

Frequently Asked Questions

Is one company taking over another company?

No, Harrisville Water Department and Pascoag Utility District are being merged into a new entity. The new entity would own and operate the current electric distribution system in Pascoag and Harrisville and likewise upon completion of the merger, would also own and operate the water production and distribution system of both companies' current customers. You can expect the same great customer service you've always received from both companies just merged into one!

Why is this a good idea?

Water systems' regulatory compliance is becoming increasingly more complex and creating a merger between the two companies would give us gains in efficiency of operations and exploration for new water resources that would help provide water rate stability and benefits to all its members/customers.

Why should we operationally connect the two water companies?

Both water companies have already been connected for over twenty years. There is an interconnection point already in operation that provides water at a wholesale rate to customers in Pascoag. The water tanks that each company owns work in tandem due to the interconnection that was established.

Will staff be retained?

All staff members at both companies will work for the new entity. The only difference will be the new Board setup. The new Board will be a seven member board, initially consisting of 3 members of the current Pascoag Utility District Board and 3 members of the current Harrisville Operating Committee Board. A seventh member will be elected by the new entity's customer base. In the future, all Board members will be elected by the new entity's customer base.

Will there still be a Harrisville Surcharge on my bill?

A Cost of Service would be conducted to determine the proper rate structure for the new entity. The rate for all customers would be the same across each class (retail, commercial, industrial).

I live in Harrisville and have never been able to vote at Pascoag Utility District meetings, will I get to now?

Yes, customers of the new entity will be eligible to vote at Special and Annual Meetings.

I am a Harrisville Water customer but a RI Energy customer. Can I get electric service from the new entity?

No, the new entity is retaining existing customers from both companies only. RI Energy has their own territory that is separate from Pascoag's and as such new electric customers cannot be added outside of each's existing territory.

What is the proposed timeline for the merger?

The steps of the merger are detailed below and will potentially take over a year to complete if both companies and customers vote in favor of the merger.

What are the next steps?

- The subcommittee from the two entities will continue to meet and work through details of the merger
- The full boards of each entity will need to vote in favor of the merger
- Customer/members of each entity will then need to vote in favor of the merger at special meetings of each entity
- A new Charter would be created to be voted on by the Rhode Island General Assembly. Such charter would separate the Harrisville fire and water assets while at the same time creating the new entity that would contain all utility assets of the new combined water and electric district.
- A new 7-member Board of utility commissioners would be created by populating the initial board with 3 commissioners from each existing board and a 7th commissioner to be voted on by the new and expanded customer/member base. Thereafter, all expiring terms of the commissioners would be voted on by the new and expanded customer/member base.
- It is anticipated that the new entity would begin operations sometime after all the preceding items above accomplished.
- The charter would include a new name for the entity, possibly one that symbolizes the area of northwestern Rhode Island where we serve so proudly.

I have questions on the merger-who can I speak to?

You can always call our office at 401-568-6222 and our staff will be happy to assist you. We also have Board meetings the 4th Monday of each month at 2pm. Media questions can be directed to Michael Kirkwood 401-568-2459 or mkirkwood@pud-ri.org.