

Laura Martin, External Affairs Manager
Laura.Martin@amwater.com
Office: (304) 340-2089
Mobile: (304) 932-7158
www.westvirginiaamwater.com

WEST VIRGINIA AMERICAN WATER RELEASES YEAR-LONG COMPREHENSIVE WATER QUALITY STUDY OF THE KANAWHA RIVER

***\$1.3 million study evaluates the Kanawha River as potential alternate source of supply
for Kanawha Valley water system***

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (Sept. 22, 2016) – West Virginia American Water released today the results of a year-long, comprehensive water quality study of the Kanawha River between Montgomery and Charleston. The company commissioned this \$1.3 million study to collect water quality and sediment data to evaluate the Kanawha River as a potential alternate source of supply for its Kanawha Valley Water Treatment Plant on the Elk River.

In 2014, the West Virginia Legislature strengthened state laws aimed at protecting the state's drinking water sources and required water systems to evaluate alternate water sources as part of new Source Water Protection Plans. Last year, at the request of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP), the Legislature re-designated a 72-mile stretch of the Kanawha River from Diamond to Point Pleasant as a West Virginia Public Water Supply "Category A" waterway. This designation had not been applied to this section of the river for decades due to potential water quality concerns related to industrial discharges.

Although the re-designation established protections of this river segment from future discharges, it did not include or require any analysis of the river's current suitability as a drinking water source. Therefore, West Virginia American Water hired a professional engineering and environmental consulting firm to help it develop and complete the most comprehensive water and sediment study ever undertaken of the Kanawha River. State regulators were also closely involved in developing the study methodology.

The study, which spanned from June 2015 to June 2016, analyzed water samples collected from multiple locations, depths and distances from the riverbank across a range of weather events and flow conditions. Hundreds of samples were analyzed by certified laboratories for more than 150 parameters, including Federal Safe Drinking Water Act primary and secondary drinking water standards, West Virginia's "Category A" Water Quality Standard and parameters on the U.S. EPA's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 3 list. Due to past industrial, chemical and mining use of the Kanawha River, the study also examined more than 50 sediment samples for total organic carbon, metals, polychlorinated biphenyls, volatile and semi-volatile organic

compounds and dioxin to identify contaminants in the river bottom, which could potentially be released back into the water over time.

“This level of sampling and analysis far exceeded typical requirements for the evaluation of a drinking water supply,” said Jeff McIntyre, President of West Virginia American Water.

“However, to seriously consider the Kanawha River as backup supply for our largest water system, sound and comprehensive empirical data was necessary – particularly with its history of industrial use and lack of historical water quality data.”

The 25,000 data points resulting from this study identified only 10 of more than 150 parameters above the associated water quality standards, which represent less than 2 percent of the total number of samples collected. Many contaminants can potentially be removed through conventional water treatment processes; however, because the study compared raw (untreated) water to drinking (treated) water standards, additional treatability studies would be necessary to determine if the water can be treated to meet all drinking water standards.

“This study demonstrates that our state’s clean water regulations have been successful in improving and maintaining the health of our rivers and streams, and we are quite pleased with its findings,” said Randy C. Huffman, Cabinet Secretary for the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection. “We applaud West Virginia American Water for providing such comprehensive data, and we hope that public perception of the Kanawha River will continue to improve and reinforce the excellent opportunities presented for quality recreation and fishing.”

West Virginia American Water continues to review the [585-page report](#), which was finalized today and shared with the WVDEP and West Virginia Bureau for Public Health (WVBPH). The study is one of the first steps in evaluating the feasibility of using the Kanawha River as an alternate drinking water source. Other factors include treatability studies, intake site availability, permitting, ability to microtunnel a 48- to 60-inch pipe under downtown Charleston, rate impact to customers, and approvals from both the WVBPH and Public Service Commission (PSC). Preliminary engineering reports estimate that constructing a second intake on the Kanawha River would cost \$56-\$137 million. The full report can be found at westvirginiaamwater.com under Water Quality & Stewardship > Source Water Protection > Kanawha River Study.

West Virginia American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water services to approximately 550,000 people. Founded in 1886, American Water is the largest publicly traded U.S. water and wastewater utility company. Marking its 130th anniversary this year, the company employs more than 6,700 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater and other related services to an estimated 15 million people in 47 states and Ontario, Canada. More information can be found at www.westvirginiaamwater.com.

Connect with us: [Facebook.com/wvamwater](https://www.facebook.com/wvamwater) • [Twitter.com/wvamwater](https://twitter.com/wvamwater) •
[YouTube.com/wvamwater](https://www.youtube.com/wvamwater)

###