

Private Providers & Water Affordability

Access to safe, clean, and affordable water is essential for public health and economic stability. Yet some households struggle to pay water and wastewater bills, and affordability challenges may worsen as utilities invest in aging infrastructure and meet stricter regulatory standards. Private water and wastewater providers play a critical role in addressing these challenges through robust customer assistance programs, advocacy for federal support, and community investment.



THE PROBLEM:

Affordability remains a key consideration for households that experience challenges paying for essential water and wastewater services—reinforcing the importance of well-designed customer assistance programs.

THE DATA:

Infrastructure needs are massive: More than \$1.2 trillion is needed for drinking water and wastewater systems over 20 years.

Low-income households are most vulnerable: Studies show families at 75% of the federal poverty level may spend up to 40% of monthly income on water and sewer bills.

Private Providers: Make a Difference

Many private water and wastewater providers offer programs designed to help customers manage financial challenges. These initiatives often include options such as budget billing, flexible payment arrangements, grants to assist with past-due balances, and discounts for income-eligible households.



American Water's Help to Others (H2O) program

American Water's H2O Help to Others program provides eligible customers with water and wastewater grants. It also offers tiered monthly discounts and arrearage forgiveness options to help reduce past-due balances. The program is supported by corporate, employee, and customer donations, and includes water conservation kits to help customers manage usage.

Veolia North America's Veolia Cares program

Veolia's CAP offers qualified residential customers monthly bill discounts, arrearage forgiveness, leak-repair support, and water efficiency tools. Launched in Pennsylvania as part of a rate case settlement and extended to New York, the program has enrolled over 2,700 households and delivered more than \$200,000 in savings in 2024.

Essential Utilities' Aqua Aid program

Aqua Aid is a needs-based grant program funded through customer and shareholder contributions to qualified residential Aqua customers. Aqua Aid provides direct financial support for water and wastewater bills and connects customers to resources like leak repair assistance. The program operates alongside Aqua's customer assistance programs and complements broader affordability efforts.

References

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