system having less than 50 service connections - \$180.00
- Non-transient noncommunity water system - \$180.00
- Community water system having at least 50 but less than 100 service connections - \$216.00
- Community water system having at least 100 service connections - \$2.69 per service connection

The bill provides that the rates shall be annually indexed on a pro-rata basis to reflect the weighted average of the percentage changes in wages applicable to the engineering, scientific and technical bargaining unit and applicable fringe benefit rates. General Fund revenues of approximately \$2.2 million will be generated in each of FY 2022 and FY 2023. In subsequent fiscal years this amount will be adjusted to reflect the indexing factor described above.

### PFAS - Drinking Water

The Governor's proposed budget includes \$408,000 in FY 2022 and \$420,000 in FY 2023 to support the Department of Public Health (DPH) in implementing certain recommendations of the Connecticut Interagency PFAS Task Force, as follows:

- Providing toxicological expertise to assist with updating standards and action levels for drinking water - 1 Toxicologist, 1 Laboratory Consultant, 1 Chemist and 1 Environmental Analyst
- Ensuring environmental laboratories may become approved for PFAS testing

- Implementing PFAS testing of drinking water at the state's Public Health Laboratory,
- Supporting testing of public water systems
- Educating stakeholders to protect the public health from the impacts of PFAS in drinking water.

The proposed budget also includes:

- \$100,000 for laboratory testing supplies
- \$600,000 from the Capital Equipment Purchase Fund for additional laboratory equipment
- \$1.15 million Grants-in-Aid to municipalities for the purpose of providing potable water and for assessment and remedial action to address pollution from perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl containing substances

## DPH Staff

The Governor's proposed budget authorizes DPH to hire two new staff to enhance response to drinking water issues in schools undergoing construction projects and assist with the continued administration of safe drinking water standards for public drinking water.

## Environmental Infrastructure

The Governor's proposed budget includes HB-6441, which expands the Connecticut Green Bank to include an [Environmental Infrastructure Bank](#) to provide low-cost financing and credit enhancement mechanisms for projects and technologies critical to resiliency and adaptation efforts, such as in water, waste and recycling, agriculture, land conservation, and environmental markets such as carbon offsets. The bill also authorizes municipalities to establish stormwater authorities to generate revenue to fund various projects.

## Clean Water Fund

The proposed budget includes \$281 million in bond funding in FY 2023 to fund low interest loans under the Clean Water Fund and \$75 million in General Obligation bonds for FY 22 and FY 23

## Municipal Boards & Commissions - Remote Access Mandate

The Governor's proposed budget includes [HB-6448](#), which would require that all public agencies, including political subdivisions and municipalities, provide remote access to members and the public to allow them to participate in and vote, if eligible, by electronic means in public meetings. If a meeting is held solely by means of electronic equipment, the public agency must provide the public with (1) a physical location and any electronic equipment necessary to attend such meeting in real-time, and (2) the opportunity to provide comment or testimony, vote and otherwise participate in such meeting, as applicable.

The bill also:

- Requires public agencies to retain the audio or video recording or transcript in accordance with standards and guidelines established by the State Librarian or the Public Records Administrator.

- Requires public agencies to make available the minutes and an audio or video recording or transcript of the meeting not later than seven days after the date of the meeting.

### **Licensing Reciprocity**

The Governor's proposed budget includes [HB-6449](#), "An Act Expanding Economic Opportunity in Occupations Licensed by the Department of Public Health" which directs the Department of Public Health to recommend which interstate licensure compacts Connecticut should join, as well as which license examinations currently administered by the state could be more effectively administered by national experts or could be improved to better stand in for onerous training or experience requirements.

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## **Energy & Technology Public Hearing**

The legislature's Energy & Technology Committee is holding a public hearing on February 18 on various bills, including:

**[SB-855](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE DECOUPLING OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.**

**[SB-863](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS -** To establish and update state appliance and equipment energy and water efficiency standards.

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