

# MOUNT EPHRAIM BOROUGH



## MOUNT EPHRAIM BOROUGH, NJ

Sale of the water system (2007) and then the sewer system (2019) to New Jersey American Water leads to improved service, water quality and fire protection as well as financial flexibility for the local government.

### WATER SYSTEM SALE

**The Need:** Approximately 95 percent of the Borough's water distribution system pipes, installed in the 1930s and 1940s, had reached the end of their useful life. The aged infrastructure was causing significant instances of discolored water and poor water quality. Additionally, the system's ability to provide adequate pressure at fire hydrants in various sections of town was severely limited. The system needed a significant capital investment to replace the aging infrastructure and local government officials determined that sale of the water system was the best solution.

**The Solution:** New Jersey American Water, with over 125 years of experience investing in infrastructure and operating and maintaining water systems, was chosen as the partner. In November 2005, the sale of the water system was placed on the municipal election ballot. The referendum passed with an almost 2:1 margin. The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities approved the sale and New Jersey American Water became the new service provider in May 2007.

### THE RESULTS

Since acquiring the Borough's system, New Jersey American Water has invested approximately \$6.6 million in the water distribution system in Mount Ephraim.

#### Improved fire protection

The first priority was to assess the condition and flow of every fire hydrant in the Borough. Many were found to be non-operational or in poor condition. New Jersey American Water began replacing non-functioning hydrants and 75 percent of fire hydrants have been replaced.

Selling our systems to New Jersey American Water eliminated a lot of risk for our small community. They are the experts on water and sewer and have been able to provide us with quality service at reasonable rates for many years. We know we're in good hands with New Jersey American Water.

**Michael "Traz" Tovinsky Former Mayor, Mt. Ephraim Borough**

## ABOUT THE SYSTEM

**Customer Connections**  
1,800 metered connections

**Water Main**  
Approximately 15 miles of main (95% of main installed in 1930s and 1940s)

**Fire Hydrants**  
97 hydrants

**Valves**  
326 valves

**Water Source**  
Purchased 100% of water supply from New Jersey American Water

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### Replaced aging water mains

Over 5 miles of water main, including valves and customer service lines to the curb were upgraded or replaced. In addition, New Jersey American Water used Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to map the entire distribution system, which allows us to locate facilities and address emergencies in a timely and efficient manner.

### Valve inspection and replacement

One of the leading causes of discolored water and inadequate fire flow was broken valves in the distribution system. New Jersey American Water conducts a rigorous annual valve inspection and exercise program. As part of that effort, 63 percent of the valves in the Borough were replaced. This work significantly decreased the number of discolored water and low pressure complaints.

### Reliability

Prior to acquisition, the Borough had only one supply feed from New Jersey American Water from which they purchased all of their supply. After the acquisition, three additional supply feeds were added, improving system reliability and enhancing the ability to circulate water and ensure quality water service throughout the system.

### Meter replacements

Within the first year, all 1,800 meters were replaced with Radio Frequency (RF) meters. The conversion to RF meters eliminates the need to estimate meter readings, providing customers with actual reads of water usage around which to base their decisions regarding water use. Plus, the readings can be completed without ever needing to gain access to the customer's property.

## WASTEWATER SYSTEM SALE

**The Need:** Similar to the water system, much of the Borough's sewer system was constructed in the 1930s and 1940s and reaching the end of its useful life. The elected leaders in Mount Ephraim commissioned their municipal engineer to evaluate and develop a capital improvement plan for the wastewater collection system. That report confirmed the need to make significant investment – \$1.5 million in the two existing pump stations alone - into the aging system or risk further deterioration or failure of the system.



**The Solution:** In April 2018, the Borough requested Bids for the sale of the system. New Jersey American Water bid \$1.4 million and was selected as the successful bidder. A public referendum was held in November 2018, and voters overwhelmingly approved sale by a 4:1 margin. New Jersey American Water took over operations of the system in July 2019.

### THE RESULTS

To date, New Jersey American Water has invested \$2.2 million into the wastewater system. The investments included two sewer main replacement projects coordinated with the Borough's road paving program, pump replacements and the purchase of emergency backup pumps, the addition of equipment to the Harding Avenue pump station to prevent sewer backups and prolong the life of the station's pumping equipment, and the installation of control and data acquisition equipment to both pump stations. By the end of 2025, New Jersey American Water will complete replacement of the Second Avenue Pump Station, investing an additional \$2.3 million.

## BOTTOM LINE

The Borough's sale of the municipal water and sewer systems to New Jersey American Water resulted in much needed capital investments to upgrade the aging infrastructure. With the ability to finance necessary capital investments in the most cost effective manner, New Jersey American Water was able to make necessary improvements to the systems without significant impact to the rates of the Borough's residents.

## ABOUT THE WASTEWATER SYSTEM

**Customer Connections** 1,800 connections

### Sewer Main

16 miles of mostly terra cotta (majority original construction from the 1930s and 1940s)

### Lift Stations

2

### Treatment

Camden County MUA

## ABOUT NEW JERSEY AMERICAN WATER

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest investor-owned water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to approximately 2.8 million people.

Our team of more than 860 highly skilled professionals provides safe, reliable and affordable service to our 668,000 water and 64,200 wastewater customers.

Learn more online at [newjerseyamwater.com](http://newjerseyamwater.com).

