

WSSCWATER
DELIVERING THE ESSENTIAL

Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion

Fiscal Year 2026 Performance Report


MORR
CONSTRUCTION, INC

Message from the Commission Chair
Jonathan W. Powell



On behalf of my fellow Commissioners, I would like to present WSSC Water's Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion (OSDI) Fiscal Year 2026 Performance Report. This report reflects WSSC Water's ongoing commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for small, local and underrepresented businesses.

In FY 2026, WSSC Water made more than $204 million in contract payments to Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) firms, representing 33% of total payments, and awarded more than $354 million in contracts to MBE firms, or 36% of total awards. The Small Local Business Enterprise (SLBE) program also delivered results, with more than $55 million in contract payments and $97 million in contract awards to small local businesses.

These investments do more than deliver essential services. They create jobs, strengthen businesses and grow our regional economy. As WSSC Water invests $4.8 billion in infrastructure over the next six years through our Capital Improvements Program, there is an opportunity to ensure Maryland workers and businesses benefit.

House Bill 1230, enacted as Chapter 560 and effective October 1, 2026, is an important step toward that goal. The legislation makes targeted administrative updates to modernize WSSC Water's procurement statute and strengthen small and local business participation. It reinforces WSSC Water's commitment to businesses in Montgomery and Prince George's counties and across Maryland, while formally recognizing businesses owned by veterans and disabled veterans.

The legislation also clarifies WSSC Water's ability to establish expectations for local hiring, training and apprenticeships among the companies it works with, helping to better measure and communicate the impact of its investments on Maryland's workforce and economy.

There is more work to do. Through OSDI's outreach, training and business development efforts, WSSC Water will continue reducing barriers and expanding access to contracting opportunities.

Thank you for your continued support of WSSC Water and the businesses that help to serve our customers. This organization has made progress, and our efforts will focus on building on that momentum.

Jonathan W. Powell, MBA, PMP
Commission Chair, WSSC Water

WSSC Water
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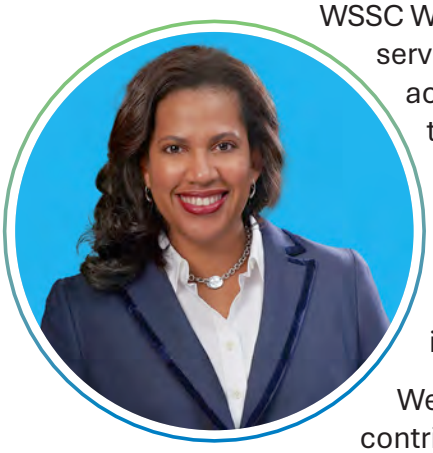


Regina Y. Speed-Bost
Prince George's County

WSSC Water Commissioners - The Commissioners submit the following report in accordance with §20-207 of the Public Utilities Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. By October 31 of each year, WSSC Water shall issue a report to the Montgomery County and Prince George's County Senate and House Delegations to the Maryland General Assembly concerning:

- The implementation and administration of the Minority Business Enterprise programs under this subtitle for the fiscal year ending on the preceding June 30; and
- Appropriate recommendations concerning the program.

Message From the General Manager & CEO **Kishia L. Powell, P.E.**



WSSC Water's mission extends beyond delivering safe, reliable water and wastewater services. As an anchor institution in our region, our investments help drive economic activity, support jobs and create opportunities for businesses and workers throughout Maryland.

The economic impact of water infrastructure reaches far beyond the projects themselves. Every $1 million invested in water projects is estimated to support 15 to 18 jobs, creating opportunities for construction workers, engineers, suppliers and professionals across many industries and multiple critical infrastructure sectors.

We see that impact here at home. Over the past five years, WSSC Water's work has contributed $704 million to businesses in Prince George's and Montgomery counties, including more than $419 million to small, local and minority-owned businesses. These investments help businesses grow, sustain jobs and strengthen the economic vitality of the communities we serve.

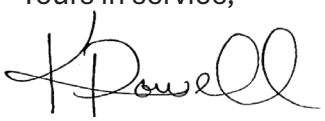
The opportunity ahead is significant. Every day, WSSC Water spends roughly $1.4 million on the goods and services needed to operate, from everyday supplies and technology to specialized equipment, construction, and professional services. These purchases create opportunities for businesses of all sizes, not just those working on major infrastructure projects.

Our Capital Improvements Program adds to that opportunity, with $778.6 million in planned infrastructure investment for FY 2027 and approximately $4.8 billion projected over the next six years. These investments will modernize essential water and wastewater infrastructure while creating opportunities for businesses and workers throughout our region.

We're committed to helping businesses prepare to compete for this work. Through our Tap Into Business events, our Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion connects business owners with our team and helps them navigate procurement. Our inaugural Rising TIDE Accelerator program builds on that effort, helping small and underrepresented businesses strengthen their capacity and prepare for future opportunities.

Investing in water infrastructure protects the economic fabric of our region. We will continue building strong partnerships, reducing barriers and expanding access to contracting opportunities so more businesses can contribute to our mission and share in the benefits of our work.

Yours in service,



Kishia L. Powell, P.E.
General Manager & CEO, WSSC Water

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WSSCWATER
DELIVERING THE ESSENTIAL

WSSC Water **at a Glance**

As a not-for-profit public utility, we serve our customers, not shareholders. Every dollar collected is reinvested into our infrastructure, technology and workforce to strengthen reliability, improve service and protect public health for generations to come. That commitment has helped us achieve **108 years without a single drinking water quality violation, ever.**

8th
Largest combined water and wastewater utility in the United States by population served

1.9M
Residents served

1,000 Sq. Mi.
Size of our service area

160M+ Gal.
Water produced daily at 2 filtration plants

65M+ Gal.
Wastewater treated daily at 6 facilities

500,000+
Laboratory tests performed every year

1,800+
Members of team H_2O deliver on our mission

11,000+
Miles of pipe

47,000+
Fire hydrants

$1.9B
FY2027 Operating & Capital Budget

$9B
In infrastructure assets maintained on behalf of our customers

Message From the Director of Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion

Kiyon T. Harley



Water is essential to life. Every time a family turns on a tap in Prince George's County or Montgomery County, they rely on infrastructure built and maintained by people: contractors, engineers, suppliers, and professional service providers. Our vendor community is an essential partner in delivering that mission, and many of those partners are neighbors who own and operate businesses here at home. As an anchor institution, WSSC Water's purchasing decisions carry a wider purpose: protecting public health while opening doors to lasting economic opportunity.

In FY 2026, we continued to expand opportunities for underrepresented businesses and small local firms. For example, SLBE awards increased 126% from FY 2025, while SLBE payments rose 25%. Together, these results reflect progress in connecting local businesses with opportunities to support WSSC Water's mission. Behind these results are workers showing up before sunrise, businesses keeping people employed, and owners taking the next step toward growth while helping sustain critical infrastructure their communities depend on.

Through more than 50 outreach events, Rising TIDE (Training Initiatives to Develop Enterprises), and our no-cost Contractor Readiness Accelerator, we worked with businesses to provide hands-on instruction, coaching, and direct access to WSSC Water staff, equipping firms to compete, perform, and grow.

We are committed to continuing such efforts as we expand pathways for businesses. House Bill 1230, enacted as Chapter 560 and effective October 1, 2026, provides a broader framework for connecting WSSC Water's contracting activity with workforce engagement and local economic benefits. Our focus remains practical: turning that framework into clear pathways and useful tools for businesses. This connects WSSC Water's multi-year infrastructure investments with the businesses and workers needed to help serve nearly 2 million residents. That is how public investment creates lasting community impact and helps sustain transformative change. Let's build something lasting, together.

In partnership,

Kiyon T. Harley

Kiyon T. Harley
Director, Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion

Fiscal Year 2026

Key Report Findings

This Performance Report presents verified Fiscal Year 2026 performance metrics for WSSC Water's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Small Local Business Enterprise (SLBE) programs. Contract payments and awards reflect economic activity across our bi-county service area of Prince George's and Montgomery counties, as well as surrounding areas in Maryland, Washington, DC, and out-of-state businesses. Women Business Enterprise (WBE) firms are included in the MBE figures throughout the report unless otherwise noted.

Nearly **$205M** paid to MBE firms

33% of total payments

FY 2026 MBE contract payments

More than **$190M** paid to MBE firms

32% of total payments

FY 2025 MBE contract payments

Nearly **$355M** awarded to MBE firms

36% of total awards

FY 2026 MBE contract awards

More than **$202M** awarded to MBE firms

34% of total awards

FY 2025 MBE contract awards

Note: Summary dollar amounts in the text and graphics are rounded for readability; detailed tables show exact whole-dollar amounts. Percentages are based on exact dollar amounts and rounded to the nearest whole percent. Because of rounding, category percentages may not add up to exactly 100%. When needed, one displayed percentage may be adjusted slightly so the categories add up to 100%. This presentation adjustment affects only the displayed percentage; the source dollar amounts remain unchanged.

FY 25 to FY 26 Growth Highlights

FY 2026 tells a story of both work delivered and opportunity ahead. Contract payments increased as businesses performed work for WSSC Water, while contract awards, which establish the pipeline for future activity, rose sharply, led by 126% growth in SLBE awards and 76% growth in MBE awards. Together, these results show public investment opening pathways for businesses to compete, grow, and help deliver the essential systems our communities depend on.

Measure	FY 2025	FY 2026	Dollar Increase	Percent Increase
SLBE Contract Awards	$42,937,459	$97,182,920	$54,245,461	126%
MBE Contract Awards	$202,212,964	$354,929,094	$152,716,130	76%
Total Contract Awards	**$597,489,386**	**$990,642,405**	**$393,153,019**	**66%**
SLBE Contract Payments	$44,067,801	$55,294,975	$11,227,174	25%
MBE Contract Payments	$190,170,646	$204,976,594	$14,805,948	8%
Total Contract Payments	**$591,946,496**	**$616,833,855**	**$24,887,359**	**4%**

MBE Program Results

WSSC Water evaluates supplier participation through two complementary lenses: contract payments and contract awards. Contract payments ($204,976,594 to MBE firms, or 33% of total payments) measure actual dollars disbursed for work delivered during the fiscal year. Contract awards ($354,929,094 to MBE firms, or 36% of total awards) capture newly executed commitments that drive multi-year revenue and backlog.

WSSC Water's contracting opportunities are not limited to large, complex procurements that can be difficult for emerging firms to access. Opportunities span a range of contract sizes and types: businesses can compete directly as prime contractors, partner on major capital projects as subcontractors, supply essential commodities and technology, or build an initial performance record through smaller operational contracts.

Statutory Framework and Program Scope

Pursuant to Section 20-207 of the Public Utilities Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, WSSC Water issues this annual report by October 31 to the Montgomery County and Prince George's County Senate and House delegations to the Maryland General Assembly. The report fulfills two statutory mandates: documenting the implementation and administration of the MBE programs for the fiscal year ending June 30, and providing appropriate recommendations concerning those programs.

Since 1978, OSDI has administered the MBE Program to remedy the effects of marketplace discrimination and, since 2001, the race- and gender-neutral SLBE Program to strengthen small businesses anchored in Prince George's and Montgomery counties. Both programs reflect the governance of the Commissioners, General Manager, and Senior Leadership Team and advance WSSC Water's Smart One Water Future.



Figure 1: FY 2026 MBE contract payments

MBE firms received more than $204 million in FY 2026 contract payments, representing 33% of total contract payments.

Business Category	Contract Payments	Share of Total Payments
MBE	$204,976,594	33%
Majority	$411,857,261	67%
Total Contract Payments	**$616,833,855**	**100%**

Figure 2: FY 2026 MBE contract awards

MBE firms received more than $354 million in FY 2026 contract awards, representing 36% of total contract awards.

Business Category	Contract Awards	Share of Total Awards
MBE	$354,929,094	36%
Majority	$635,713,311	64%
Total Contract Awards	**$990,642,405**	**100%**

Dollar amounts are shown in whole dollars. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point. Distribution tables total 100%.

MBE Program

Contract Payments

Actual contract payments represent the most direct measure of capital flowing to MBE firms for work performed. Because utility infrastructure projects frequently span multiple fiscal years, annual disbursements reflect active project execution, supply-chain delivery, task-order utilization, and contract modifications across four core contracting areas.

MBE Contract Payments by Contracting Area

In FY 2026, WSSC Water disbursed $616,833,855 in total contract payments, including $204,976,594 to MBE firms (33% overall participation), as detailed in **Figure 3**. Notably, $117,762,173 (57% of all MBE payment dollars) went to MBE firms performing as prime contractors, while $87,214,421 supported MBE subcontractors.

MBE payment participation reached 36% in both Construction Services ($122,978,684 of $341,755,371) and Professional Services ($20,730,350 of $57,761,521), alongside 29% in Architectural and Engineering (A/E) Services ($17,119,023) and 28% in Goods and Services ($44,148,537).

Figure 3: MBE contract payments by contracting area

Contracting Area	MBE Share Within Area	MBE Prime Payments	MBE Sub Payments	Total MBE Payments	Majority Payments	Total Contract Payments
A/E Services	29%	$2,843,392	$14,275,631	$17,119,023	$41,545,837	$58,664,860
Construction Services	36%	$64,392,613	$58,586,071	$122,978,684	$218,776,687	$341,755,371
Goods & Services	28%	$38,353,680	$5,794,857	$44,148,537	$114,503,566	$158,652,103
Professional Services	36%	$12,172,488	$8,557,862	$20,730,350	$37,031,171	$57,761,521
Overall Total Payments	**33%**	**$117,762,173**	**$87,214,421**	**$204,976,594**	**$411,857,261**	**$616,833,855**



Behind every successful infrastructure project are businesses showing up, building capacity, and helping sustain the vital systems our communities depend on every single day.

MBE Program

Contract Payments

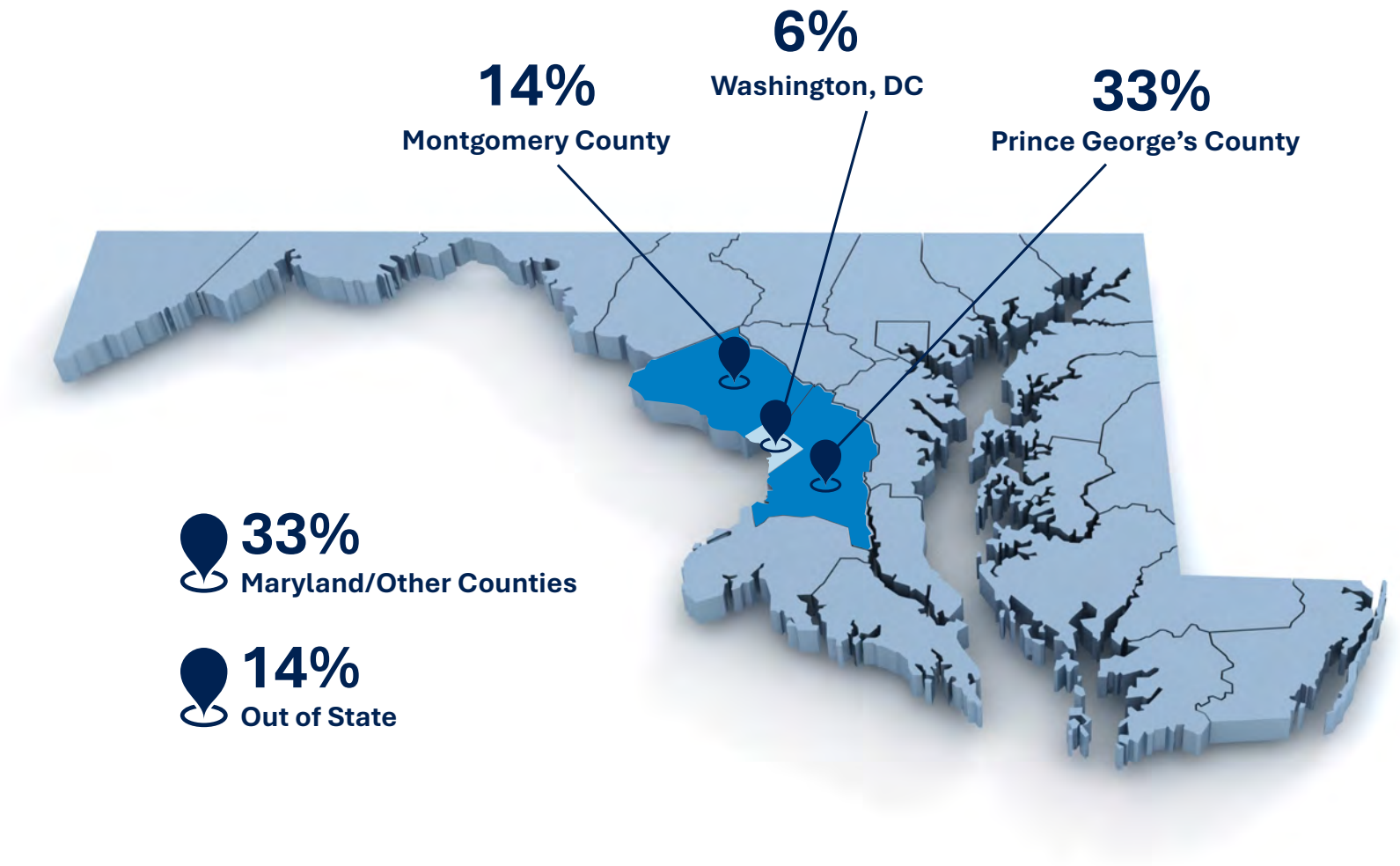
MBE Contract Payments by Location (Percentages)

Tracking payment geography demonstrates how WSSC Water's capital and operating investments circulate across our bi-county service area, the State of Maryland, and the broader regional market. Location tables reflect recorded payment geography; they do not define program eligibility or distinguish between prime and subcontract performance.

Figure 4: FY 2026 MBE contract payments by location (percentages)

Nearly half of all MBE payment dollars, $95,178,408 of $204,976,594, were recorded in Prince George's and Montgomery counties combined.

Note: Percentages are rounded, and the displayed distribution is adjusted to total 100%.



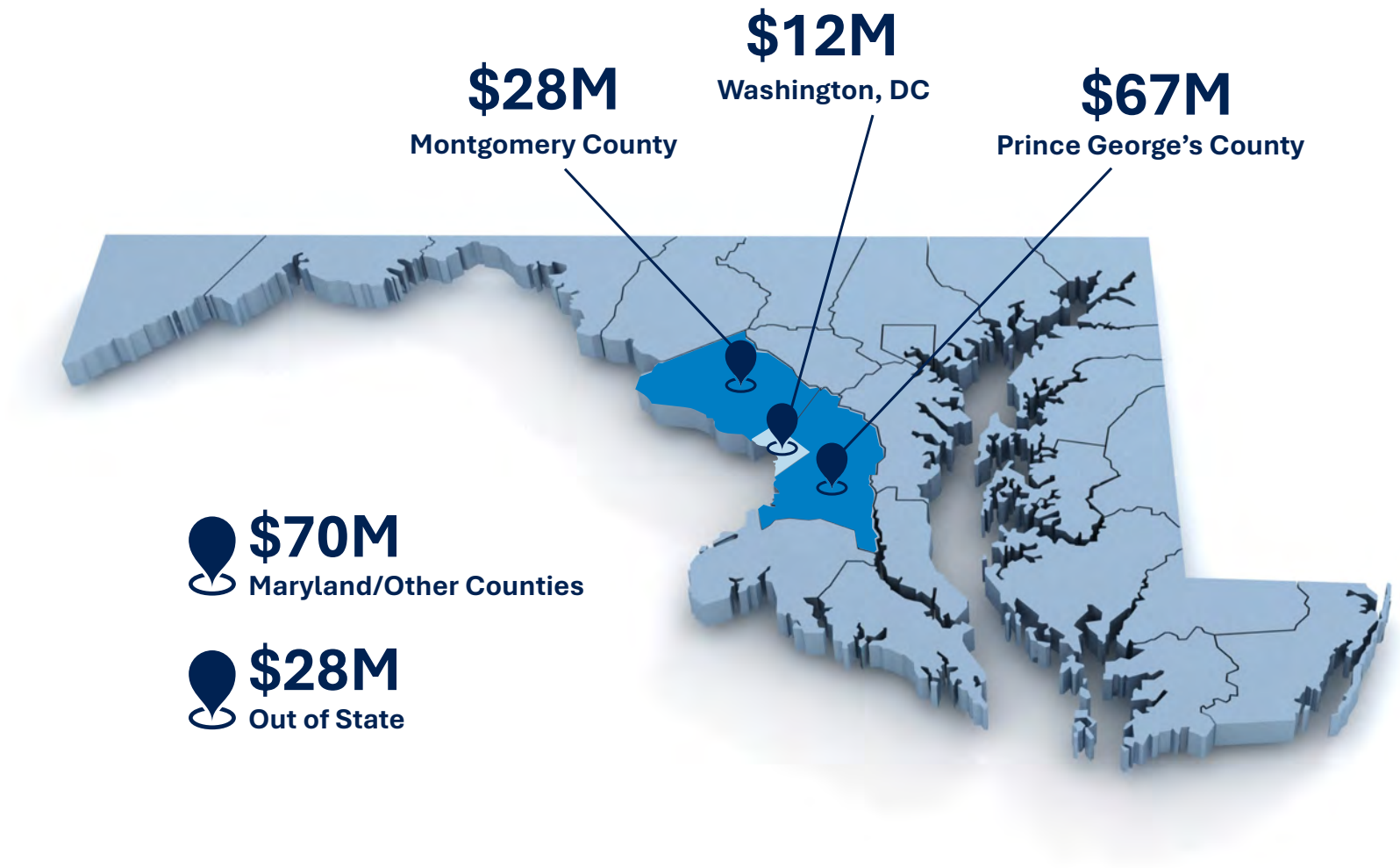
MBE Program

Contract Payments

MBE Contract Payments by Location (Dollars)

Figure 5: FY 2026 MBE contract payments by location ($205M total)

In FY 2026, $165 million of the nearly $205 million in MBE contract payments were recorded within the State of Maryland, led by $95 million across Prince George's and Montgomery counties.



MBE Program

Contract Payments

MBE Contract Payments Over Five Years (FY 2022 – 2026)

As shown in **Figure 6**, WSSC Water's annual MBE contract payments have grown steadily from $140,418,391 in FY 2022 to $204,976,594 in FY 2026 (a 46% five-year expansion). Across the five-year period from FY 2022 through FY 2026, WSSC Water directed $857,516,533 of $2,757,191,595 in cumulative contract payments (31%) to MBE firms.

Figure 6: MBE contract payments by fiscal year, 2022 to 2026

Fiscal Year	MBE Contract Payments	Majority Contract Payments	Total Contract Payments	M/WBE Percent
2022	$140,418,391	$366,114,007	$506,532,398	28%
2023	$148,428,314	$384,148,483	$532,576,797	28%
2024	$173,522,588	$335,779,461	$509,302,049	34%
2025	$190,170,646	$401,775,850	$591,946,496	32%
2026	$204,976,594	$411,857,261	$616,833,855	33%
Five-year cumulative total payments	**$857,516,533**	**$1,899,675,062**	**$2,757,191,595**	**31%**



MBE Program

Contract Awards

Contract awards are the primary leading indicator of future economic impact. Because major capital construction, engineering, and operational contracts carry multi-year terms, today's contract awards establish the revenue pipeline that will convert into contractor payments, local hiring, and business growth over the next several fiscal years.

In FY 2026, WSSC Water awarded $990,642,405 in total contracts, a 66% increase over FY 2025. MBE contract awards rose 76% to $354,929,094, representing 36% of total contract awards (**Figure 7**). Construction Services led all categories at 41% MBE participation ($266,847,863 of $647,798,176), followed by A/E Services at 35% ($47,718,046), Professional Services at 26% ($15,289,668), and Goods and Services at 17% ($25,073,517).

Figure 7: FY 2026 MBE contract awards by contracting area

Contracting Area	MBE Share Within Area	Total MBE Awards	Majority Awards	Total Contract Awards
A/E Services	35%	$47,718,046	$90,538,658	**$138,256,704**
Construction	41%	$266,847,863	$380,950,313	**$647,798,176**
Goods & Services	17%	$25,073,517	$120,050,886	**$145,124,403**
Professional Services	26%	$15,289,668	$44,173,454	**$59,463,122**
Total for all Contract Types	**36%**	**$354,929,094**	**$635,713,311**	**$990,642,405**

MBE Program

Prime and Subcontractor Awards

A defining indicator of supplier maturity is the balance between prime contracting and subcontracting. As shown in **Figure 8**, FY 2026 MBE awards achieved a near-even 50% split between prime contracts ($178,871,508) and subcontracts ($176,057,586), demonstrating that MBE firms are competing successfully as prime-level leaders while capturing vital subcontracting scopes.

Figure 8: FY 2026 MBE prime and subcontract awards

Prime awards accounted for 75% of MBE awards in Goods and Services ($18,683,514), 57% in Construction Services ($152,176,466), and 49% in Professional Services ($7,460,328), while A/E Services generated $47,166,846 (99%) in specialized subcontracts.

Contracting Area	MBE Prime Awards	MBE Sub Awards	Total MBE Awards	Prime Percent of MBE Award	Sub Percent of MBE Award
A/E Services	$551,200	$47,166,846	$47,718,046	1%	99%
Construction Services	$152,176,466	$114,671,397	$266,847,863	57%	43%
Goods & Services	$18,683,514	$6,390,003	$25,073,517	75%	25%
Professional Services	$7,460,328	$7,829,340	$15,289,668	49%	51%
Overall MBE award mix	**$178,871,508**	**$176,057,586**	**$354,929,094**	**50%**	**50%**

MBE Program

Contract Awards

MBE Contract Awards Over Five Years (FY 2022 – 2026)

Over the five-year period from FY 2022 through FY 2026 (**Figure 9**), WSSC Water awarded $1,174,987,227 of $3,729,282,935 in cumulative contract dollars (32%) to MBE firms, with annual MBE award share rising every single year from 28% in FY 2022 to 36% in FY 2026.

Figure 9: MBE contract awards by fiscal year, 2022 to 2026

Fiscal Year	MBE Dollars	Majority Dollars	Total Dollars	MBE Share of Total Awards
2022	$358,884,014	$938,698,443	$1,297,582,457	28%
2023	$101,609,994	$243,931,790	$345,541,784	29%
2024	$157,351,161	$340,675,742	$498,026,903	32%
2025	$202,212,964	$395,276,422	$597,489,386	34%
2026	$354,929,094	$635,713,311	$990,642,405	36%
5 Fiscal Years	**$1,174,987,227**	**$2,554,295,708**	**$3,729,282,935**	**32%**

Small Local Business Enterprise (SLBE)

Program Results

WSSC Water's SLBE Program is a race- and gender-neutral economic development initiative purpose-built to accelerate the growth and competitiveness of small businesses anchored in Prince George's and Montgomery counties.

SLBE Contract Payments

$55M+

spent with **SLBE firms**

9%

of total payments
Up 25% from FY 2025.

SLBE Contract Awards

$97M+

awarded to **SLBE firms**

10%

of total awards
Up 126% from FY 2025.

In FY 2026, SLBE contract payments increased 25% to $55,294,975 (9% of total agency payments), while SLBE contract awards surged 126% to $97,182,920 (10% of total agency awards). Participating firms compete across both prime and subcontract pathways, allowing local enterprises to enter the utility market at appropriate project scales, establish a verified performance record and expand operational capacity.

Figure 10: FY 2026 SLBE contract payments

FY 2026 SLBE contract payments totaled more than $55 million.

Business Category	Contract Payments	Share of Total Payments
SLBE	$55,294,975	9%
Non-SLBE	$561,538,880	91%
Total for all Contract Types	**$616,833,855**	**100%**

Figure 11: FY 2026 SLBE contract awards

FY 2026 SLBE contract awards totaled more than $97 million.

Business Category	Contract Awards	Share of Total Awards
SLBE	$97,182,920	10%
Non-SLBE	$893,459,485	90%
Total for all Contract Types	**$990,642,405**	**100%**

SLBE Contract Payments by Contracting Area

Figure 12: FY 2026 SLBE contract payments by contracting area

SLBE payments generated $55,294,975 in revenue for small local businesses across all four contracting areas in FY 2026 (**Figure 12**), led by Construction Services ($47,874,192) and Goods and Services ($6,875,965), with additional activity in A/E Services ($520,002) and Professional Services ($24,816).

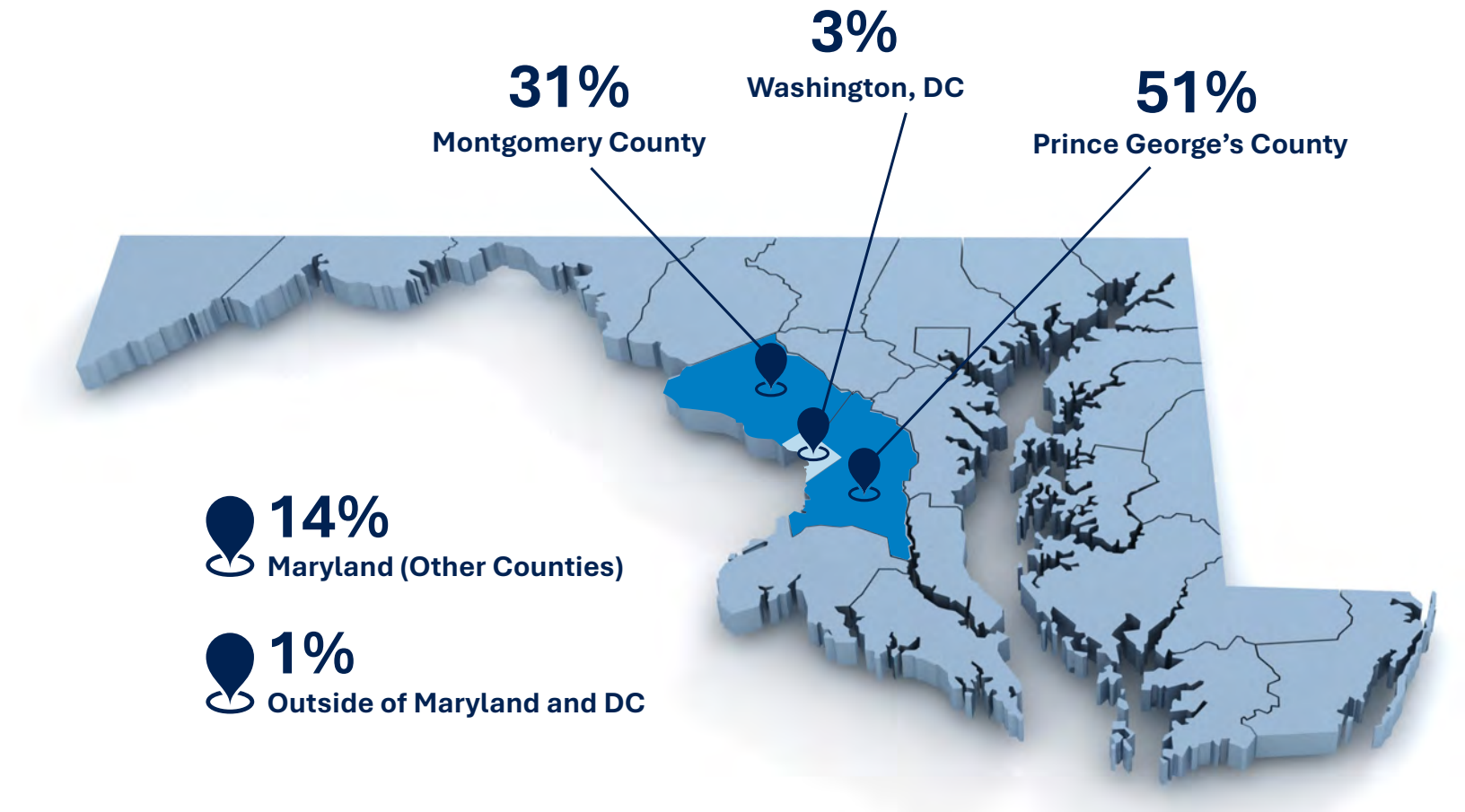
Contracting Area	Total SLBE Payments
A/E Services	$520,002
Construction Services	$47,874,192
Goods & Services	$6,875,965
Professional Services	$24,816
Total SLBE Payments	**$55,294,975**

Contract Payments to SLBE
Firms by Location

Firms qualify for WSSC Water's SLBE Program by meeting small-business size standards and maintaining either a principal place of business in Prince George's or Montgomery County or at least 25% of their workforce domiciled in one or both counties. The location categories below reflect recorded payment geography rather than eligibility basis or prime/subcontract role.

Figure 13: FY 2026 SLBE contract payments by reported payment location

Location reporting shows that 82% of FY 2026 SLBE payment dollars were recorded in Prince George's and Montgomery counties combined ($45,454,032 of $55,294,975). The remaining 18% was recorded in Maryland (all other counties), Washington, DC, and out of state. These payment-location categories do not define SLBE eligibility or indicate where firms are headquartered.



Percentages are shown as whole numbers and the displayed distribution totals 100%.

SLBE Contract Awards by Contracting Area

In FY 2026, total SLBE contract awards reached $97,182,920 across all four contracting areas, including $12,954,008 awarded to SLBE firms serving as prime contractors and $84,228,912 in subcontract awards. As shown in **Figure 14**, the largest concentration of SLBE awards occurred in Construction Services ($90,079,639).

Figure 14: FY 2026 SLBE contract awards by contracting area

This table shows SLBE awards by contracting area in FY 2026.

Contracting Area	SLBE Awards
A/E Services	$4,898,185
Construction Services	$90,079,639
Goods & Services	$818,114
Professional Services	$1,386,982
Total SLBE Awards	**$97,182,920**

Total FY 2026 SLBE awards were more than $97 million.

SLBE Program

Award Pathways by Contracting Area

FY 2026 SLBE awards totaled $97.2 million, with Construction Services accounting for $90.1 million (93%). Of that total, $13.0 million (13%) was awarded to SLBE prime contractors, and $84.2 million (87%) was awarded through subcontracting pathways. Together, these pathways give small local firms multiple entry points into WSSC Water's contracting market, where they can build experience, strengthen capacity, and grow while helping sustain the critical systems their communities depend on.

Figure 15: FY 2026 SLBE award pathways by contracting area

Contracting Area	SLBE Awards	Prime Awards	Subcontract Awards	Prime/Sub Share
A/E Services	$4,898,185	$0	$4,898,185	0% / 100%
Construction Services	$90,079,639	$12,712,148	$77,367,491	14% / 86%
Goods & Services	$818,114	$241,860	$576,254	30% / 70%
Professional Services	$1,386,982	$0	$1,386,982	0% / 100%
Overall SLBE Awards	**$97,182,920**	**$12,954,008**	**$84,228,912**	**13% / 87%**

Note: *Prime/subcontractor shares are calculated within each row's SLBE awards. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.*

House Bill 1230
(Chapter 560 of the 2026 Legislative Session)
Prioritizing Local Businesses
Expanding Contracting Opportunities Across Maryland

Strengthening participation for businesses in Prince George's and Montgomery counties while creating clearer pathways for Maryland businesses and workers.

House Bill 1230, enacted as Chapter 560, modernizes WSSC Water's business participation framework and strengthens opportunities for local and Maryland businesses and workers to benefit from the billions of dollars WSSC Water invests in critical infrastructure projects across Prince George's and Montgomery counties.

The law supports clearer participation pathways, vendor registration options, workforce engagement, and reporting on workforce residency and local economic activity.



Modernized Authority

Updates the former local small business enterprise structure into a broader business participation program.



Local Preference + Recognized Categories

Preference for local small and local businesses; eligible categories also include Maryland-based, veteran-owned, and disabled veteran-owned businesses that meet statutory criteria.



Supplier Readiness

Outreach, training, capacity-building and opportunity awareness.



Simplified Registration

Vendor registration may recognize registration in another jurisdiction or self-certification, as authorized by Commission regulations.



Workforce + Local Benefits

Good-faith standards for local hiring, skills training, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship participation or support, and reporting on workforce residency or local economic activity.



Economic Activity

Keeping more infrastructure dollars working for Maryland businesses, Maryland workers, and local communities.

Turning Infrastructure Investment into Economic Impact for Maryland Businesses and Workers

WSSC Water leaders join Governor Wes Moore, House Speaker Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk, Senate President Bill Ferguson, state leaders, and legislative partners in Annapolis for the ceremonial signing of House Bill 1230 (Chapter 560). Standing left to right from WSSC Water: Government Affairs Director Monica Marquina; Government Affairs Manager Kenneth Simmons; Deputy General Manager of External Affairs Cristi Bickham; Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion Director Kiyon T. Harley; General Manager & CEO Kishia L. Powell; Chief of Staff Justin DeVantier and Joe Green with GS Proctor & Associates. (May 12, 2026)



Surging Forward: Rising TIDE Builds Readiness for the Work Ahead

Strong supplier pipelines are built through sustained investment. Rising TIDE, or Training Initiatives to Develop Enterprises, is WSSC Water's continuing business readiness initiative. In FY 2025 and FY 2026, OSDI provided technical assistance, Friday vendor training sessions, consultations, and on-demand online resources, including videos, checklists and solicitation guidance.

Building on that work, WSSC Water expanded Rising TIDE in FY 2026 by developing the no-cost, cohort-based Contractor Readiness Accelerator, delivered in a hybrid format. The Accelerator added hands-on instruction, individualized coaching, expert feedback, and direct engagement with WSSC Water staff, including on weekends. The October 19, 2026 cohort graduation marked the next stage of that progression.

The work continues through technical assistance, online resources, coaching, and future cohorts. Rising TIDE creates entry points for businesses pursuing prime and subcontract opportunities, while WSSC Water continues investing in the business community and strengthening the supplier pipeline for the infrastructure work ahead.

How Businesses Can Engage

Rising TIDE Pathway	What Businesses Receive
Contractor Readiness Accelerator	Hybrid sessions, hands-on training, individualized coaching, practical tools, expert feedback, and direct engagement with WSSC Water staff.
Free Online and On-Demand Resources	Training videos, proposal development guide, compliance checklist, guidance on reading solicitations, and contract management best practices.
Friday Vendor Training and Consultations	A recurring opportunity to ask questions, receive guidance, and connect with practical resources.
Prime and Subcontract Entry Points	A clearer path to pursue opportunities at different sizes and levels of contract responsibility.



WSSC Water celebrates its inaugural Rising TIDE graduating class on October 19, 2026, alongside staff, elected officials and community partners.





Participants engage in the Rising TIDE program.

Notes


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