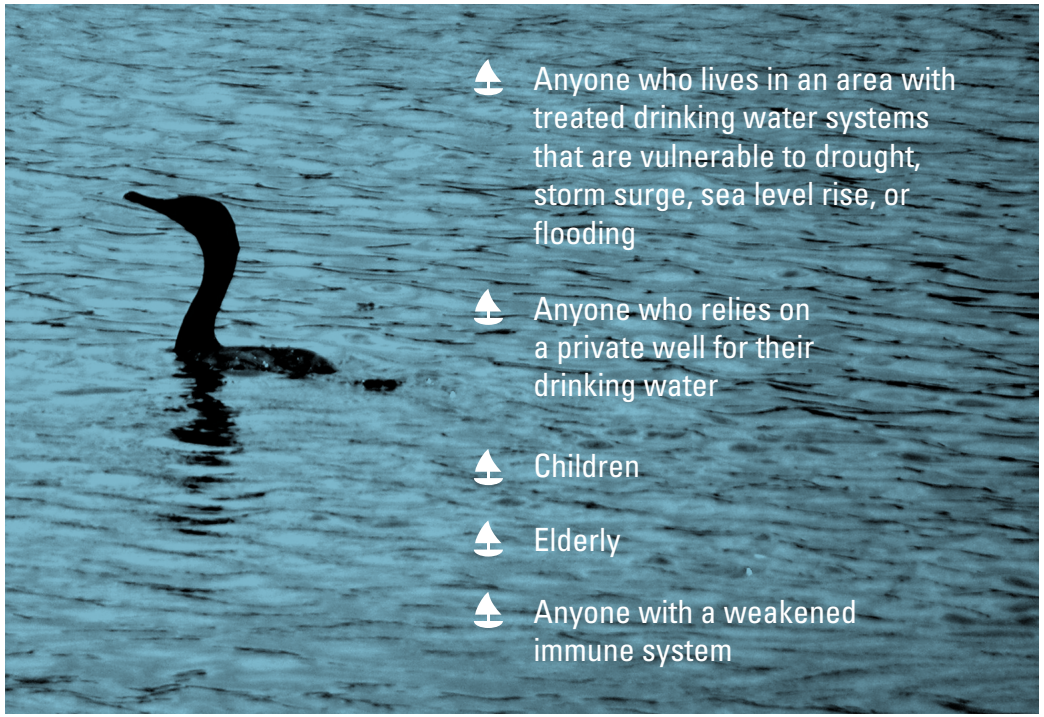
Tiverton deals with drought: **"The lack of water does lead to a health issue ... and it's a health and safety concern for the entire community. The sanitary systems don't work if we don't have water."** – Robert Lloyd, Tiverton Fire Chief

AT-RISK POPULATIONS



- Anyone who lives in an area with treated drinking water systems that are vulnerable to drought, storm surge, sea level rise, or flooding
- Anyone who relies on a private well for their drinking water
- Children
- Elderly
- Anyone with a weakened immune system

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

WATER

Public health, infrastructure, agriculture, and ecosystems are all impacted by water quality and supply. Waterborne bacteria, viruses, parasites, and algae all pose health risks, including gastrointestinal illnesses, liver and kidney damage, or nerve and breathing problems. As climate change contributes to the warming of Rhode Island's waters, contaminants may become more common, leading to increased cases of illness or death.

DATA AND PROJECTIONS

About 12% of Rhode Islanders get their drinking water from private wells.

Climate change may make drought conditions worse.

Droughts are likely to occur at least once each summer.

More extreme storm events will cause more stormwater runoff and increase the concentrations of nutrients that increase the risk of fish kills in Narragansett Bay.

Microalgae seaweeds, blue-green algae, and swimmer's itch, may all become more common.

Fecal bacteria contamination may increase due to stressed wastewater facilities.

WATER QUALITY

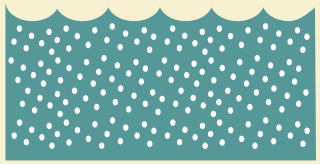
UNSTABLE WATER

Heavy rainfall increases the amount of runoff and can result in making water resources unusable, unsafe, or in need of water treatment.

SHELLFISH BAN

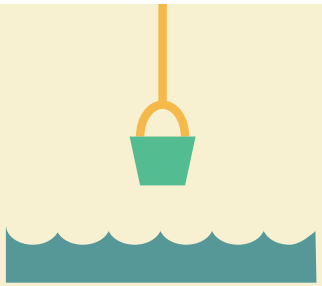
Summertime bans on shellfishing may increase because toxic bacteria grow better in warmer water.

WATER SUPPLY



SALINITY

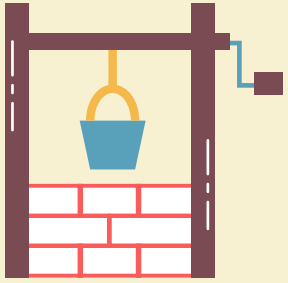
Rising sea level and increased incidence of drought can increase the salinity of both surface water and groundwater.



WATER SUPPLY

Municipal water systems that get drinking water from groundwater sources are more vulnerable when there is a significant, prolonged loss of water supply.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

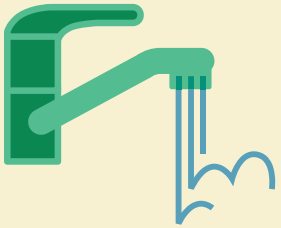


TEST WELL WATER

Test well water annually. Learn more at http://www.health.ri.gov/wells

BEACH CLOSURE

Check the Rhode Island Department of Health's beach closure website at health.ri.gov/beaches.



ASK YOUR LOCAL OFFICIALS

Ask your local officials what actions have been taken to mitigate the impacts of climate change on drinking water.

CONSIDER GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Consider improvements that can reduce the risk of flooding and pollution.