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New York State Awards Grant of \$30 Million Toward Construction of Rye Lake Water Filtration Plant

MAMARONECK, N.Y. (Dec. 14, 2023) — The Westchester Joint Water Works (WJWW) has been awarded \$30 million through the New York State Intermunicipal Grant Program funded by the Environmental Bond Act toward the construction of its \$138 million water filtration plant proposed to be built on land at the Westchester County Airport in the Town/Village of Harrison. WJWW, a nonprofit public benefit corporation responsible for maintaining a drinking water system for up to 100,000 Westchester County residents, is under state and federal orders to build the plant to filter its Rye Lake water source to ensure the safety and quality of the drinking water it supplies. The filtration plant not only addresses current threats to WJWW’s source water quality but also is a proactive step toward meeting the future challenges to its source water posed by climate change.

Gov. Kathy Hochul announced the award of \$479 million in critical water infrastructure projects statewide this week, which included the WJWW grant which was the largest drinking water grant award in the mid-Hudson region.

“We are grateful to Gov. Hochul and New York State for recognizing the importance of ensuring access to clean and safe drinking water for all of our residents, and providing our municipalities with these much-needed resources,” said Paul Kutzy, WJWW Manager. “This funding will help offset the costs associated with building the mandated Water Filtration Plant and in so doing mitigate the impact to ratepayers. Most importantly, the funding helps facilitate safe water for generations to come.”

WJWW is under orders from New York State Supreme Court and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – and, along with the member municipalities of the Town of Mamaroneck, the Village of Mamaroneck and the Town/Village of Harrison, will be subject to action by the U.S. Department of Justice – to build the plant to treat disinfection byproducts, specifically Haloacetic Acids (HAA5), that have been found in WJWW’s water distribution system. Long-term exposure to high levels of HAA5 has been linked to an increased risk of cancer. Filtering water is a proven treatment to reduce the formation of HAA5 compounds by removing organic matter that is naturally found in reservoirs and lakes.

WJWW has been working with a team of environmental and engineering professionals, and municipal officials to site the plant in the most environmentally conscious and fiscally responsible

manner. The State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Findings Statement adopted by WJWW, as lead agency, on Oct. 12, 2022 concluded the Westchester County Airport site for the plant was superior to all alternative locations investigated. Information about the project is available at DemandSafeWater.org and at www.wjwwfiltration.org.

The \$479 million in state grants mark the first funding awarded through the \$4.2 billion Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022. The initial funding is projected to save ratepayers an estimated \$1.3 billion and create 24,000 jobs statewide. The grants are awarded by the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation, in coordination with the Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation.

“No one in New York should ever fear that they don’t have access to clean water,” Gov. Hochul said. “We are reassuring communities across New York that your kids, grandkids, and great grandkids will always have access to clean and safe water. This investment will make life saving improvements to our water infrastructure and safeguard drinking water for millions of people, in addition to saving New Yorkers money and creating tens of thousands of jobs.”

ABOUT WJWW

Westchester Joint Water Works (WJWW) is a nonprofit public benefit corporation formed in 1927 by its three member municipalities: the Village of Mamaroneck, the Town of Mamaroneck, and the Town/Village of Harrison pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 654, Laws of 1927, State of New York to acquire, construct and provide a joint water works. WJWW supplies water to its member municipalities and to portions of the cities of Rye and New Rochelle, serving 59,629 consumers through 14,682 service connections. WJWW also supplies water on a wholesale basis to the Village of Larchmont and Veolia (formerly Suez Water Westchester), which sells water to the City of Rye, Village of Rye Brook and Village of Port Chester. In all, WJWW provides drinking water to up to 100,000 residents and other consumers in Westchester County.

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An aerial view of where the plant will be sited adjacent to Westchester County Airport.