

# SAFER DASHBOARD USER GUIDE



Lear more about the data here:  
[HTTPS://WWW.WATERBOARDS.CA.GOV/DRINKING\\_W  
 ATER/CERTLIC/DRINKINGWATER/DOCUMENTS/NEED  
 S/2023NEEDSASSESSMENT.PDF](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/need_s/2023needsassessment.pdf)

APRIL 2023

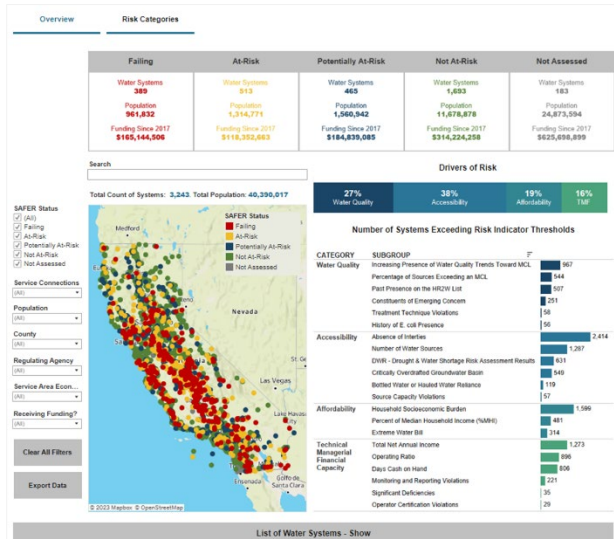
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# INTRODUCTION

Board's annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment. Learn more about the Risk Assessment for public water systems in Appendix A.

The Dashboard displays risk drivers for public water systems. The Dashboard includes source data from the State Water Board, the Department of Water Resources, and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. The Dashboard is used by internal staff and members of the public to identify and explore Failing and At-Risk public water systems and how they perform in the following risk categories: water quality, accessibility, affordability, and TMF (technical, managerial, and financial) capacity. The Dashboard displays summary statistics of the number of Failing and At-risk public water systems in different risk categories and shows users the locations of these systems. Users can apply filters to view regional or system-level statistics.



In 2022, the State Water Board released the web-based SAFER Dashboard. The SAFER Dashboard displays the current list of Failing water systems and the results of the Risk Assessment for public water systems. This is a core component of the State Water

# NAVIGATING THE DASHBOARD

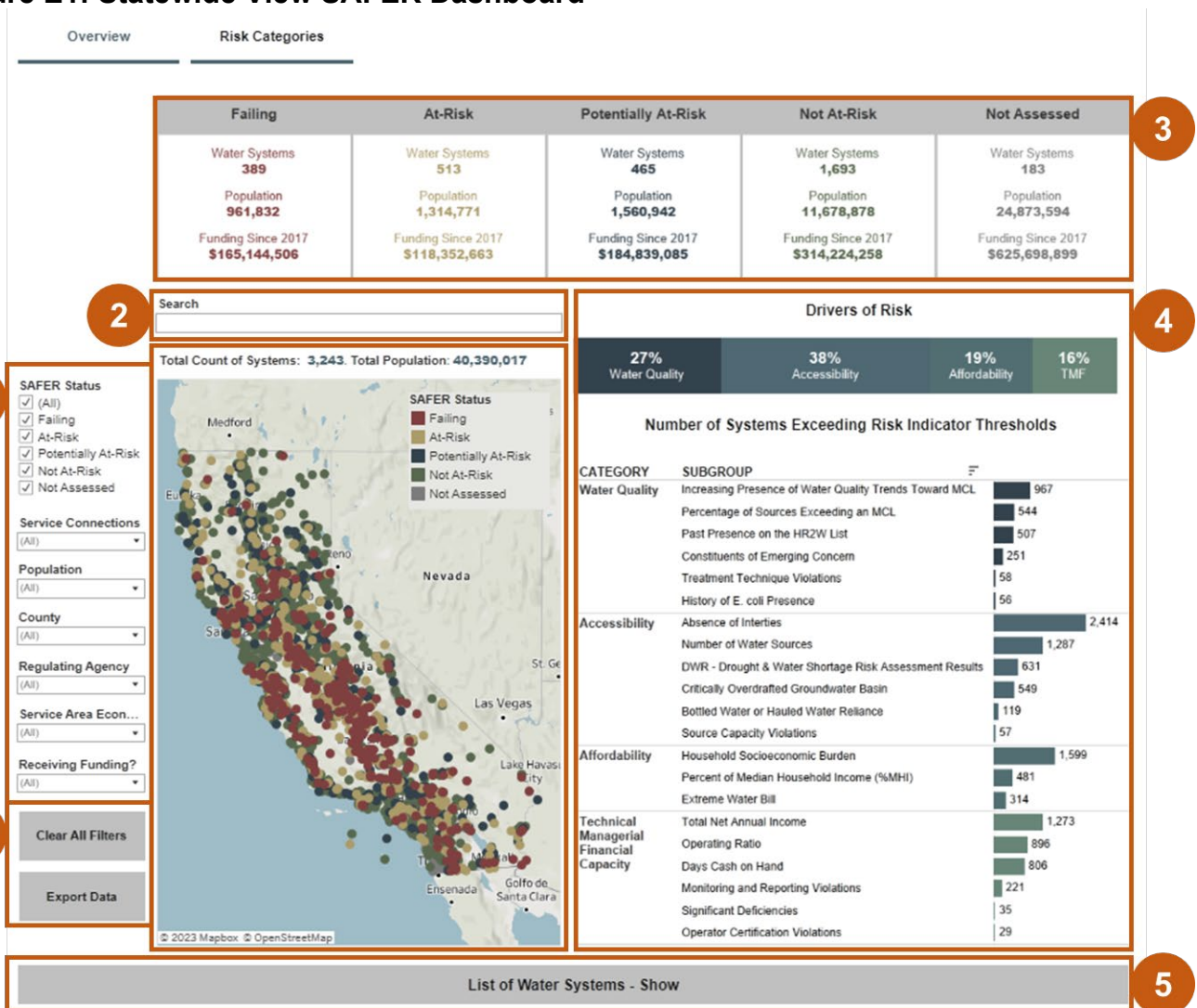
The SAFER Dashboard can be viewed in the State Water Board's website at the URL below:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/saferdashboard.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/saferdashboard.html)

## STATEWIDE OR REGIONAL VIEW

By default, the SAFER Dashboard displays the full statewide dataset of Failing water systems and the results of the Risk Assessment. Figure E1 and the sections below provide an overview of the information and functionality currently available in the statewide view.

**Figure E1: Statewide View SAFER Dashboard**



## 1. FILTER OPTIONS

Users can filter the SAFER Dashboard to change the data summaries displayed. Users can select multiple filters at a time using the drop-down menu options on the left side of the Dashboard. Table E1 summarizes the filter options currently available.

**Table E1: Filter Options in the SAFER Dashboard**

Filter Option	About
<b>SAFER Status<sup>1</sup></b>	Whether a water system is Failing, At-Risk or Potentially At-Risk of failing, Not At-Risk of failing, or Not Assessed.

<sup>1</sup> Failing criteria is summarized in the Drinking Water Needs Assessment and detailed online at the link below. The criteria used to determine At-Risk, Potentially At-Risk, and Not At-Risk water systems is detailed in Appendix A of the annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment report.

[Failing Criteria](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf): [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w\\_expanded\\_criteria.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf)

Filter Option	About
<b>Service Connections</b>	The total number of service connections served by the water system.
<b>Population</b>	The total estimated population served by the water system.
<b>County</b>	The primary County where the water system is physically located.
<b>Regulating Agency</b>	The State Water Board District Office or Local Primacy Agency that is responsible for regulatory oversight of the system.
<b>Service Area Economic Status</b>	The disadvantage community status of the water system, determined with U.S. Census median household income (MHI) data.
	“Disadvantaged community” or “DAC” means the entire service area of a community water system, or a community therein, in which the MHI is less than 80% of the statewide annual MHI level. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Receiving Funding?</b>	“Severely disadvantaged community” or “SDAC” means the entire service area of a community water system in which the MHI is less than 60% of the statewide MHI. <sup>3</sup>
	Indicates if the water system has received technical assistance, planning and/or construction funding from the State Water Board since 2017. This information is provided by the State Water Board’s Division of Financial Assistance.

## 2. MAP DISPLAY & SEARCH OPTIONS

Users can use the search box to look-up a water system. Users can enter either a water system’s name or a Public Water System ID (PWSID) number to search the list of active community water systems and schools.

*Note:* To clear the search box and re-set the map, the user must select the entered text, delete it, and hit enter with your keyboard within the search box.

The map will display the systems that meet the filtered criteria (1) or the water system the user has looked-up using the search box. The color of the point location represents the current SAFER Status of the water system. Above the map is a summary of the total number of systems meeting the filter criteria and the total population served by those water systems.

<sup>2</sup> Health & Saf. Code, § 116275, subd. (aa).

<sup>3</sup> Water Code § 13476, subd. (j)).

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### 3. ABOUT THE SAFER SYSTEMS

The top of the SAFER Dashboard contains a breakdown summary of information regarding the systems that fall into the SAFER Status categories: Failing, At-Risk, Potentially At-Risk, Not At-Risk, and Not Assessed. As filters are applied to the Dashboard, the displayed numbers will automatically update to reflect the systems meeting both the SAFER Status criteria and the applied Dashboard filter criteria.

**Table E2: SAFER Systems Data Summary**

Summary Data by SAFER Status	About
<b>Water Systems</b>	Total count of water systems meeting the criteria for each SAFER Status.
<b>Population</b>	Total population served of the water systems meeting the criteria for each SAFER Status.
<b>Funding Since 2017</b>	Total amount of technical assistance, planning and construction funding provided by the State Water Board since 2017. This information is provided by the State Water Board’s Division of Financial Assistance.

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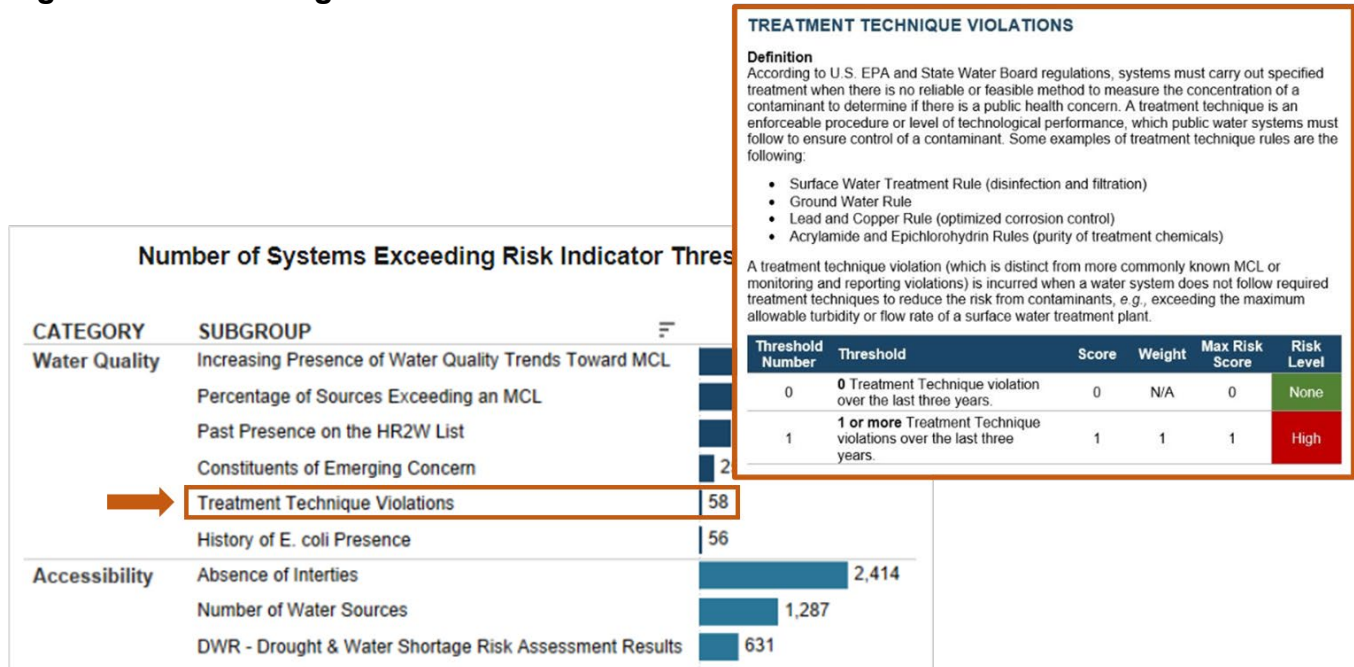
### 4. DRIVERS OF RISK & RISK INDICATOR PERFORMANCE

The right-side of the SAFER Dashboard displays the summary of water system performance in the Risk Assessment. The ‘Drivers of Risk’ chart indicates which risk categories the water systems displayed in the Dashboard accrued the most risk points in. The chart and the percentages will update automatically when filters are applied and/or is the user searches for a particular water system.

The ‘Number of Systems Exceeding Risk Indicator Thresholds’ bar chart displays the total number of water systems that meet the lowest risk criteria for each displayed risk indicator. The chart will update automatically when filters are applied and/or is the user searches for a particular water system.

*Learn More:* Users can click on a risk indicator title to open a new web-browser tab with the risk indicator definition and risk threshold criteria (Figure E2).

**Figure E2: Accessing Risk Indicator Definitions**



## 5. LIST OF WATER SYSTEMS

Selecting the 'List of Water Systems' button at the bottom of the SAFER Dashboard will Show and Hide the list of water systems that are meeting the applied filter criteria (1) or search box fields (2).

## 6. CLEAR FILTERS & EXPORT DATA BUTTONS

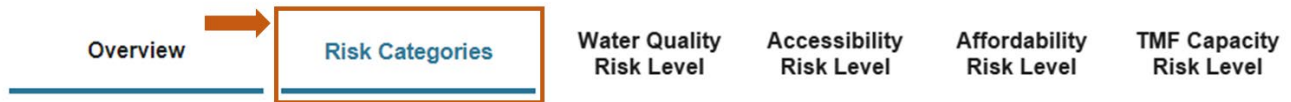
Selecting the 'Clear All Filters' button will de-select and re-set the filter options on the left side of the Dashboard (1). *Note:* This button will NOT clear the search box fields (2). To clear the search box, the user must select the entered text, delete it, and hit enter with your keyboard within the search box.

The 'Export Data' button will open a pop-up window with options for how to download the data displayed in the Dashboard. *Note:* This feature in the Dashboard is known to have issues. Users are encouraged to use the links above the Dashboard to access the data in a more user-friendly format.

## STATEWIDE OR REGIONAL VIEW - RISK CATEGORIES

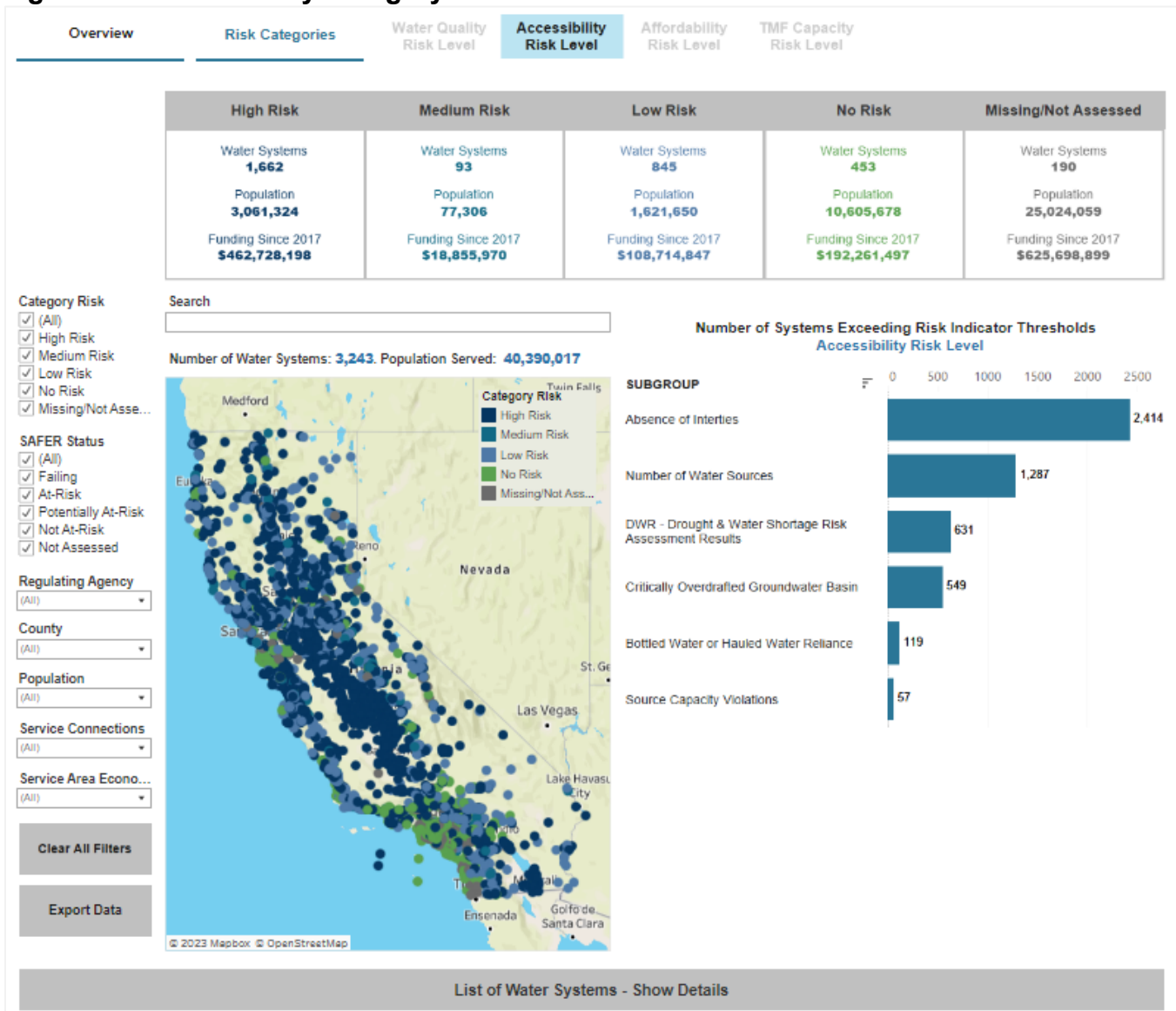
The SAFER Dashboard statewide and regional view can be narrowed down to each risk category by clicking on 'Risk Categories' button at the top of the Dashboard: Water Quality; Accessibility; Affordability; and TMF (technical, managerial, and financial) Capacity (Figure E3).

**Figure E3: Risk Categories**



Users can select their desired Risk Category and the SAFER Dashboard will automatically refresh to display the statewide view of how water systems have performed within that category. The filter options, search box, and display features function the same as they do on the Overview view. The only NEW feature is the ability to view and filter by a system’s performance in the risk category (to left filter option).

**Figure E4: Accessibility Category**





# INDIVIDUAL WATER SYSTEM VIEW

The SAFER Dashboard also displays detailed information about individual water systems. To navigate to the individual water system view, users should click on the corresponding dot-location in the map (Figure E5).

**Figure E5: Individual Water System View**

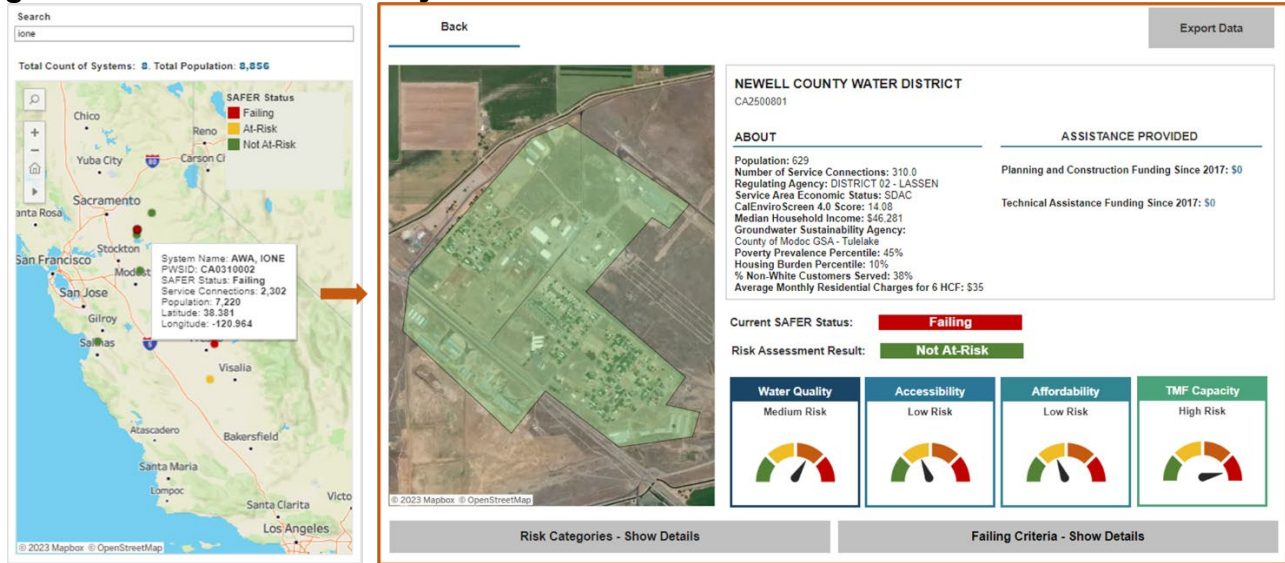
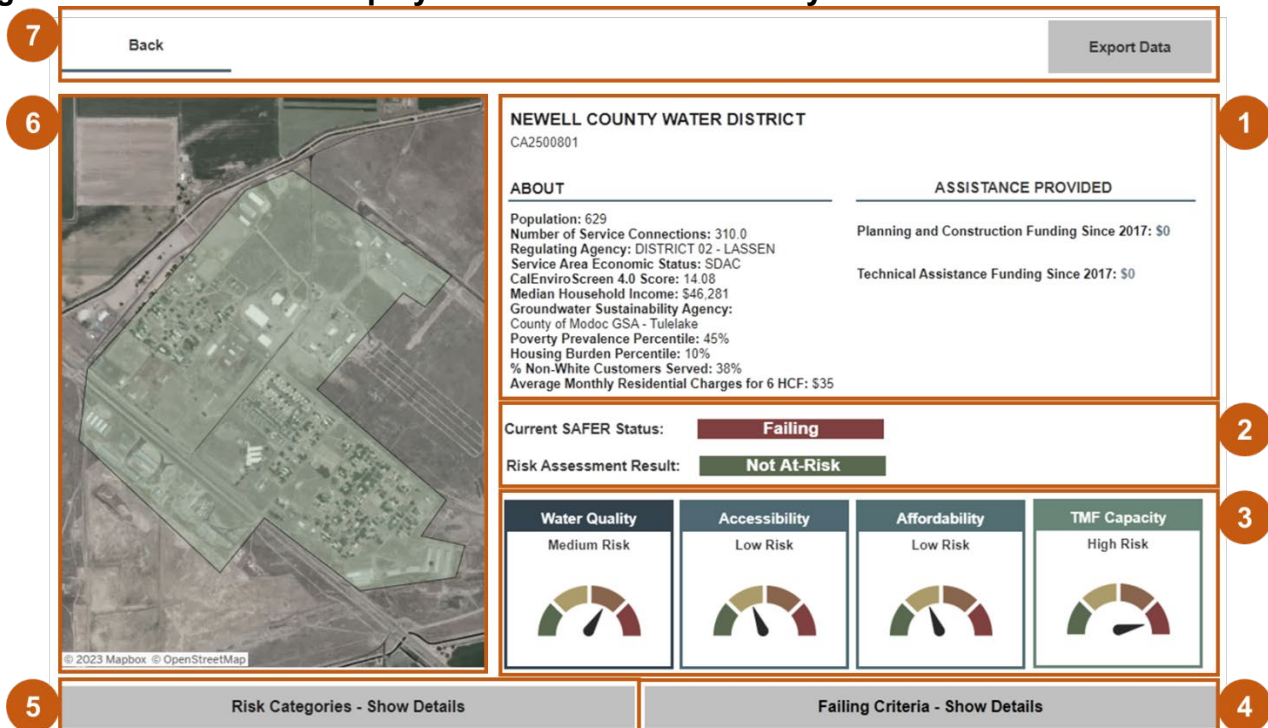


Figure E6 and the sections below provide an overview of the information and functionality currently available in the individual water system view.

**Figure E6: Information Displayed for Individual Water Systems**



## 1. WATER SYSTEM DETAILS

The profile page for individual water systems displays information about the system’s location, size, demographics, State Water Board assistance received etc.

**Table E3: Water System Details**

Water System Information	About
<b>Water System Name</b>	The water system’s name
<b>Public Water System ID (PWSID = CA#####)</b>	The unique identifier assigned by the State Water Board to individual water systems. The PWSID is used for the state and federal data and information tracking purposes.
<b>Population</b>	The total number of service connections served by the water system.
<b>Number of Service Connections</b>	The total estimated population served by the water system.
<b>Regulating Agency</b>	The State Water Board District Office or Local Primacy Agency that is responsible for regulatory oversight of the system.
<b>Service Area Economic Status</b>	<p>The disadvantage community status of the water system, determined with U.S. Census median household income (MHI) data.</p> <p>“Disadvantaged community” or “DAC” means the entire service area of a community water system, or a community therein, in which the MHI is less than 80% of the statewide annual MHI level.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>“Severely disadvantaged community” or “SDAC” means the entire service area of a community water system in which the MHI is less than 60% of the statewide MHI.<sup>5</sup></p>
<b>CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Score</b>	CalEnviroScreen is a screening methodology that can be used to help identify California communities that are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution. Scores range from 0 to 100, with 100 representing high pollution burden and 0 low pollution burden.
<b>Median Household Income</b>	Median household income (MHI) is determined for a water system using American Community Survey data for household income. Community water system boundaries typically do not align with census boundaries where per capita income data is regularly collected. To assign an average median household income to a community water system spatially weighted income data is aggregated by

<sup>4</sup> Health & Saf. Code, § 116275, subd. (aa).

<sup>5</sup> Water Code § 13476, subd. (j)).

Water System Information	About
	census block group within the water system service area. Learn more in Appendix E of the annual Needs Assessment report.
<b>Groundwater Sustainability Agency</b>	The Groundwater Sustainability Agency the water system's location is associated with.
<b>Poverty Prevalence Percentile</b>	Measures the percent of the population living below two times the federal poverty level and can be represented reliably at the census block group, tract, and county level.
<b>Housing Burden Percentile</b>	Measures the percent of households in a census tract that are both low income (making less than 80% of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Area Median Family Income) and severely burdened by housing costs (paying greater than 50% of their income to housing costs).
<b>% Non-White Customers Served</b>	The estimated percentage of population served by the water system that is non-white. U.S. Census and water system service area boundaries are used to calculate this value.
<b>Average Monthly Residential Charges for 6 Hundred Cubic Feet (HCF)</b>	The most common residential drinking water charges for 6 hundred cubic feet (HCF) of water per month. This data is collected annually from water systems.
<b>Planning and Construction Funding Since 2017</b>	Indicates the estimated total amount of State Water Board grant and/or loan planning and/or construction funding the water system has received since 2017. Planning and construction funding is allocated to water systems directly. This information is provided by the State Water Board's Division of Financial Assistance.
<b>Technical Assistance Funding Since 2017</b>	Indicates the estimated total amount of State Water Board technical assistance funding that the water system has benefitted from since 2017. Technical assistance funding is allocated to designated technical assistance providers that work directing with a water system. This information is provided by the State Water Board's Division of Financial Assistance.

## 2. FAILING AND AT-RISK STATUS

The individual water system profile page displays the current SAFER Status of the water systems and how the system is performing in the Risk Assessment. The SAFER Status can be one of four options as defined in Table E4.

The water system's Risk Assessment performance is based on the most current Risk Assessment methodology and data available. See Appendix A of the annual Needs Assessment report to learn more about the current methodology and the section below on the refresh rate of the Risk Assessment results. If a water system is system's SAFER Status is

currently Failing, the Risk Assessment result will indicate what the systems SAFER Status will be once it comes off the Failing list.

**Table E4: SAFER and Risk Assessment Status**

Status	About
<b>Failing</b>	Failing water systems are those that are meeting current Failing criteria as defined by the State Water Board. <sup>6</sup>
<b>At-Risk</b>	Water system’s At-Risk of failing. Systems are designated At-Risk based on their performance across multiple risk indicators in the Risk Assessment as defined in the Drinking Water Needs Assessment. <sup>7</sup>
<b>Potentially At-Risk</b>	Water system’s Potentially At-Risk of failing. Systems are designated Potentially At-Risk based on their performance across multiple risk indicators in the Risk Assessment as defined in the Drinking Water Needs Assessment.
<b>Not At-Risk</b>	Water system’s Not At-Risk of failing. Systems are designated Not At-Risk based on their performance across multiple risk indicators in the Risk Assessment as defined in the Drinking Water Needs Assessment.
<b>Not Assessed</b>	Water systems that are currently not Failing and not included in the Risk Assessment analysis. <sup>8</sup>

### 3. RISK ASSESSMENT CATEGORY RISK

The Risk Category dials display how water systems are performing within each category of the Risk Assessment. Sections below detail the methodology used to determine category High, Medium, Low, or No Risk.

### 4. FAILING CRITERIA MET

Users can click on the ‘Failing Criteria’ Hide and Reveal button at the bottom of the SAFER Dashboard to display information about a system’s Failing SAFER Status if the system is currently Failing Figure E7.

<sup>6</sup> Failing criteria is summarized in the Drinking Water Needs Assessment and detailed online at the link below. [Failing Criteria](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf): [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w\\_expanded\\_criteria.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> The criteria used to determine At-Risk, Potentially At-Risk, and Not At-Risk water systems is detailed in Appendix A of the annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment report.

<sup>8</sup> Large community water system with greater than 30,000 service connection or more than 100,000 population served are not included in the Risk Assessment and will not have a Risk Assessment result.

**Figure E7: Failing Details**

Risk Categories - Show Details		Failing Criteria - Hide Details	
Failing Start Date: <a href="#">5/12/2022</a> CA0310002			
FAILING_CRITERIA	Current Criteria Met?	Contaminants	Definition
PRIMARY MCL	Met Failing Criteria	TTHM	

**Table E 5: Failing Details**

Displayed Information	About
<b>Failing Start Date</b>	The data the water system began meeting the Failing criteria and was added to the Failing list. If a system is failing because they are meeting multiple Failing criteria, the Start date will represent the oldest criteria met.
<b>Failing Criteria</b>	The Failing criteria the water system is meeting as defined by the State Water Board. <sup>9</sup> A system can be on the Failing list for more than one criterion met.
<b>Contaminants</b>	The contaminants associated with the Failing criteria met. A water system can have multiple contaminants associated with a Failing criteria met.
<b>Definition</b>	Clicking on the word “Definition” will open a new web-browser tab with the definition and details for the associated Failing criteria (Figure E8).

**Figure E8: Failing Criteria Definition**

Risk Categories - Show Details		Failing Criteria - Hide Details	
Failing Start Date: <a href="#">5/12/2022</a> CA0310002			
FAILING_CRITERIA	Current Criteria Met?	Contaminants	Definition
PRIMARY MCL	Met Failing Criteria	TTHM	<a href="#">Definition</a>

**Primary MCL Violation**

In accordance with federal regulations, California requires public water systems to sample their sources and have the samples analyzed for inorganic and organic substances in order to determine compliance with drinking water standards, also known as maximum contaminant levels (MCLs). Primary MCLs are based on health protection, technical feasibility, and costs. The water system must notify the State Water Board and the public when a primary MCL has been violated and take appropriate action.

**Failing Criteria:**

- At least one primary MCL violation with an associated open enforcement action.

<sup>9</sup> Failing criteria is summarized in the Drinking Water Needs Assessment and detailed online at the link below. [Failing Criteria: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w\\_expanded\\_criteria.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf)

## 5. RISK INDICATOR PERFORMANCE

Users can click on the 'Risk Categories' Hide and Reveal button at the bottom of the SAFER Dashboard to display information on how the water system has performed for all the Risk Assessment indicators (Figure E9).

**Figure E9: Risk Categories**

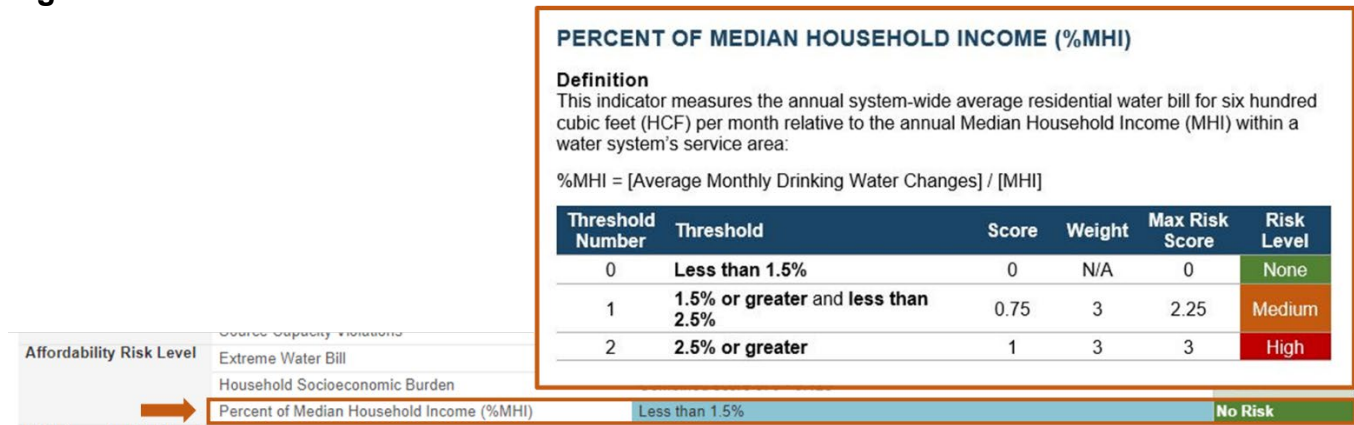
Risk Categories - Hide Details		Failing Criteria - Show Details	
RISK CATEGORY	SUBGROUP	Threshold Met	
Water Quality Risk Level	Constituents of Emerging Concern	Less than 25% sources meeting the criteria	No Risk
	History of E. coli Presence	No history of E. coli presence over the last 3 years	No Risk
	Increasing Presence of Water Quality Trends Toward MCL	Less than 25% sources meeting the criteria	No Risk
	Past Presence on the HR2W List	1 HR2W list occurrence over the last 3 years	Medium Risk
	Percentage of Sources Exceeding an MCL	Less than 50% sources exceed an MCL	No Risk
	Treatment Technique Violations	No violation over the last three years	No Risk
Accessibility Risk Level	Absence of Interties	No intertie	High Risk
	Bottled Water or Hauled Water Reliance	No occurrences of bottled/hauled water reliance within the last 3 years	No Risk
	Critically Overdrafted Groundwater Basin	No sources within a Critically Overdrafted Basin	No Risk
	DWR - Drought & Water Shortage Risk Assessment Results	Below top 25%	No Risk
	Number of Water Sources	1 source	High Risk
Affordability Risk Level	Source Capacity Violations	No source capacity violations; and no Service Connection Moratoriums within the pa	No Risk
	Extreme Water Bill	Below 150% of statewide average	No Risk
	Household Socioeconomic Burden	Combined score of 0 - 0.125	No Risk
	Percent of Median Household Income (%MHI)	Less than 1.5%	No Risk
TMF Capacity Risk Level	Days Cash on Hand	Less than 90 days cash on hand	Medium Risk
	Monitoring and Reporting Violations	Less than 2 violations	No Risk
	Operating Ratio	1 or greater	No Risk
	Operator Certification Violations	No Operator Certification violations over the last three years	No Risk
	Significant Deficiencies	No Significant Deficiencies over the last three years	No Risk
	Total Net Annual Income	Greater than \$0	No Risk

**Table E6: Risk Category Details**

Displayed Information	About
<b>Risk Category</b>	The category of indicators in the Risk Assessment. Categories include: Water Quality, Accessibility, Affordability, and TMF (technical, managerial, and financial) Capacity
<b>Subgroup</b>	This is the individual risk indicator within the category. Click on the name to learn more (Figure E10).
<b>Threshold Met</b>	How the water system performed for each individual risk indicator. Each threshold corresponds to a risk level which is based on a calculation of risk points. Click on the name of the risk indicator to learn more (Figure E10).
<b>Associated Risk Level</b>	The level of risk associated with the threshold met for each individual risk indicator. Click on the name to learn more (Figure E10).

*Learn More:* Users can click on a risk indicator title to open a new web-browser tab with the risk indicator definition and risk threshold criteria (Figure E10).

**Figure E10: Risk Indicator Definition**



## 6. WATER SYSTEM LOCATION

The individual water system profile page will display the water system's service area boundary. If the State Water Board does not have the water system's service area boundary, it will display an estimated point location on the map. This data is from the State Water Board's System Area Boundary Layer (SABL) dataset.<sup>10</sup>

## 7. BACK AND EXPORT BUTTONS

The 'Back' button at the top of the SAFER Dashboard will navigate the user back to the Statewide View of the SAFER Dashboard. The 'Export Data' button will open a pop-up window with options for how to download the data displayed in the Dashboard. *Note:* This feature in the Dashboard is known to have issues. Users are encouraged to use the links above the Dashboard to access the data in a more user-friendly format.

# DATA REFRESH RATE

The SAFER Dashboard displays data from many different sources that is collected and analyzed at different frequencies. The sections below provide a summary of the data refresh rate.

## FAILING WATER SYSTEMS

The Failing list of water systems is updated **daily** in the SAFER Dashboard before noon. The Failing list of water systems is generated by reviewing all new and historical violation and enforcement data for active community water systems and non-community schools and identifying which systems are currently meeting the Failing criteria.<sup>11</sup> Systems that are meeting the criteria are listed as Failing in the Dashboard, those that are not Failing will have their

<sup>10</sup> [California Drinking Water System Boundaries](https://gispublic.waterboards.ca.gov/portal/home/item.html?id=fbba842bf134497c9d611ad506ec48cc)

<https://gispublic.waterboards.ca.gov/portal/home/item.html?id=fbba842bf134497c9d611ad506ec48cc>

<sup>11</sup> [Failing Criteria](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf)

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w\\_expanded\\_criteria.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/hr2w/docs/hr2w_expanded_criteria.pdf)

results from the Risk Assessment displayed: At-Risk, Potentially At-Risk, Not At-Risk, or Not Assessed.

## RISK ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The Risk Assessment results and corresponding performance for individual risk indicators are updated in the SAFER Dashboard on a **quarterly** basis. Important to note that some risk indicators are dependent on data that is not collected or updated more than once a year. For example, ‘Days Cash in Hand,’ is dependent on water system reporting through the electronic Annual Report (eAR). This indicator will stay constant throughout the year unless a data change request is made or when new eAR data becomes available. Other risk indicators, like ‘Percentage of Sources Exceeding an MCL,’ have new data submitted to the State Water Board on a monthly basis. These indicators will be updated quarterly and may impact a water system’s aggregated performance in the Risk Assessment.

## CATEGORY RISK DETERMINATION

The SAFER Dashboard displays in multiple locations the Risk Category performance for water systems. **This performance designation is for the SAFER Dashboard only and does not have a direct role determining the Risk Assessment results for water systems.** The purpose of the Category Risk level determination is to allow SAFER Dashboard users to assess relative risk per category. Table E7 details the normalized risk score ranges used to determine Category Risk levels. The thresholds used for the risk levels were determined based on an analysis of how systems were performing in the category and comparing category scores to Failing and At-Risk water system performance within the category. Refer to Appendix A of the annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment to learn more about how risk points are accrued within each Category.

**Table E7: Risk Scores per Category and Risk Levels**

Risk Category	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk	No Risk
<b>Water Quality</b>	$0.6 \leq n$	$0.45 \leq n < 0.6$	$0 < n < 0.45$	0
<b>Accessibility</b>	$0.64 \leq n$	$0.49 \leq n < 0.64$	$0 < n < 0.49$	0
<b>Affordability</b>	$0.8 \leq n$	$0.65 \leq n < 0.8$	$0 < n < 0.65$	0
<b>TMF Capacity</b>	$0.64 \leq n$	$0.49 \leq n < 0.64$	$0 < n < 0.49$	0

## ACCESSING THE DATA

A hyperlink for a user-friendly excel spreadsheet is accessible at the top of the Dashboard screen. It contains a snapshot in time of the Risk Assessment results and the Failing list.