

BAY RESTORATION FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Maryland Department of the Environment

Thursday, July 9 · 1:00 – 3:00pm
IN PERSON: MDE Lobby, 1st Floor

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions – Chris Murphy, Committee Chairman (15 Minutes)
- Approve previous meeting minutes – Chris Murphy, Committee Chairman
- Update on Major and Minor WWTPs ENR Implementation (10 Minutes) – Walid Saffouri, MDE
- Update on the Whole Watershed Act Implementation (10 Minutes) - Dana Reiss, DNR
- Update on Cover Crops Activities (10 Minutes)– Jason Keppler, MDA
- Update on Onsite Sewage Disposal Systems (OSDS) and Fee (10 Minutes)– Manith Hang, MDE
- Discussion on Long Term Outlook for the Bay Restoration Fund
 - Fee Increase Sunset (Effective July 1, 2030)
 - Current BRF Implementation Challenges
 - Proposed Improvements and Solutions
 - Legislative Proposals
 - Timeline for Committee Recommendations to MDE
- Next meetings and other administrative issues to be discussed with the committee – Chris Murphy, Committee Chairman
- 2026 Pre-Scheduled Meetings:
October 8th
December 10th
- ADJOURNMENT

BAY RESTORATION FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Maryland Department of the Environment

April 9, 2026
Virtual Meeting

Meeting Minutes
(Edited Gemini Notes)

- **Call to Order and Introduction Process:** Mr. Murphy initiated the meeting by reminding attendees to state their name before speaking and to use the 'raise hand' function for questions. The initial focus was on establishing a permanent list of committee members due to discrepancies in attendance records; an email list contained 28 names while the official committee size is 18 members, including representatives from various state departments. Ms. Caldarelli suggested coordinating with the governor's office to get the most recent appointment list, as some terms are expiring, and then engaging the people on the current list to confirm representatives.
- **Clarifying Committee Membership and Representation:** Mr. Saffouri noted that the list they received recently also includes appointed representatives for environmental justice, as well as the secretaries of key departments (MDE, DBM, MDP, MDA, and DNR) who are automatic members but send designates. Ms. Caldarelli proposed that these agencies should provide an official designate to whom communications can be directed, which Mr. Murphy agreed would make the process of confirming attendance much easier.
- **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** Mr. Murphy asked if there were any comments on the previously distributed meeting minutes. Mr. Male proposed using the chat function at the beginning of meetings for attendees to quickly log their presence, which Mr. Murphy agreed was a great idea. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Male, seconded by Ms. Maguire, and approved without opposition.
- **Update on the Annual Report:** Ms. Caldarelli provided an update on the annual report, stating that it was officially transmitted on January 27th of this year and is available on the website. Mr. Saffouri clarified that the report is submitted to both the Governor and the legislature, and it was submitted late (January 27th) this year, as the due date is typically January 15th. Mr. Bozick noted that the report listed 24 advisory committee members, which seemed to conflict with the established number, prompting Mr. Saffouri to explain that this figure included the secretaries and their designates, as well as members who worked on the report in the previous year but are no longer on the committee.

- **Wastewater Treatment Plants Upgrade Status:** Mr. Saffouri updated the committee on the wastewater treatment plants upgrade status, noting that Princess Anne (a major plant) has progressed from planning to the design phase, while all other major plants are complete. For minor plants, Rock Hall has started construction (now 3% complete), and St. Clements Shores and Talbot County region 4 are proceeding to construction, with St. Clements Shores having opened bids. Twin Cities plant remains at 96% completion because they are decommissioning the lagoon, and Smith Island is at 98% completion, considered substantially completed with only punch list items remaining.
- **Discussion of Wastewater Treatment Plant Cost Metrics:** Mr. Murphy raised concern about the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) sunset in 2030 and the increasing costs of upgrades, suggesting the need for a metric like cost per pound over time to advocate for continued funding. Mr. Saffouri confirmed that costs are rising, noting that major plants were less than \$10 per pound, but minor plants started at \$100 and are now at \$150 per pound maximum. Mr. Saffouri offered to create a spreadsheet or a graph showing the average cost per pound for projects over the years to better illustrate the trend.
- **Data Presentation and BRF Advocacy:** Ms. Maguire emphasized the necessity of making data more accessible and manipulable, potentially through GIS mapping, to effectively demonstrate the BRF program's importance ahead of the 2030 sunset. Mr. Sandi discussed the challenges MDE is facing in creating interactive tools to show BRF expenditures, particularly how to accurately represent the service area (sewer-shed) of plants that serve multiple jurisdictions. Mr. Bozick highlighted further complications in calculating accurate cost per pound metrics, as the BRF only funds the Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) portion of the work, and smaller facilities face magnified costs and complexities related to growth funding and non-ENR components.
- **Public Access to BRF Data:** Mr. Murphy asked MDE to consider creating a shared location or tool where other organizations could access and use the BRF data, supporting Ms. Maguire's suggestion. Mr. Sandi responded that they are developing ArcGIS online tools to look at aggregate data for all BRF sectors (wastewater, septic, and cover crops) and committed to providing an update on this development at the next meeting.
- **Whole Watershed Update:** Ms. Reiss provided a brief update for the whole watershed program, noting that Ms. Saunders' group is working towards a State Management Team meeting in May to make project decisions for fiscal year 2027 for the five selected watersheds. Ms. Reiss clarified that the whole watershed planning process occurs every five years.
- **Coordination Challenges Among State Agencies (MDE, MDP, DNR):** Mr. Bozick expressed concern that coordination among MDE, MDP, and DNR is not effective on the ground, particularly on the Eastern Shore, which complicates efforts to deal with issues like funding,

regionalization, and effluent disposal options. Mr. Bozick emphasized that the lack of acceptable effluent disposal options is a major challenge for growth and sustainability. Mr. Sandi suggested that the conversation about effluent disposal should be directed to the MDE wastewater permits division.

- **Challenges in Local Planning and Regionalization:** Mr. Bozick further detailed the lack of coordination between municipal and county comprehensive plans regarding utility infrastructure and growth, noting that relying on past, inaccurate data hinders progress. He criticized the current PFA (Priority Funding Areas) model for the Eastern Shore, where urban/rural boundaries shift quickly, and argued against building long, restricted-access pipelines for regionalization, which is not cost-effective and creates pressure for unauthorized connections. Mr. Bozick concluded that effluent disposal is the largest driver of ENR costs and is hampered by the current regulatory framework.
- **Discussion on MDE/MDP/DNR Coordination and BRF Impact:** Mr. Murphy acknowledged the importance of discussing how MDP, MDE, and DNR coordination affects the BRF fund and mentioned their county's struggle to connect existing, non-PFA houses to the sewer system. Mr. Saffouri noted that exceptions are often granted for existing homes with failing septic tanks outside of the PFA. Mr. Bozick argued that the exception-by-exception approach is too slow for the large number of non-compliant, old septic systems in rural areas, necessitating rural central sewers.
- **On-site Disposal System (OSDS) and Fee Collection Update:** Ms. Hang provided the OSDS update. The year-to-date totals (July 1st to March 31st) are 404 septic upgrades and 122 sewer connections, and the trend appears to be holding steady. Ms. Hang also reported on fee collections, noting that MDE has received \$60.193 million for wastewater BRF but has not yet received the distribution for the last quarter. Ms. Dorsey confirmed they are following up directly with the Comptroller's office regarding the transfer of funds.
- **Septic Fee Collection and Data Presentation Improvement:** For septic fee collection, Ms. Hang reported \$12.885 million received by MDE (the first column). Mr. Murphy suggested that a trend line or moving average might be more helpful for visualizing the collection data. Ms. Caldarelli agreed, noting they have been discussing ways to better present the OSDS and fee collection information to show trends and be more useful to the committee.
- **New Business and Motion for In-Person Meeting:** Mr. Murphy opened the floor for new business and proposed holding the next meeting, scheduled for July 9th, in person, as the committee has not met in person since before the COVID pandemic. Mr. Male and Ms. Maguire supported the motion. Ms. Caldarelli suggested potentially aligning the meeting with the MACO

conference in August, but Mr. Murphy recommended keeping the meeting at MDE. The motion to hold the next meeting in person was passed.

- **Discussion of BRF Funding Barrier for Mobile Home Communities:** Mr. Murphy brought up an issue regarding a legislative barrier that limits BRF funding to 50% for upgrades to privately owned treatment works, such as mobile home communities. Mr. Murphy argued that this 50% limit should be removed if a publicly owned entity intends to take over and upgrade the system. Mr. Saffouri agreed, stating that Ann Arundel County is not alone and a law change would make it easier to implement these projects, which would benefit the mobile home park residents, MDE (by eliminating consent order issues), and the watershed. Mr. Male supported the general policy but requested staff provide information on the extent to which new small wastewater facilities are still being approved, potentially creating future maintenance problems. Mr. Bozick supported the proposal to ease the funding restriction but noted that private systems have historically been problematic due to enforcement and compliance issues.
- **Discussion on Private Wastewater Facilities and Funding:** The participants discussed the challenges associated with private entities operating wastewater facilities under consent orders, noting the whole public suffers when these arrangements are problematic. Mr. Murphy brought up the issue of publicly owned treatment facilities not being able to secure 100% funding easily and suggested figuring out how to eliminate this issue.
- **Upcoming Meeting Schedule and Adjournment:** The next meeting is scheduled for July 9th and will be held in person. A motion to adjourn the current meeting was made and seconded, leading to the closing of the meeting.

Materials Distributed at the Meeting

- Meeting Agenda
- Previous Meeting Minutes
- Annual Status Report
- Wastewater Treatment Plants ENR Upgrade Status
- BRF Septic Program Funded Installations
- Distribution of Bay Restoration Fee

Attendance

Advisory Committee Members or Designees Attending:

Chris Murphy, Anne Arundel County DPW, Committee Chairman
Suzanne Dorsey, Maryland Department of the Environment
Adriana Caldarelli, Maryland Department of the Environment
K'Yalei Harris, Maryland Department of Budget and Management
Manith Hang, Maryland Department of the Environment
Walid Saffouri, Maryland Department of the Environment
Ellen Mussman, Maryland Department of Planning
Doug Abbott, Easton Utilities
Bob Buglass, Washington Suburban Sanitary District
Peter Bozick, Engineer, Retired Engineer
Tim Male, Environmental Policy Innovation Center
Dong Hee Kang, Morgan State University
John Carroll, Maryland Municipal League
Gussie Maguire, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Dana Reiss, Department of Natural Resources

Others in Attendance:

Kurt Fuchs, Easton Utilities
Andrew Gray, Department of Legislative Services
Paola Argueta

Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Attendees:

Sunita Boyle	Gregorio G Sandi
Leslie Mitchell	Kathy Stecker
Mehdi Majedi	Rajiv Chawla

Wastewater Treatment Plants ENR Upgrade Status

(July 9, 2026)

Major WWTPs

Previous Meeting

66 facilities are in operation
0 facility is under construction
1 facility is in design
0 facility is in planning
67 total

Current

66 facilities are in operation
0 facility is under construction
1 facility is in design
0 facility is in planning
67 total

Status Changes Since Previous Meeting:

- No change.

Minor WWTPs

Previous Meeting

17 facilities are in operation
3 facilities are under construction
9 facilities are in design
7 facilities are in planning
36 total

Current

18 facilities are in operation
2 facilities are under construction
9 facilities are in design
7 facilities are in planning
36 total

Status Changes Since Previous Meeting:

- Twin Cities completed the ENR construction.
- St. Clements Shores (St. Mary's County) and Talbot Region IV (Talbot County) are scheduled to start construction in August.

Percentage completion of facilities under construction for ENR Upgrade:

Facility	Previous Meeting Percentage Complete	Current Percentage Complete
Rock Hall	3%	10%
Smith Island	98%	98%

Whole Watershed Program

Year 1 Updates & Year 2 Goals

July 9, 2026

BRF Advisory Committee Meeting

Kristin Saunders, MD DNR



Whole Watershed Program Overview

The Whole Watershed Act (SB 969 / HB 1165)
Passed April 2024

- Five year pilot, partnership program targeting five watersheds
- To improve watershed health in the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays
- **Shallow water habitat improvements**
- **Rapid improvement (de-listing)**
- **Ecological uplift**



In direct response to the CESR Report



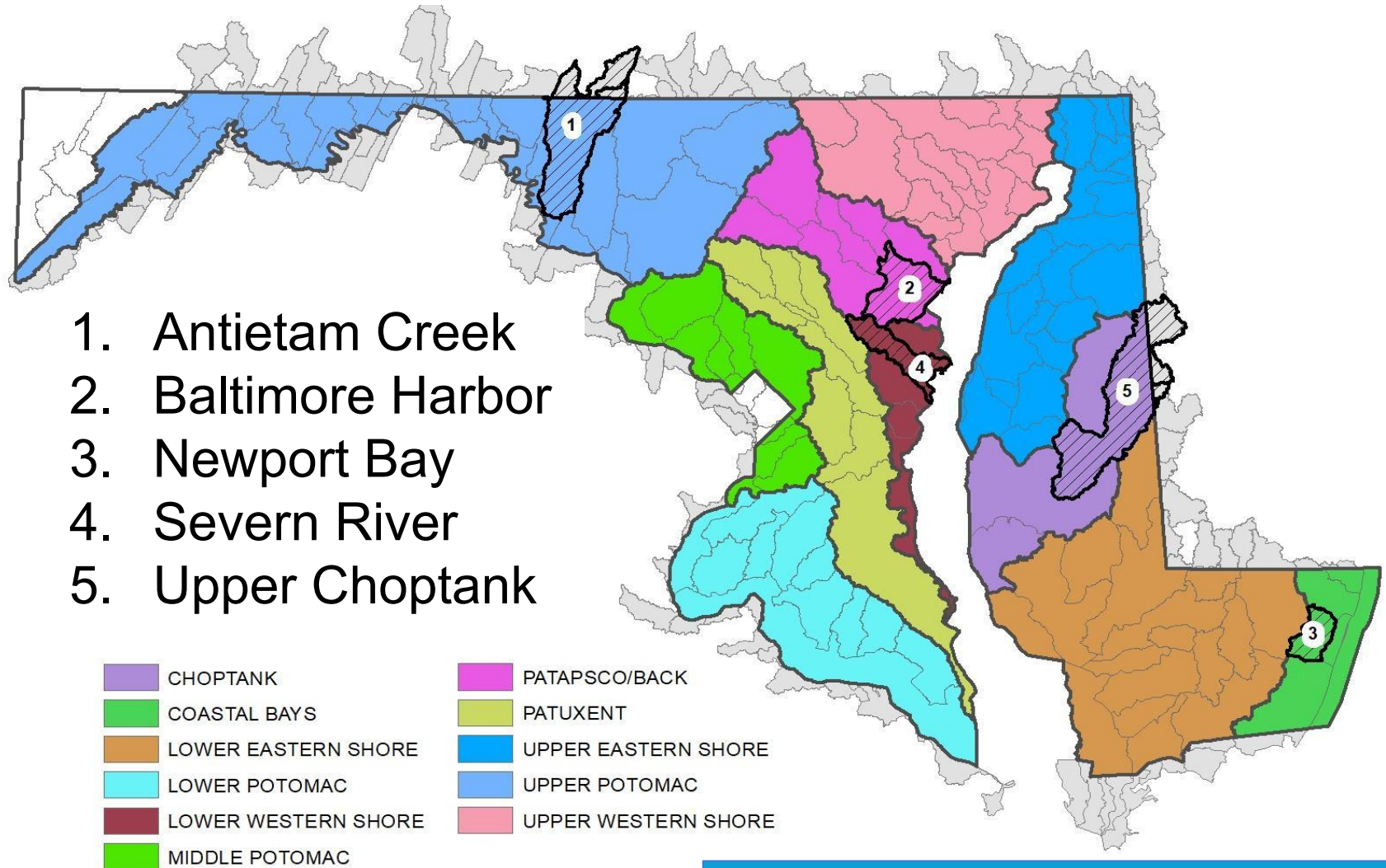
Holistic Watershed Wide Approach

BEYOND Water Quality BMPs, co-benefits include:

- Wildlife, Aquatics & Fisheries
- Economic benefits
- Public access / Recreation
- Land Conservation
- Environmental Justice
- Employment opportunities
- Public health
- Local land use coordination



Selected Watersheds



Selected in March 2025 from 9 applications

Whole Watershed Partnership

State Management Team (SMT)



Department of
Natural
Resources

Critical Area
Commission

Department of
the Environment

Department of
Agriculture

Department of
Planning

Department of
Emergency
Management

Whole Watershed Staff

Project Sponsors:

Antietam Creek: *Catoctin Land Trust*

Baltimore Harbor: *South Baltimore*

Gateway Partnership

Upper Choptank: *ShoreRivers*

Newport Bay: *MD Coastal Bays*

Severn River: *Resilience Authority of*

Annapolis & Anne Arundel County

Local Partners

Community Members / Landowners

Whole Watershed Program Funding Sources

- **MD Department of Natural Resources:**
 - Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund
 - Waterway Improvement Fund
- **MD Department of the Environment:**
 - Bay Restoration Fund
 - Clean Water Commerce Act
- **MD Department of Agriculture**
 - MD Agricultural Land Preservation
 - MD Agricultural Cost Share Program



*Please note: MDA funding
is in addition to this
allocation and funded
through their existing
programs*

FY 2026 & FY 2027 Allocations

Funding Year	Trust Fund	MDE: BRF	WIF	Outside Funding	Totals
FY26	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$1,250,000	\$11,000,000	\$22,250,000
FY27	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$1,250,000	\$11,000,000	\$22,250,000

- Each of the 5 watersheds receives
 - \$2M a year for implementation (Trust Fund & BRF)
 - \$250,000 a year for watershed monitoring (WIF)
- Project sponsors are required to provide 50% outside funding
- MDE: BRF specific support:
 - FY26 ~ Baltimore (\$2M), Severn (\$2M) and Upper Choptank (\$1M)
 - FY27 ~ Antietam (\$2M), Baltimore (\$2M) and Severn River (\$1M)

Year 1 ~ FY26 ~ Severn River

1st completed Whole Watershed Projects !!!

Key Point Giant

~ \$250K

2 urban micro-bioretenction cells

Treat 1 acre (70% impervious)

Wardour Community

~ \$150K

Series of infiltration cells

Treat 12 acres (27% impervious)



Ribbon cutting, May 29, 2026



Year 1 ~ FY26 ~ Baltimore Harbor

MedStar Harbor Hospital Tidal Wetland Construction

\$500,000 FY26

Status: 85% construction completed

Timeline: construction completion is expected fall 2026

Goal of restoring 7.5 acres of aquatic habitat and 2,000+ linear feet of living shoreline



Agricultural Connections & Innovation

- September 2025 ~ **Agricultural themed meetings** to connect watershed sponsors with local Soil Conservation Districts, State contacts, etc.
- Introduction of the newly approved **LEEF Program** ~
 - Priority participation for WWP partners
 - Financial support for each watershed
- April 2026 ~ **MDA-led Agricultural connections meeting** for District Managers and State programs (MACS, MALPF)
- Whole Watershed sponsors were selected to **PILOT the innovative expansion of various newly eligible practices within MACS**
 - Drone seeding for cover crops

Additional Year 1 Accomplishments

- Co-developed **5 Watershed Monitoring Plans** with project sponsors and RAS to measure results and “tell a story”
- Engaged **75 partners** throughout the State
- Exploring protective zoning overlays in Choptank and Severn
- Connected Whole Watershed partners to:
 - Land conservation program managers
 - Data hosting with Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative
 - Septic upgrade policy makers at MDE to explore flexibility in BRF and leverage funding



Maryland
Department of
the Environment

Bay Restoration Fund: Onsite Sewage Disposal Systems and Fee

July 9, 2026

Manith Hang



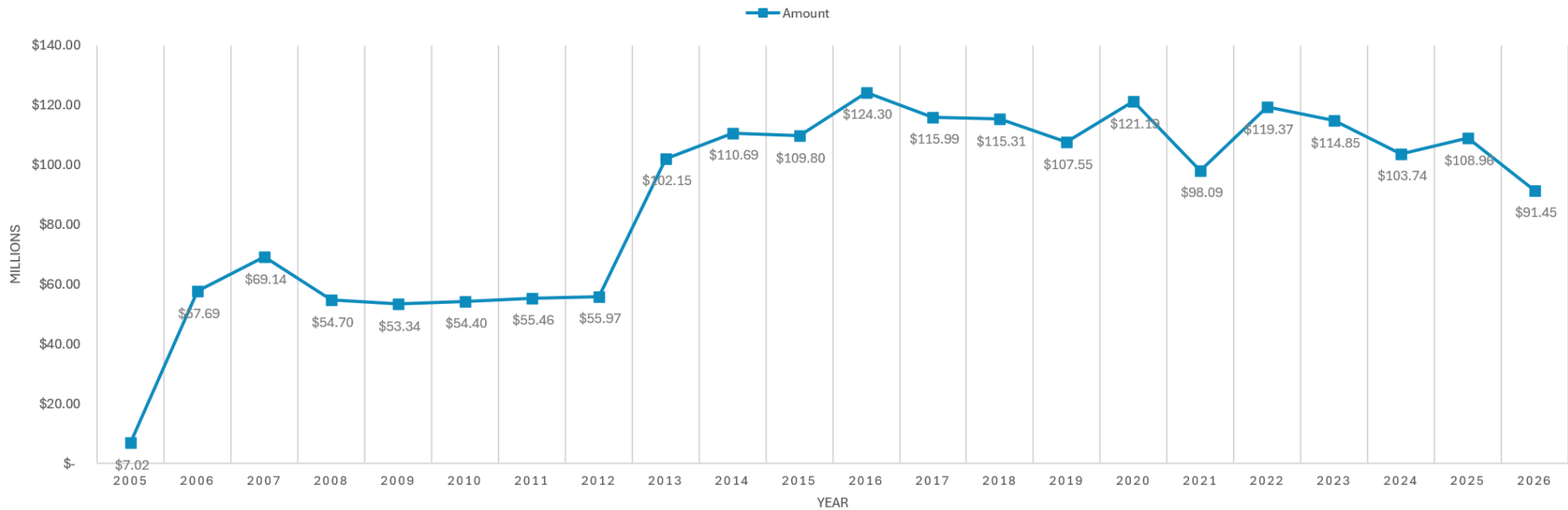
BRF Wastewater Fees

FY 2026 Distribution	Amount
August 2025	\$ 2,705,326.13
September 2025	\$ -
October 2025	\$ 33,606,588.92
November 2025	\$ -
December 2025	
January 2026	\$ 23,881,284.55
February 2026	
March 2026	
April 2026	\$ 31,261,657.44
May 2026	
June 2026	
FM13	
FM13	
Total FY 2026	\$ 91,454,857.04



BRF Wastewater Fees

BRF WASTEWATER FEE





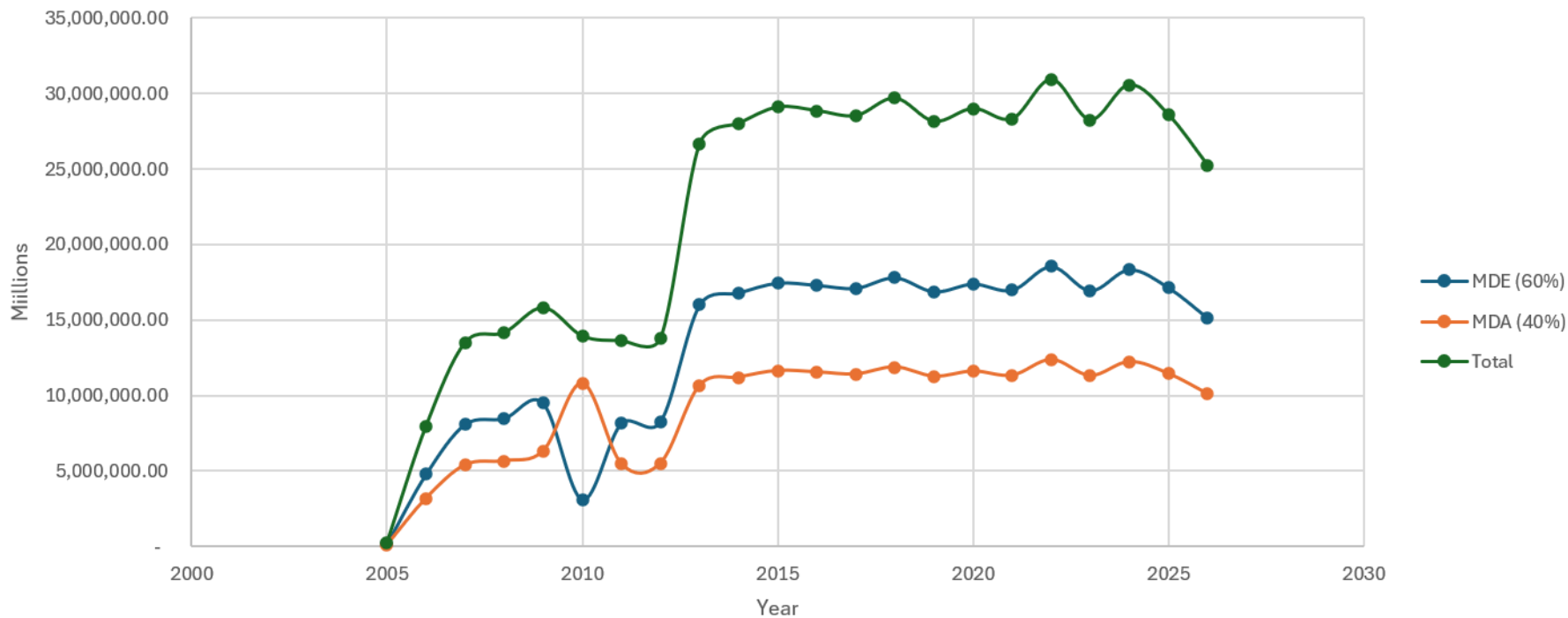
BRF Septics Fees

FY 2026 Distribution	MDE (60%)	MDA (40%)	Total
August 2025	\$ 151,630.73	\$ 101,087.15	\$ 252,717.88
September 2025	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
October 2025	\$ 6,782,823.22	\$ 4,521,882.15	\$ 11,304,705.37
November 2025		\$ -	\$ -
December 2025		\$ -	\$ -
January 2026	\$ 5,951,003.94	\$ 3,967,335.96	\$ 9,918,339.90
February 2026		\$ -	\$ -
March 2026		\$ -	\$ -
April 2026	\$ 2,260,324.27	\$ 1,506,882.85	\$ 3,767,207.12
May 2026		\$ -	\$ -
June 2026		\$ -	\$ -
FM13		\$ -	\$ -
FM13		\$ -	\$ -
Total FY 2026	\$ 15,145,782.16	\$ 10,097,188.11	\$ 25,242,970.27



BRF Septic Fees

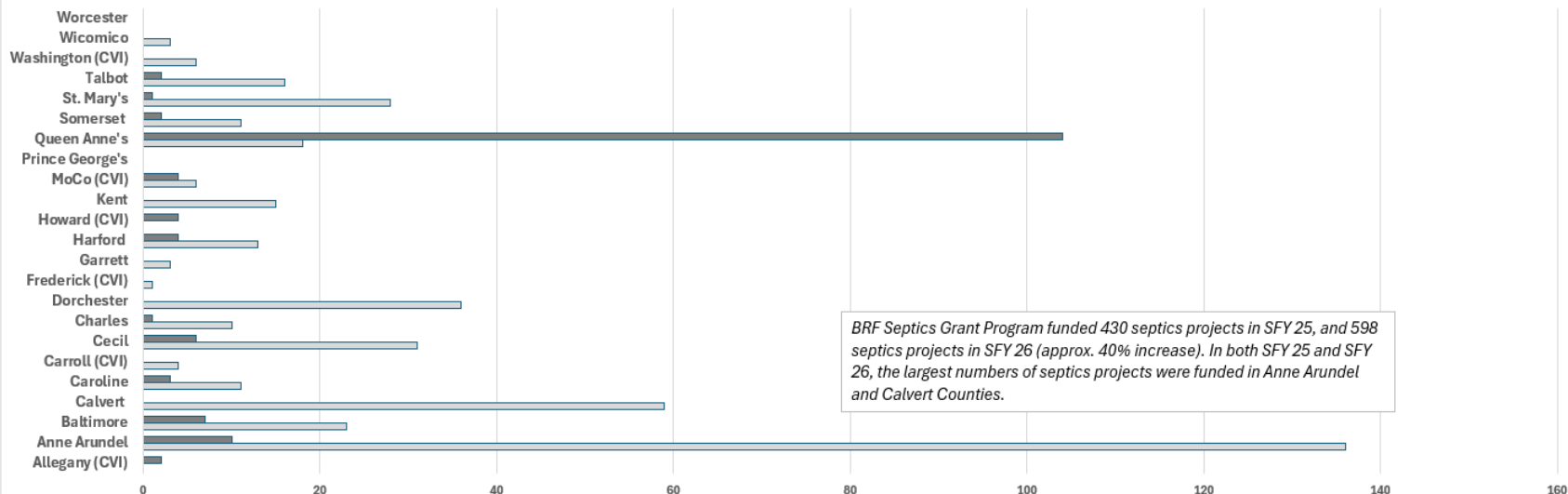
BRF Septics Funding





BRF Septic Install SFY 25 vs SFY26

Number of Septic Projects Funded by County in SFY25 and SFY26



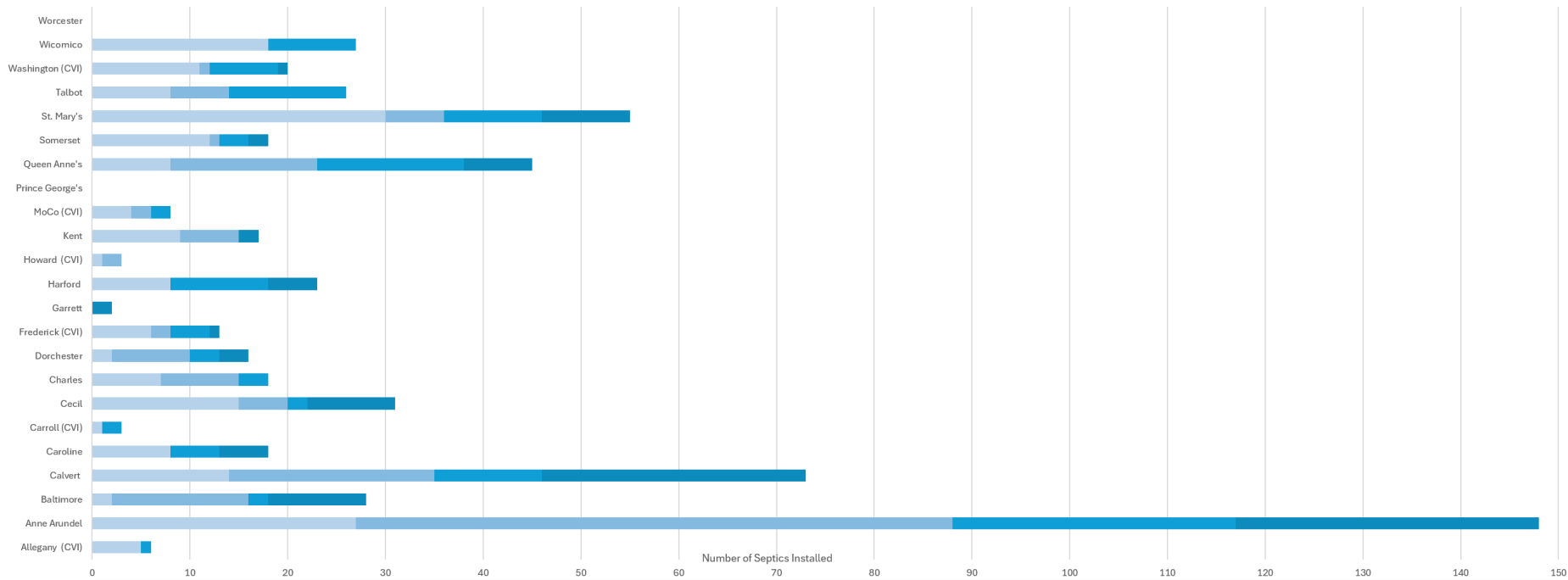
	Allegany (CVI)	Anne Arundel	Baltimore	Calvert	Caroline	Carroll (CVI)	Cecil	Charles	Dorchester	Frederick (CVI)	Garrett	Harford	Howard (CVI)	Kent	MoCo (CVI)	Prince George's	Queen Anne's	Somerset	St. Mary's	Talbot	Washington (CVI)	Wicomico	Worcester
2026	2	10	7	0	3	0	6	1	0	0	0	4	4	0	4	0	104	2	1	2	0	0	0
2025	0	136	23	59	11	4	31	10	36	1	3	13	0	15	6	0	18	11	28	16	6	3	0

CVI: Cane Valley Institute Institute

2026 2025



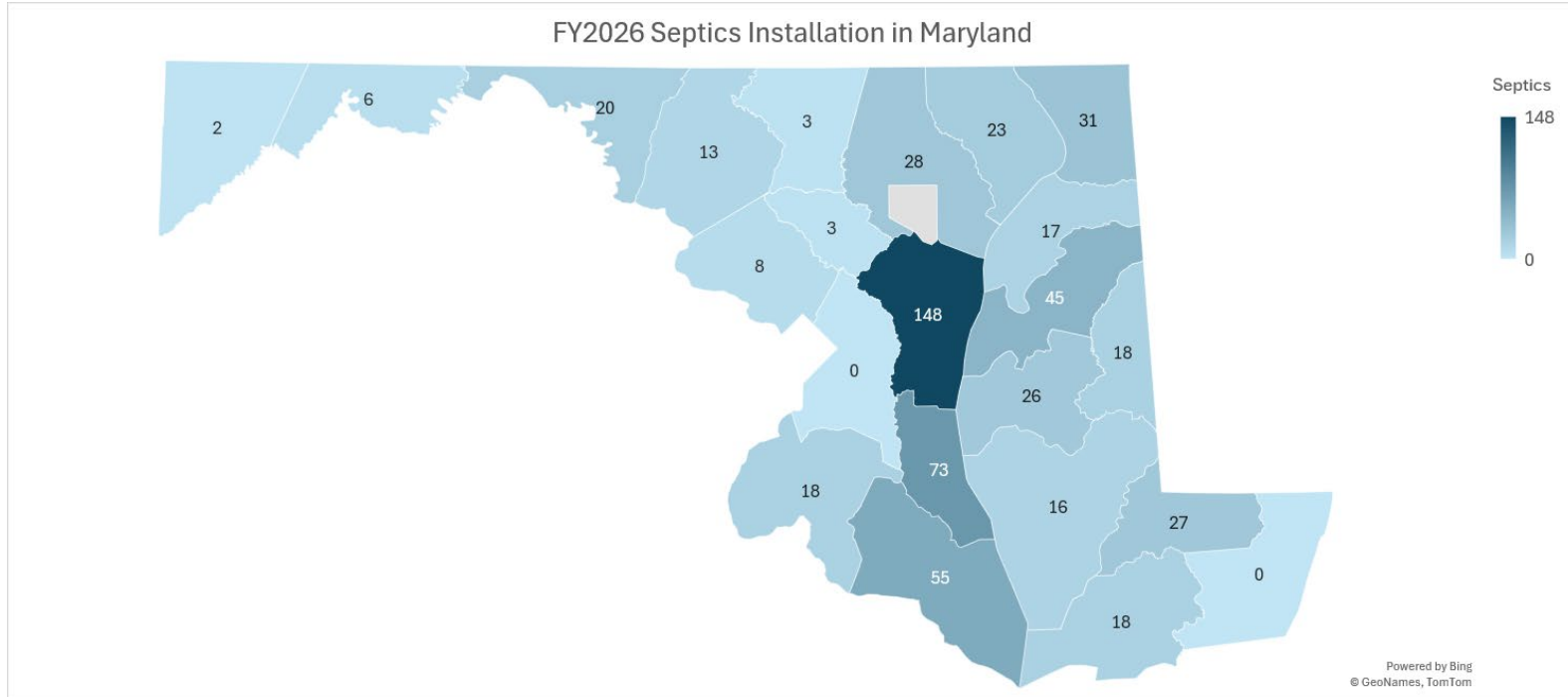
FY 26 Septics Installation



	Allegany (CVI)	Anne Arundel	Baltimore	Calvert	Caroline	Carroll (CVI)	Cecil	Charles	Dorchester	Frederick (CVI)	Garrett	Harford	Howard (CVI)	Kent	MoCo (CVI)	Prince George's	Queen Anne's	Somerset	St. Mary's	Talbot	Washington (CVI)	Wicomico	Worcester	Totals
Q1	5	27	2	14	8	1	15	7	2	6	0	8	1	9	4	0	8	12	30	8	11	18	0	196
Q2	0	61	14	21	0	0	5	8	8	2	0	0	2	6	2	0	15	1	6	6	1	0	0	158
Q3	1	29	2	11	5	2	2	3	3	4	0	10	0	0	2	0	15	3	10	12	7	9	0	130
Q4	0	31	10	27	5	0	9	0	3	1	2	5	0	2	0	0	7	2	9	0	1	0	0	114
Total FY26	6	148	28	73	18	3	31	18	16	13	2	23	3	17	8	0	45	18	55	26	20	27	0	598



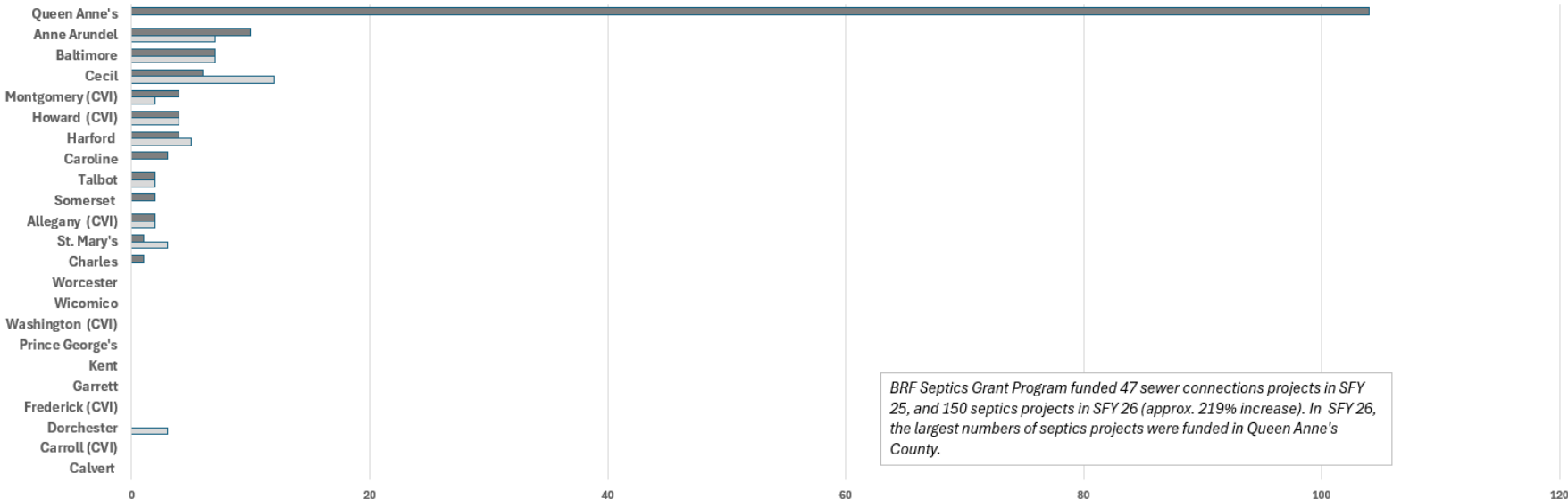
Maryland Map of Septics Installation FY26





BRF Sewer Connections FY25 vs FY26

Number of Sewer Connections Projects Funded by County in SFY25 and SFY26



BRF Septics Grant Program funded 47 sewer connections projects in SFY 25, and 150 septic projects in SFY 26 (approx. 219% increase). In SFY 26, the largest numbers of septic projects were funded in Queen Anne's County.

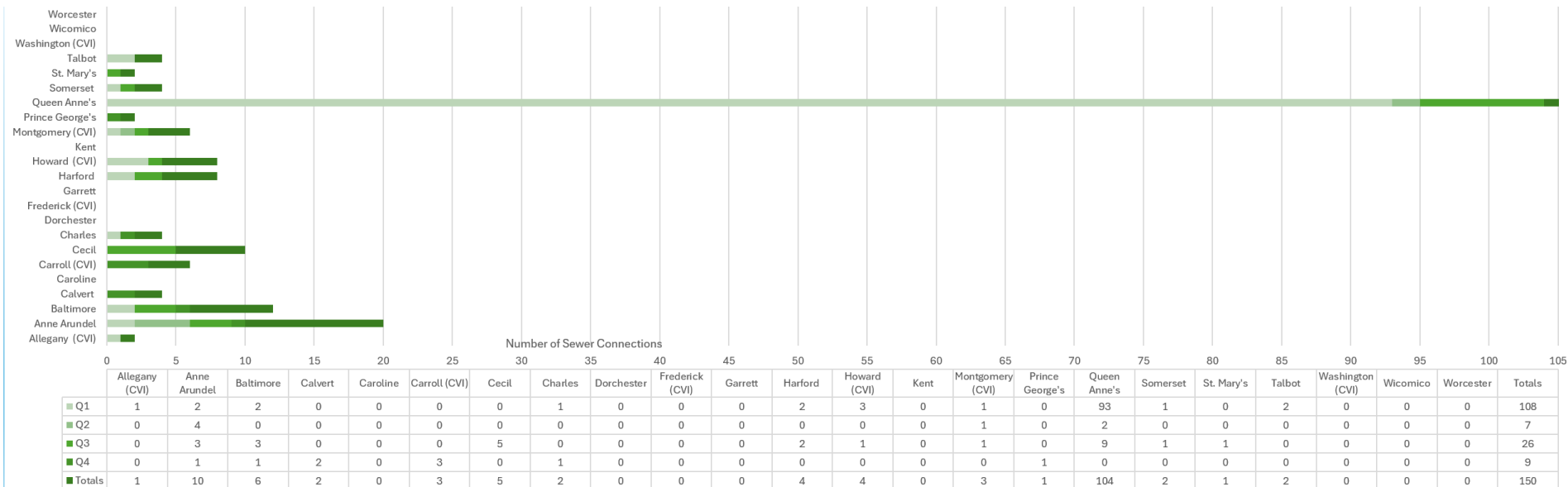
	Calvert	Carroll (CVI)	Dorchester	Frederick (CVI)	Garrett	Kent	Prince George's	Washington (CVI)	Wicomico	Worcester	Charles	St. Mary's	Allegany (CVI)	Somerset	Talbot	Caroline	Harford	Howard (CVI)	Montgomery (CVI)	Cecil	Baltimore	Anne Arundel	Queen Anne's
2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	3	4	4	4	6	7	10	104
2025	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	2	0	5	4	2	12	7	7	0

CVI: Cane Valley Institute Institute

2026 2025



FY 26 Sewer Connections





Maryland Map of Sewer Connections FY26

