

Edward Farrar Utility District

Managing Public Water System Watersheds: Identifying and Addressing the Challenges of Cost-Effectively Maintaining Safe, Adequate, and Reliable Water Supplies

Notice of Informational Sessions

6:30 PM Thursday, **December 11**, 2025 and Thursday, **January 15**, 2026

Waterbury Fire Station, 43 South Main Street

Introduction

The Edward Farrar Utility District (EFUD) is a Vermont municipality that was established to provide water and sewer services to the former Village of Waterbury and a number of extra-territorial customers in nearby areas, including portions of Waterbury Center, Duxbury, and Moretown. EFUD owns approximately 500 acres of undeveloped, forested land in Waterbury and Stowe, from which it collects both surface and ground water to serve the demand for potable water of its users. Roughly 90 percent of the nearly 500-acre watershed is in Stowe; some fifty acres are located along the northern border of Waterbury.

The sole purpose of this land is to provide a safe, adequate, and reliable supply of source water to meet the current and future demand of the District's users—that is, a drinking water supply (1) whose quality meets or, preferably, exceeds all state and federal requirements; (2) that is acquired and managed in a reliable manner that most economically minimizes disruptions in service; and (3) that is of sufficient quantity to meet expected demand today and most economically in the long-run, thereby avoiding unnecessary increases to operations costs or capital upgrades. Today, a substantial amount of the water the watershed supplies is surface water, which is more economically treated and piped by gravity to the municipality than ground water, which requires pumping. The District Commissioners and staff approach decisions with respect to this land with a core belief: this source water must be protected to serve the District in perpetuity.

Purpose of the Sessions

The watershed has long been used for unsanctioned recreational activities, primarily hiking and hunting. However, in recent years, there has been a significant increase, in both scope and scale, in such activities, which, if allowed to continue unmanaged or, possibly, if not prohibited altogether, pose a risk to source water quality protection and public health. Among matters of concern are pathogen contamination, erosion causing elevated levels of particulate matter suspended in the water (which can interfere with disinfection and increase the concentration of disinfectant by-products in the drinking water), and forever chemicals. And, in the same way that some of the challenges we face today were not well understood thirty years ago, there may be other contamination risks of which we're unaware today, but which diligence and care might mitigate.

Degradation of the quality of supply can raise the cost of treatment and potentially require a change in treatment technology. The challenge for EFUD is how to most cost-effectively meet its obligations, as set out in its charter and in statute, which, because of EFUD's narrow purpose, limit the scope of its jurisdiction. The board is considering whether to adopt a formal policy on recreational and other non-EFUD-related activities in the watershed.

The purpose of these informational sessions is to provide input to the board as it considers policy options. The sessions are designed to educate the EFUD commissioners and staff, EFUD users, and the public in general about the challenges that the District's watershed faces, the risks they create, and steps that can be taken to address them. These sessions will initiate EFUD's deliberations on a longer-term policy for the management of the watershed.

Each session will consist of several short presentations on specified subjects, followed by facilitated discussions. We encourage interested persons to submit questions they would like addressed ahead of time, by sending emails to waterworks@waterburyvt.com.

Agenda: December 11, 2025

1. Introduction
 - a. Skip Flanders, EFUD Chair
 - b. Topics:
 - i. Purpose of the informational sessions
 - ii. Introduction of EFUD commissioners and waterworks employees
 - iii. Introduction of the facilitator, David Mears
2. The Edward Farrar Utility District
 - a. Presenters: Skip Flanders, EFUD Chair and Bill Woodruff, EFUD Public Works Director & Drinking Water Operators
 - b. Topics
 - i. What is EFUD?
 - ii. History, governance, forest management (inc. logging and invasives control)
 1. Role of Hunger Mountain Forestry (now Redstart).
 - iii. Public Water System Infrastructure
3. Regulation of Public Water Systems
 - a. Presenter: Ben Montross, Deputy Director, VT DEC-Drinking Water & Groundwater Protection Division
 - b. Topics
 - i. Safe Drinking Water Act and Public Water System Compliance
 - ii. Requirement for Watershed Protection/Source Protection Areas
 - iii. Multiple-Barrier Approach to Water Quality Protection
 - iv. Major Water Quality Concerns
4. Source Water Quality Protection
 - a. Presenter: Brad Roy, Source Water Specialist, Vermont Rural Water Association
 - b. Topics
 - i. Watershed Protection by Surface Water Systems in Vermont
 - ii. Causes of adverse impacts on water quality
 - iii. Protecting water quality

Agenda: January 15, 2026

This session will look into how other water systems in the state and region have dealt with similar challenges. We will also hear from organizations representing other surface water public systems, environmental, and other relevant interests in undeveloped and largely forested lands.