

# FAQ Guide

## BCWA East Bay Pipeline Leak – Mandatory Restrictions on Water Use

April 29, 2019

### **1. How does this leak affect Warren, Bristol, and Barrington residents?**

The BCWA will switch to alternative water supply on **Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>**, while the pipeline is being repaired, and water usage restrictions will be implemented due to the limits on the supply. We do not anticipate water safety or quality being affected at this time.

### **2. Is the water safe to drink and use?**

Yes. The supply is from the City of East Providence which also obtains their water from the Providence Water Scituate Reservoir.

### **3. What are the water restrictions?**

Mandatory ban on outdoor and unnecessary use. These restrictions could last 1-2 months, or longer, while the pipeline is repaired.

### **4. Is there enough water in the case of a fire?**

Currently there is ample water supply and pressure for fire protection. However, unnecessary use of water by customers may affect water pressure and availability.

### **5. How can BCWA customers stay up to date**

BCWA will post regular updates to its website. It is also in regular communication with Warren, Bristol, and Barrington Town leaders, who will help disseminate the message to their constituents. Customers can also call the BCWA Emergency Hotline at (401) 245-5071 or Customer Service line at 401-245-2022.

### **6. How will BCWA ensure the water remains safe during the leak/while it's being repaired? And after?**

BCWA maintains the highest standards of water quality for all its customers. We will be closely monitoring water safety throughout this leak and beyond. We do not anticipate water safety or quality being affected at this time.

### **7. Where is the leak?**

The pipeline appears to be leaking in an area that is approximately 10 feet – 14 feet below the Port of Providence parking lot on the Providence side of the Providence River.

### **8. How much water is leaking?**

BCWA is losing approximately 10 percent of its average daily water flow (approximately 300,000 gallons per day).

**9. When did the leak begin?**

The leak was suspected on April 10, at which time BCWA took immediate investigative action. It has since been working with local and state leaders to implement a repair plan.

**10. Why is it taking so long?**

Due to the depth, location, and as the sole water supply pipe to the BCWA, the repair is a complex issue requiring extensive planning and preparation. The site of the leak is under RI DEM control and treatment of the groundwater pumped from the area is necessary. However, the leak rate has been steady and does not impact the operation of the water system. It allowed time for the dewatering wells and treatment to be installed - which will be completed by April 30<sup>th</sup>.

**11. Is the East Bay Pipeline functioning properly, is it a reliable supply?**

Yes. The BCWA's East Bay Pipeline is functioning properly, is safe, and is reliable. Water is supplied from the Providence Water Supply Board through the pipeline to the BCWA utility. The East Bay pipeline itself was completed in 1998 and has been maintained as part of our capital improvements plans. However leaks can occur in any system.

**12. Does BCWA have an emergency water source of water?**

BCWA has an established emergency connection with the City of East Providence's water utility. This connection can supply up to 3.5 million gallons per day of water, which is equivalent to BCWA's average daily flow (daily flow can be higher at times). When BCWA does switch to the East Providence supply, it can be coordinated expediently following established protocol.

BCWA has additionally been working with the City of East Providence for the past year on the design of a much larger interconnection between the two water systems. This will provide both BCWA and the City of East Providence with increased redundant water supply in the case of an emergency or need for alternative supply. Construction on this 24" pipe is anticipated to begin next year.

**13. How is BCWA addressing the leak?**

BCWA has been actively working with local and state agencies to address the East Bay Pipeline leak since it was detected. As of this update, BCWA is working with its staff, engineers, and utility experts to identify the exact point of leakage and options for repair. Excavation on the pipeline is scheduled to begin on Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. Once exposed, the method of repair can be finalized. BCWA is also in conversation with the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) as it evaluates and plans for all possible scenarios.

BCWA will provide further updates as they are available.

**14. Will the leak present an additional cost burden to BCWA customers?**

No. BCWA customers will see no direct cost increase to their service due to this leak. BCWA maintains a reserve fund to cover emergency expenses.