

2022 YEAR IN REVIEW



DHEC OFFICE OF RURAL WATER MARCH 2023

A message from Brad Martin, ORW Manager

The Office of Rural Water (ORW) was established in 2016 to support small rural drinking water and wastewater systems. ORW provides technical assistance to owners and operators of small water systems and collaborates with local, state, and federal partners to develop sustainable, long-term solutions for aging infrastructures.

Since becoming the manager of the Office of Rural Water, I have come to realize the vital role ORW plays in establishing partnerships and collaborations with small rural water systems. I look forward to continuing these efforts with the dedicated ORW staff and all of our partners to assist rural water systems with their many unique challenges.



Altamont Forest Wastewater – ORW worked with the Altamont Forest Community and ReWa to successfully transfer the wastewater facility from receivership to a private owner. This allows for the possibility of expansion and replacement of the facility in its entirety with a modern approach in the future.

Town of Eastover – ORW has been in collaboration with the Town of Eastover, Southeastern Rural Community Assistance Project (SERCAP) and SC Rural Water Association (SCRWA) to assist in various updates to the Town's water and wastewater systems. One such accomplishment thus far is the mapping of the Town's drinking water distribution system by SERCAP. ORW stands ready to continue to provide technical assistance to the Town.

Town of Summerton – The working group consisting of representatives from the Town of Summerton, Clarendon County, SERCAP and local state legislative leaders continues to collaborate on the connection of the Goat Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to the Town of Summerton. This would eliminate a WWTP near the shores of Lake Marion, a major recreational and fishing lake in South Carolina. This project has been submitted to Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) and is awaiting announcement.

Chapin Service Line – ORW was called to assist in locating service lines to homeowners after interference from the installation of new cable lines. ORW quickly connected with SERCAP who was able to be on scene and assist in locating and preventing any further damage to service lines.



Conferences and Trainings – ORW participated in a number of different conferences and trainings statewide such as the SCRWA regional conferences and the Council of Governments (COGs) workshops as well as cross training with other departments within DHEC. Most recently, ORW staff had the opportunity to attend the SCRWA Decision Maker’s Conference and the SC Environmental Conference; both of which acquainted ORW staff with more water and wastewater systems.

WIIN Lead Testing Grant – ORW continues to manage SC’s Lead Testing in School and Child Care Program Drinking Water Grant. This is a voluntary program to assist with the testing of lead in drinking water for public schools and child care programs throughout the state. Opportunity zones were created to include the prioritizing of facilities serving younger children (Pre-K, K-5), under-served and low-income communities, as well as facilities that are older and more likely to contain lead plumbing. ORW continues to work with partners such as Department of Social Services (DSS) and SERCAP to further the program and to provide remediation as applicable.

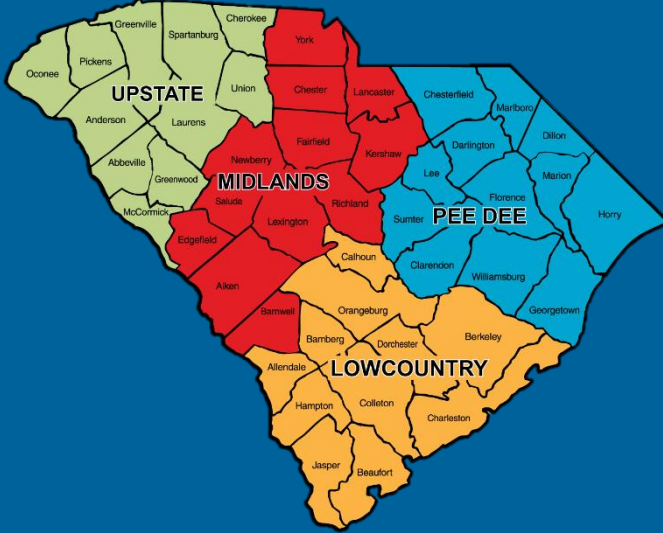


2023 New & On-Going Initiatives

- **Facilitate** innovative collaborations and partnerships to support rural water systems.
- **Promote** sustainability of rural water and wastewater systems.
- **Continue** on-going efforts to provide technical assistance to challenged rural water systems, including underserved minority communities.
- **Develop** easily accessible resources for rural water systems on the ORW web page (scdhec.gov/ORW)
- **Project management** of the WIIN Grant
- **Continue** to develop the ORW to further assist rural water systems and their ever-growing challenges.
- **ORW Staff** has seen growth in the last year to include two new positions and four total new staff members thanks to the SC General Assembly.



ORW Coverage Area and Staff Map



Meet Your ORW Team!

- Manager: Brad Martin – (803) 898-4240
- Upstate: Fred Taylor - (803) 898-4241
- Midlands: Caleb Snelling – (803) 898-4432
- Pee Dee: Ron Berry – (803) 898-3391
- Lowcountry: Brett Butz - (803) 898-4431



To protect and preserve State water resources for drinking, swimming, fishing and other uses to benefit present and future South Carolinians.