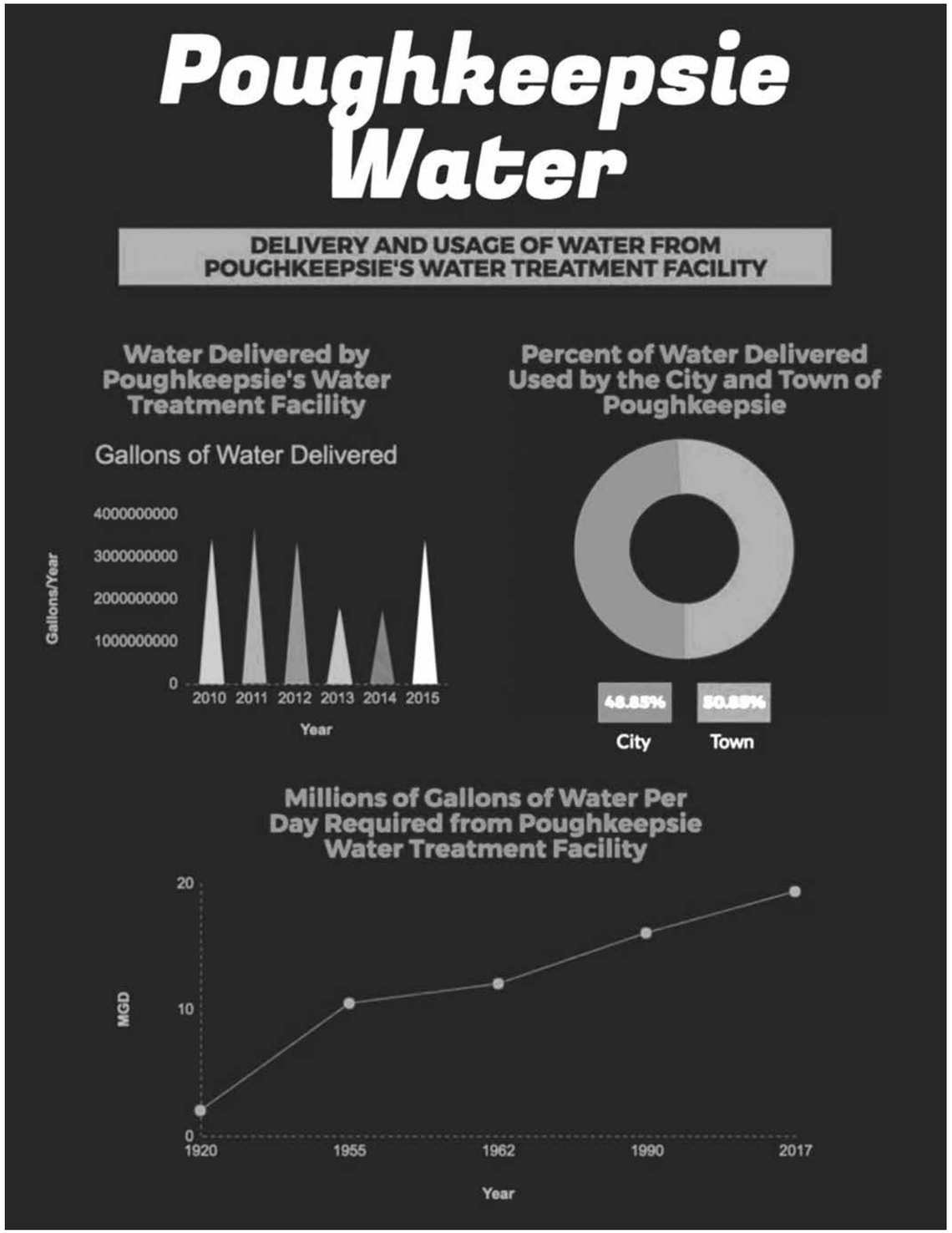


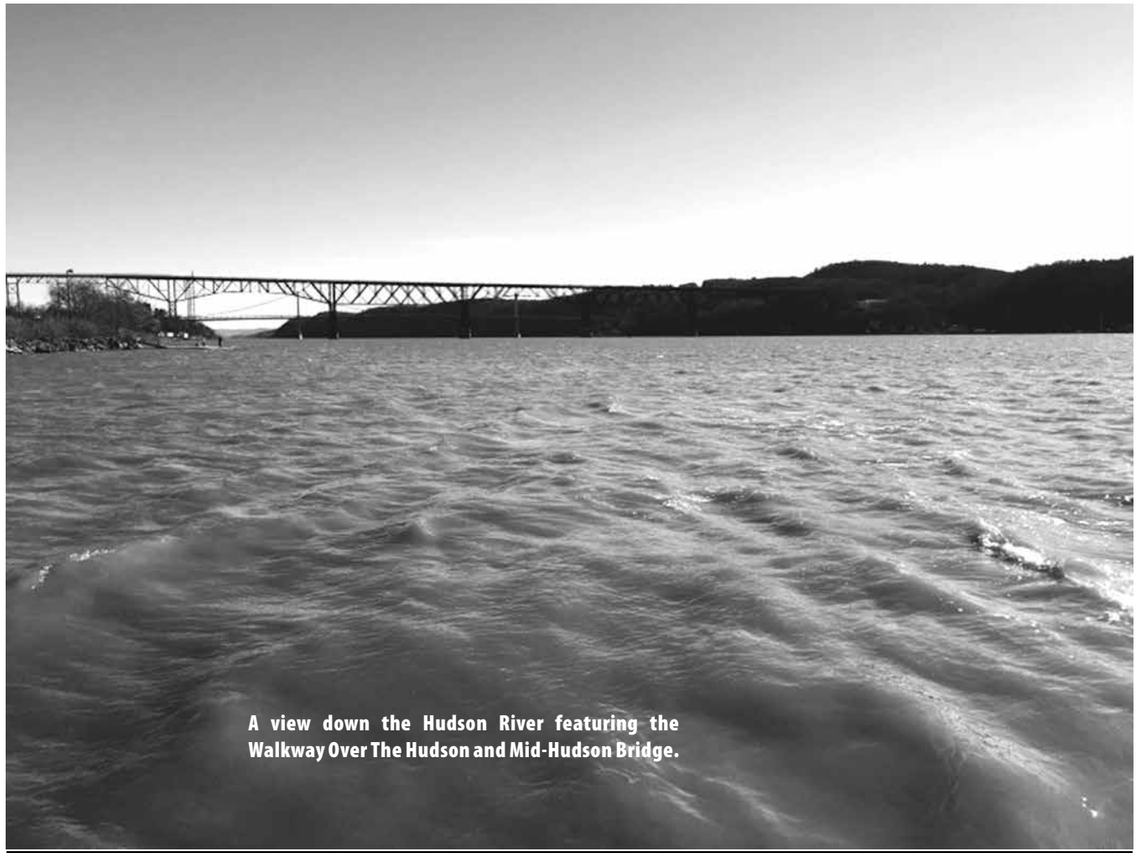
<left: **Infographic created with statistics from the Poughkeepsie Water Treatment Facility's website and annual reports.**

Poughkeepsie Residents Pleased With Hudson River Water Quality

by Amy Lavigne

Although its waters are far less than crystal clear, the Hudson River is an essential part of keeping Poughkeepsie residents happy and healthy.

As with most other rivers in direct proximity to cities, the Hudson was used by nearby factories as a dumping ground for industrial waste and garbage



A view down the Hudson River featuring the Walkway Over The Hudson and Mid-Hudson Bridge.

The main entrance of Poughkeepsie's Water Treatment Facility.

in the past. Through dedicated conservation and clean-up efforts the river's pollution levels have steadily decreased over the years, but it may still be a surprise to some people that the river is the source of public drinking water for Poughkeepsie.

A view down the Hudson River featuring the Walkway Over The Hudson and Mid-Hudson Bridge.

The Poughkeepsie Water Treatment Facility, located within the Marist College Campus on Route 9, is responsible for taking water straight from the river and transforming it into the clean, fresh water that comes out of faucets and shower-heads all around Po Town.

The facility has been in operation since 1962 and over time it has grown and evolved to accommodate the water needs of both the City and Town of Poughkeepsie. According to the treatment facility's website, after the plant's most recent upgrade, the facility is now able to provide 19 million gallons of water per day (MGD) to residents in the area, a staggering increase from the two MGD required from the original facility when it opened its doors in the 1920's.

Every drop of the 19 million gallons provided by the plant each day is taken from the Hudson. Randy Alstadt, the plant administrator at the water treatment facility, is confident that once it has undergone the necessary filtration, the river water is perfectly safe to drink.

"As far as we are concerned the river is an excellent source," Alstadt said. "Salt front periodically impacts our customers but it really is not a major problem."

Salt front, defined by Riverkeeper.org as the location "where the freshwater runoff meets the saline water" is a seasonal issue and in the Hudson, the location of this edge changes in location throughout the year depending on rainfall or lack thereof.

To prevent the salt front, or any other potential contaminants, from having a significant impact on Poughkeepsie residents, the plant monitors "their source water on a regular basis to determine if they need to modify their treatment for the finished water to meet standards," said Tanya Clark, director of environmental health services for the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health.

Although the condition of the Hudson has dramatically improved in recent years and the Poughkeepsie water treatment facility works hard to make sure that area residents have no problems with their water supply, it is still important for Poughkeepsie residents and visitors alike to know that drinking unfiltered river water can be potentially harmful because of polychlorinated biphenyls, more commonly known as PCBs.

"PCBs in the Hudson were legally disposed but now are an environmental hazard," Alstadt explained.

Before the practice was banned in the 1970's, electrical plants, most notably the General Electric plants in the area, discharged PCBs into the river. According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's website, though PCBs are no longer being discharged and the levels of the toxic chemicals are continually decreasing, they linger in the river sediment and have become concentrated in wildlife such as fish and crabs.

Plenty of river clean-up progress has been made in recent years, but there is always more work to do. The dredging required to remove the contaminated river sediment from the Hudson is extremely expensive, so it is important for Hudson Valley groups and residents to continue fundraising and raising awareness about the issue of PCBs and protecting the river from future contamination and pollution.

"Overall the Northeast is lucky to be plentiful in its water resources as compared to other areas of our country, and the world… water use, conservation, source protection, and proper management of public water supplies will ensure that this natural resource will not be misused, but rather protected and preserved to the extent possible," Clark said.

As long as the Hudson continues to be cleaned-up, preserved and protected, the residents of Poughkeepsie will have plenty of safe and clean water.

Download the entire report here:
www.hudsonriver.org/download/2017-06-01Report-HRFDredgingProgramEvaluationFinal.pdf

Summary of the First and Second PCB Sampling Rounds

Public Water Supply Name	Date ofSample	Sample Type	Method Green Bay Concentration (ppt)	Method 508B Concentration(ppt)	
Poughkeepsie	6/5/08	source	25.2		
	6/5/08	treated	Less than 9.3	Less than 5.1	
	6/25/08	source	19.2		
	6/25/08	treated	Less than 9.3	Less than 5.1	

A The Green Bay Method measures the quantity of individual PCB and the quantity reported is the sum of the different PCBs measured.
B Method 508 measures PCBs from the pattern of PCB s associated with the different PCB commercial products known as Aroclors.
C All numbers below 32.3 ppt for the Green Bay Method and all numbers below 25.0 ppt for the Method 508 may have higher uncertainty than the values greater than these numbers.
D "Less than 9.3" means PCBs were not detected at a concentration above 9.3 ppt.
E "Less than 5.1" means PCBs were not detected at a concentration above 5.1 ppt.