

Cedar Grove, West Virginia

How a Small Town Found Stability Through Partnership with a Private, Regulated Water Provider

A Small Town Facing Water Woes

For years, residents of Cedar Grove lived with uncertainty about their water service. The town's aging water system, serving just over 500 people, struggled to keep pace with daily demands. Water main breaks, leaks and service interruptions became increasingly common, eroding confidence in a system that people depended on every day.

Built decades earlier, the water system was aging faster than the community could afford to repair it. By 2021, town leaders recognized that continuing to operate the system alone was no longer sustainable and that protecting residents' access to safe, reliable water required a new approach.

A Turning Point: Partnering with a Private, Regulated Water Provider

Rather than allow conditions to worsen, Cedar Grove chose a proactive path. The town decided to sell its water distribution system to West Virginia American Water, a private, regulated water utility with the local knowledge, experienced operators and financial capacity to stabilize and modernize small systems. The town and the utility jointly petitioned the West Virginia Public Service Commission, which conducted a thorough review and approval process.

Once the transition was complete, West Virginia American Water moved quickly to restore reliability and rebuild confidence in Cedar Grove's water service—delivering improvements that would have been out of reach for a small, government-owned system. Through partnership, Cedar Grove restored trust in its water system—ensuring residents have reliable service today and confidence in the system that serves them tomorrow.

Investment With Measurable Results

Since acquiring the system in 2021, West Virginia American Water has made significant, utility-scale investments and deployed expertise that would not have been feasible for a small, government-owned water system with Cedar Grove's challenges.

Key outcomes have included:

- More than \$9 million invested in water system improvements.
- Reduced system demand from 500 to 50 gallons per minute, a transformative operational improvement.
- Water loss and non-revenue water reduced by roughly 90%, dramatically improving efficiency.
- Stabilized rates by aligning Cedar Grove customers to standard PSC-approved rates with a gradual phase-in over three years.
- Customer assistance programs, including special reduced-rate options to support qualifying customers struggling to afford water service.



Benefits to Cedar Grove

- Utility-scale capital and expertise unavailable to small communities
- Stabilized rates and expanded customer assistance programs
- Significantly improved reliability and operational efficiency