

SUMMARY OF SDWA FEE SERVICES – Fiscal Year 2026

I. INTRODUCTION

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Fee program was enacted in July 1993 to help water systems in South Carolina comply with new unfunded federal mandates. The program provides the resources for South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) to continue as the primacy agency and gives DHEC (or Department) the responsibility to conduct federally mandated water testing for all water systems in the state. The fee to be paid by each water system is based upon three components: (A) Administration, (B) Distribution Monitoring and (C) Entry Point to Distribution System (EPTDS) Monitoring.

The following is a list of the SDWA services for: Community Water Systems (CWS), Non-Transient Non-Community Water Systems (NTNCWS), Transient Non-Community Water Systems (TNCWS); and State Water Systems (SWS).

II. COMMUNITY (CWS) AND NON-TRANSIENT NON-COMMUNITY (NTNCWS)

(A) **ADMINISTRATION:** This component of the fee applies to **ALL** CWS and NTNCWS and is based upon a sliding scale where each system pays the same amount for each service connection within a given range. It provides the resources necessary for DHEC to maintain primacy. This fee component allows DHEC to provide the following services for these public water systems:

1. **EMERGENCY RESPONSE:** Both the Emergency Response Team and the Bureau of Water staff are available 7-days a week, 24-hours a day in the event of a water quality crisis in the state. South Carolina's potable water supplies have been threatened in the past by both natural and man-made hazards. The Department has responded with personnel and equipment to collect and analyze water samples and to offer advice and coordination of response efforts.
2. **SECURITY ISSUES:** The Department conducts training seminars to assist water systems in bioterrorism and security issues. Department staff is involved in multi-media workgroups to assess vulnerability and response to terrorist attacks.
3. **SANITARY SURVEYS:** The sanitary survey helps the water systems comply with all federal and state regulations and gives the Department staff a chance to spot potential problem areas based on their knowledge of upcoming regulations.
4. **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:**
 - a. **Regulation Interpretation:** The Department serves as a liaison between the state's water systems and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Complex federal regulations often require a certain amount of interpretation based on individual circumstances.
 - b. **Training:** The Department conducts training seminars to help keep the water systems informed about current and future regulations. Department staff is also involved in operator training schools and are readily available to make presentations to local, state, and national organizations concerning drinking water issues.
 - c. **Consulting:** The Department staff is often called upon to answer questions from water systems, engineers, or the public, concerning water quality, water treatment, water system design, and water system construction. Staff members are constantly updating their knowledge of water treatment techniques and passing this knowledge on to systems as they experience problems with water quality. The Department continues to evaluate ways to expand the technical assistance programs to place more emphasis on on-site investigation and resolution of water quality problems for all system types and sizes.

5. **WATER SYSTEM PERMITTING:** The Department reviews and approves engineering plans and specifications prior to new construction, modification, or expansion of any public drinking water system in the state. This review ensures compliance with state and federal regulations which set forth standards for water system design.
 6. **ENGINEERING REPORT REVIEW:** Preliminary Engineering Reports and Engineering Evaluations addressing water system upgrades, regulatory compliance and/or consolidation are reviewed by the Department. By reviewing these documents, the Department can offer suggestions to design engineers prior to the submittal of final plans and specifications or offer viable alternatives for systems that are out of compliance.
- (B) **DISTRIBUTION MONITORING:** This component of the fee applies to CWS and NTNCWS (except as noted) and is based upon a fixed charge that varies upon system size. Water testing increases as a water system's size increases. **The estimated cost of compliance distribution monitoring is approximately \$1,000 to \$18,000 per year.** This fee component includes:
1. **LEAD AND COPPER SAMPLE ANALYSIS: (2 contaminants)** Service includes delivery and return shipment of sample bottles. The water system's population determines the number of samples required, see State Primary Drinking Water Regulation R.61-58.11.H for Monitoring Requirements. The Department contacts are Idris Liban, (803) 898-3573, lidris.liban@des.sc.gov and Ana Barber, (803) 898-4154, ana.barber@des.sc.gov.
 2. **TOTAL TRIHALOMETHANES/HALOACETIC ACIDS (TTHM/HAA) ANALYSIS: (9 contaminants)** - For surface water systems and ground water systems under the direct influence of surface water and that treat their source water, and master-metered systems that purchase treated water from other water systems. Monitoring requirements are based on source water, population served and past historical results. Samples are collected by Bureau of Environmental Health Services (Regional) office personnel. The Department contact is Preston Smarr, 803-898-3572 or preston.smarr@des.sc.gov.
- (C) **ENTRY POINT TO DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (EPTDS):** This component does not apply to master-metered systems or any system that buys its water from another water system. This component is based upon a **fixed charge per active source** that varies with system size. **The estimated cost of compliance monitoring for each EPTDS is approximately \$2,000 to \$10,000 per year.** Water testing is required for each EPTDS. The Department contact is Megan Johnson, (803) 898-4156, megan.johnson@des.sc.gov. This fee component includes sample collection and laboratory analyses for the following:
1. **NITRATE:** Annually for all EPTDS. Nitrate results $\geq \frac{1}{2}$ the MCL (10 mg/L or ppm) monitored quarterly.
 2. **NITRITE:** One sample between 2020 – 2028 (9-years) for all EPTDS. Nitrite results $\geq \frac{1}{2}$ the MCL (1 mg/L or ppm) monitored quarterly.
 3. **INORGANICS, METALS & FLUORIDE (IOC):** Surface water EPTDS monitored annually. Groundwater EPTDS monitored once every 3-years (2023-2025). Inorganic results > MCL, see R.61-58.5, will be monitored quarterly.
 4. **VOLATILE ORGANICS (VOC):** Surface water EPTDS monitored annually. Groundwater EPTDS monitored once every 6-years (2020-2025). Volatile results exceeding the MCL, see R.61-58.5, monitored quarterly.
 5. **SYNTHETIC ORGANICS (SOC):** Surface water EPTDS monitored annually. Groundwater systems serving > 3,300 monitored once every 3-years (2026-2028). Groundwater systems serving $\leq 3,300$ monitored once every 9-years (2020-2028). Results \geq detection limits defined in R.61-58.5.E.7(r), monitored quarterly.
 6. **RADIONUCLIDES:** Applies to CWS only. New systems and/or new EPTDS monitored quarterly (4 consecutive quarters). After 4 consecutive quarters EPTDS placed on one of the following monitoring schedules: Result < detection level one sample every 6-years (2026-2031); Result \geq detection level but $\leq \frac{1}{2}$ MCL one sample every 6-years (2026-2031); Result > $\frac{1}{2}$ MCL but \leq MCL one sample every 3-years (2026-2028); Result > MCL one sample quarterly. Detection limits, see R.61-58.5.K. The Department contact is Megan Johnson, (803) 898-4156, megan.johnson@des.sc.gov.

III. TRANSIENT NON-COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS (TNCWS), STATE WATER SYSTEMS (SWS) AND WATER VENDING MACHINES

Fees are based on a fixed rate. Administrative services are provided to these systems.

(A) TRANSIENT NON-COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS (TNCWS)

1. DISTRIBUTION MONITORING:

- a. **COLIFORM MONITORING:** A minimum of one (1) routine sample is collected during the calendar year. New TNCWS require four (4) consecutive quarters of initial monitoring. If a sanitary survey has not been completed in the last three (3) years, the system returns to quarterly monitoring until a sanitary survey is conducted. If a system has an Unsatisfactory (UNSAT) sanitary survey, they are placed on quarterly monitoring until the UNSAT sanitary survey is resolved and upgraded to either a Needs Improvement rating or a Satisfactory rating. The Department contact is Elizabeth DeLanghe, 803-898-4149 or elizabeth.delanghe@des.sc.gov. In the event of a total coliform positive sample in the distribution, if the system is served by their own groundwater source, then source samples will be collected to comply with SDWA.

2. ENTRY POINT TO DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (EPTDS):

- a. **NITRATE:** Annually at each EPTDS.
- b. **NITRITE:** One sample at each EPTDS between 2020 - 2028.

(B) STATE WATER SYSTEMS (SWS)

1. DISTRIBUTION MONITORING:

2. **COLIFORM MONITORING:** A minimum of one (1) routine sample is to be collected during the calendar year. New SWS require four (4) consecutive quarters of initial monitoring. If a sanitary survey has not been completed in the last five (5) years, the system returns to quarterly monitoring until a sanitary survey is conducted. If a system has an Unsatisfactory (UNSAT) sanitary survey, they are placed on quarterly monitoring until the UNSAT sanitary survey is resolved and upgraded to either a Needs Improvement rating or a Satisfactory rating. The Department contact is Elizabeth DeLanghe, 803-898-4149 or elizabeth.delanghe@des.sc.gov.
3. In the event of a total coliform positive sample in the distribution, if the system is served by their own groundwater source, then source samples will be collected to comply with SDWA.

4. ENTRY POINT TO DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (EPTDS):

- a. **NITRATE:** One routine sample at each EPTDS between 2020 - 2028.

(C) WATER VENDING MACHINES

1. DISTRIBUTION MONITORING:

- a. **COLIFORM MONITORING:** A minimum of one (1) routine sample is collected during the calendar year. New TNCWS require four (4) consecutive quarters of initial monitoring. If a sanitary survey has not been completed in the last three (3) years, then the system returns to quarterly monitoring until a sanitary survey is conducted. If a system has an Unsatisfactory (UNSAT) sanitary survey, they are placed on quarterly monitoring until the UNSAT sanitary survey is resolved and upgraded to either a Needs Improvement rating or a Satisfactory rating. The Department contact is Elizabeth DeLanghe, 803-898-4149 or elizabeth.delanghe@des.sc.gov.

FY 2026 SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT FEE SCHEDULE

TABLE 1: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

SYSTEM SIZE (number of taps)	Column A	Column B	Column C
1 – 10	\$ 0.00	0	\$ 14.38
11 – 25	\$ 143.80	10	\$ 9.60
26 – 50	\$ 287.80	25	\$ 7.76
51 – 100	\$ 481.80	50	\$ 5.75
101 – 500	\$ 769.30	100	\$ 3.85
501 – 1,000	\$ 2,309.30	500	\$ 2.88
1,001 – 5,000	\$ 3,749.30	1,000	\$ 1.96
5,001 – 10,000	\$ 11,589.30	5,000	\$ 1.44
10,001 – 15,000	\$ 18,789.30	10,000	\$ 0.92
15,001 – 25,000	\$ 23,389.30	15,000	\$ 0.46
25,001 – 50,000	\$ 27,989.30	25,000	\$ 0.29
50,001 – 100,000	\$ 35,239.30	50,000	\$ 0.17
100,001 – and above	\$ 43,739.30	100,000	\$ 0.12

For the purposes of this fee schedule, tap is defined as a service connection, the point at which water is delivered to the consumer (building, dwelling, commercial establishment, camping space, industry, etc.) from a distribution system, whether metered or not and regardless of whether there is a user charge dwelling, for the consumption of the water.

**TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION
MONITORING**

SYSTEM SIZE (number of taps)	FIXED RATE
1 – 10	\$ 262.50
11 – 25	\$ 262.50
26 – 50	\$ 262.50
51 – 100	\$ 262.50
101 – 500	\$ 750.00
501 – 1,000	\$ 750.00
1,001 – 5,000	\$ 3,750.00
5,001 – 10,000	\$ 3,750.00
10,001 – 15,000	\$ 3,750.00
15,001 – 25,000	\$ 7,500.00
25,001 – 50,000	\$ 7,500.00
50,001 – 100,000	\$ 7,500.00
100,001 – and above	\$ 7,500.00

FEE SCHEDULE FOR OTHER PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM TYPES

SYSTEM TYPE	FIXED FEE
Transient Non-Community Systems:	\$ 275.00
Systems Serving > 1 Tap and < 15 Taps and Serving < 25 People	\$ 175.00
Systems Serving 1 Tap and < 25 People	\$ 125.00
Vending Machine	\$ 75.00

**TABLE 3: EPTDS MONITORING
(Rate based on number of active sources)**

SYSTEM SIZE (number of taps)	GROUNDWATER Rate per Source Column D	SURFACE Rate per Source Column E
1 – 10	\$ 250.00	\$ 500.00
11 – 25	\$ 250.00	\$ 500.00
26 – 50	\$ 450.00	\$ 800.00
51 – 100	\$ 450.00	\$ 800.00
101 – 500	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00
501 – 1,000	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00
1,001 – 5,000	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00
5,001 – 10,000	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00
10,001 – 15,000	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00
15,001 – 25,000	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00
25,001 – 50,000	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00
50,001 – 100,000	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00
100,001 – and above	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,800.00