



Center for Drinking Water Quality

Instructions for Changing the Operational Status of a Licensed Public Water System

Three Capitol Hill, Room 209 | Providence RI 02908 | 401-222-6867 | DOH.RIDWQ@health.ri.gov

A public water system (PWS) that is licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), Center for Drinking Water Quality (DWQ) can have two different operational statuses, known as active non-operational and active operational.

When active non-operational, the distribution lines of the PWS must be depressurized (also known as dewatered) and the water system must not be used in any capacity. When active operational, the water distribution system of the PWS is pressurized and sampling and monitoring are taking place so that the PWS is in compliance with RIDOH regulations. The active in active non-operational refers to the PWS license, which you must renew annually.

This document outlines the steps that the licensee can take to change the PWS from active operational status to active non-operational status and back again.

Changing a Licensed PWS Status from Active Operational to Active Non-Operational

The process to change the status of an active operational PWS to active non-operational is:

- 1) Contact the RIDOH Center for Drinking Water Quality for sampling requirements before depressurizing (also known as dewatering).
- 2) Safely and completely depressurize the distribution system.
- 3) Complete the renewal application that RIDOH will send to you and make sure to state in an email or somewhere on the application the date that the PWS was depressurized.

Changing a Licensed PWS Status from Active Non-Operational to Active Operational

The process to change the status of an active non-operational PWS to active operational will vary from water system to water system, but broadly the licensee must follow the steps below.

If you are a new water system owner, you may want to set up an optional onboarding meeting with RIDOH to learn how to stay in compliance with the regulations that apply to your PWS.

Note: If your water system is no longer de-watered and de-pressurized, **contact RIDOH right away** at 401-222-6867. A pressurized PWS is in active operational status and therefore you must begin routine sampling.

Before the water system is pressurized:

1. You must renew the public water system license annually, by submitting a completed license renewal application by the June 30th deadline, even when the water system is in active non-operational status. RIDOH must have the correct contact information for the current owner of the water system (Change of Information Form) in order to ensure that you receive the renewal application and other critical communications.
2. Contact RIDOH once there is an approximate date to re-pressurize the water system or if there will be a change in ownership. RIDOH will then send you a renewal application so that it can be updated with the active operational status. Make sure to state in an email or somewhere on the application the date that the PWS will be pressurized.
3. Depending on the length of time this water system has been in active non-operational status, RIDOH will inform you if they must conduct a Sanitary Survey inspection.

If you have any questions or need to get in touch with the Rhode Island Department of Health Center for Drinking Water Quality call 401-222-6867 or email DOH.RIDWQ@health.ri.gov.

After the water system is re-pressurized:

1. RIDOH advises that you disinfect the water system and obtain a water sample that is absent for the indicator bacteria *total coliform* before you re-open to the public (please note that this includes staff, construction contractors, customers, etc.) Otherwise, the PWS must operate under a **precautionary boil water notice** until the system is disinfected, and sample results indicate that there are no coliform bacteria in the system.
2. You will be required to perform routine contaminant sampling and any required compliance monitoring. Ensure open communication with RIDOH so that staff can work with you to identify what kinds of sampling and monitoring you will have to start.
3. The RIDOH Center for Drinking Water Quality will inform you of any other actions that are required or advised based on the public water system's unique history and treatment needs. If the PWS meets certain criteria, you may need to hire a certified drinking water operator.

Forms for PWS

The public water system license renewal application form must be completed every year and submitted to RIDOH by the June 30 deadline. You will receive this in the mail.

The change of information form should be used anytime there is an update to the contact information that RIDOH requires. You can find this online at the [health.ri.gov website](http://health.ri.gov).

Additional forms: you may be required to use the following reporting forms for your PWS. You can find them all online at the [health.ri.gov website](http://health.ri.gov). RIDOH staff will work with you to let you know which of these you will need to ensure the drinking water quality of your PWS and how to complete the forms on the required cycles.

- Cross Connection-Control Annual Report Template
- Electronic Data Reporting Agreement
- Fluoride Monitoring
- Groundwater Rule Compliance Monitoring
- Haloacetic Acids
- Inorganics
- Lead and Copper
- Microbial Monthly Summary
- Microbial Sample Results
- Natural Disaster Incident
- Radiologicals
- Synthetic Organic Compounds
- Trihalomethanes
- Volatile Organic Compounds

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