

September 2021 Town Meeting

Why build a new filter facility at Mill Pond for PFAS removal instead of using MWRA as a water source alone?

The short answer is that because of construction timing, the full connection to the MWRA will not be available until 2024 or later (as it requires additional work from Burlington and the MWRA to fully supply Burlington's water demand).

As you may recall, In May 2018, Town Meeting approved phase 1 of the MWRA project, which was approved as a supplemental water supply.

Phase 1 included the construction of a new water main on Adams Street to connect to Lexington's water distribution system. This new connection was completed in December 2020 and we have been continually using it since May 2021. Unfortunately, this connection can only supply an average of 1 million gallons per day (MGD). Burlington's average daily demand is 3 MGD but exceeds 5 MGD in the summer.

During Town Meeting in May 2018, we indicated that there would be a phase 2 project, which would be designed to meet the entire needs of Burlington into the future: 6.5 MGD. The plan was to abandon the Vine Brook treatment facility, maintain the Mill Pond Water Treatment Facility in operation, and use the MWRA water to supplement our water supply and maintain water supply redundancy.

Phase 2 proposed construction was scheduled for FY23 and FY24.

In order to accelerate the connection to the MWRA, we divided phase 2 into 2 projects. In January 2021, we came back to Town Meeting and asked for funding of phase 2A, which can bring up to 3.5 MGD from the MWRA. This project has been awarded, and we expect the water main to be completed by the end of 2022. As stated earlier, this connection alone cannot supply Burlington during periods of high water demand.

It is important to note that the Mill Pond Treatment Facility has outstanding bonds through FY27.

Also, producing water at the Mill Pond Treatment Facility would save close to \$1 million dollars per year vs purchasing MWRA water.

In conclusion, due to project timing and long term redundancy needs, we are recommending the upgrades to the Mill Pond Treatment Facility such that we can have a faster solution to the PFAS problem and maintain redundancy to the water supply system.

Our goal is to use Mill Pond treated water and MWRA water in 2023 to meet MassDEP's PFAS standards.