

About Water & Wastewater Companies

Do you have questions about what private water and wastewater companies do or how communities benefit from their operational expertise and investment? Below are some answers.

What is a private water or wastewater company?

A private water or wastewater company is a professional company that specializes in providing vital water and wastewater services to customers within its service areas. They own, operate, maintain and make necessary investments to upgrade or improve water and wastewater infrastructure. Most importantly, they are dedicated to delivering clean, safe, reliable and affordable drinking water service from source to tap and responsibly recovering, treating and returning wastewater to the environment.

Private water companies across the U.S. serve nearly 40 million customers, treat and distribute 2.8 billion gallons of drinking water each day, and maintain almost 250,000 miles of water pipes.

What are some of the benefits of working with private water and wastewater companies?

Private dedicated water and wastewater service providers focus on and specialize in the ownership, operation and maintenance of water and wastewater systems. Their workforce comprises trained experts, technicians, scientists and engineers possessing decades of experience with the best practices of providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable service to customers and communities. Dedicated water providers have access to financial and capital planning resources and the ability to manage long-term investment in infrastructure, as well as, the regulatory expertise to meet or surpass standards for quality.

How can private companies address local community water and wastewater needs?

Because of their single focus on operational excellence in water and wastewater service, professional companies can provide technical expertise in managing a community's water or wastewater system from plant operations to maintenance of the distribution or collection system, capital planning, customer service and billing, while helping to ensure its customers receive water that meets federal and state required standards.

How do private companies leverage economies of scale to better serve local communities?

Large providers with scale have greater access to resources ranging from financial and operational expertise to engineering and planning to water quality and regulatory compliance. Economies of scale allow large providers to:

- standardize industry-leading procedures and processes
- exchange best practices across a national footprint
- leverage access to a greater network of expertise
- lower procurement costs on materials
- distribute costs of investments across a larger customer base, allowing for long-term rate stabilization

How do private companies and municipalities compare when it comes to complying with required drinking water and wastewater standards?

Private companies have a demonstrated track record of providing safe, clean and reliable service, maintaining compliance with safe drinking water and wastewater standards and receiving fewer violations compared to public water and wastewater systems managed by local governments.

How are private water and wastewater rates determined?

Private water and wastewater rates are determined by state public utility commissions. Any proposed changes in rates are subject to extensive governmental review and approval. Rates are based on several factors, including:

- costs associated with operating and maintaining treatment plants and underground pipes
- capital investments related to upgrading water and wastewater treatment, distribution and collection facilities that have reached the end of their lifecycle or are needed to meet new and evolving regulations
- taxes