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SDWIS Private Water System Ownership: A PE Screen

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In this article

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction and Background
3. Key Changes in the Ownership Screen
4. Implementation Considerations and Process Changes
5. State Evidence and Jurisdiction Boundaries
6. The System-to-Business Evidence Ledger
7. Deduplication and Corporate Parent Verification
8. Data Analysis and Evidence
9. Fictional Screening Examples
10. Implications and Future Directions
11. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
12. Conclusion

Executive Summary

SDWIS private water system ownership is a screening input, not a company-ownership conclusion. A "public water system" can be privately owned: the term defines a regulated water supply, rather than a government enterprise. The federal threshold includes **15 service connections**, or an average of **25 people for 60 days annually**. (www.epa.gov) A private-system record can represent a utility business, a nonprofit, or water supplied alongside another business. GAO explicitly distinguishes these business models. (www.gao.gov)

The first control is to preserve the source product. The EPA federal reporting dictionary lists **10 ownership codes**, including private ancillary, private ancillary nonprofit, private for profit and private nonprofit categories. (www.epa.gov) Its ECHO bulk-download dictionary enumerates **six broader codes**. (echo.epa.gov) These are different published dictionaries; this research did not download a national extract to determine how frequently the detailed codes occur in exported records. Treat "P: Private" as unresolved business-model evidence. Treat a detailed for-profit code as a reason to investigate, rather than proof of an independent utility company.

The next control is to separate the **permit owner, contract operator, legal entity and corporate parent**. Texas publishes separate owner and operator reporting instructions; Maine expressly permits systems to contract for operator services. (www.tceq.texas.gov) (www.maine.gov) Utility-commission evidence needs jurisdictional interpretation: North Carolina excludes several nonprofit and ancillary arrangements from its stated traditional utility scope, while Kentucky includes water districts and associations. A commission listing therefore cannot substitute for business-model verification. (ncuc.gov) (psc.ky.gov)

The recommended deliverable is a system-to-business evidence ledger, followed by **keep, exclude or hold** decisions and an explicit operation-type classification. It counts distinct systems separately from verified companies and leaves unknown parents unresolved. Legal Entity Identifier parent data concerns accounting consolidation, not a complete register of beneficial owners. (www.gleif.org) GAO's live recommendation page still shows ownership-definition work as open; its February 2026 update reports EPA's **December 2026**

estimated completion, not implemented correction. (www.gao.gov) As of this report's November 2026 research date, the defensible output is a dated, reviewable subset of potential utility-business leads. It is neither a complete acquisition-market denominator nor evidence that any owner wishes to sell.

Introduction and Background

A private-equity water utility market map should begin with its mandate, before its database query. Is the buyer studying businesses that own drinking-water utility assets, businesses that operate systems under contract, or companies selling equipment and services? Those mandates can share names and addresses while requiring different evidence. **Private ownership alone does not answer the business-model question.** New York's health department explicitly includes homeowners associations, apartment complexes and mobile-home parks among privately owned community suppliers. (www.health.ny.gov)

The **Safe Drinking Water Information System, or SDWIS**, is useful because it organizes observations about regulated water systems. However, a **Public Water System Identification Number, or PWSID**, identifies a system; the federal dictionary also explains that multiple facilities can belong to that system. Neither relationship establishes a separate corporation. (www.epa.gov) For Docket's private-equity origination audience, the relevant research product is the crosswalk from those observations to documented business roles.

The scale figures encountered during research need similar restraint. The Congressional Research Service, or **CRS**, reported almost **50,000 community water systems** in its November 2024 financing report, using SDWIS information accessed in July 2024. (www.everycrsreport.com) That is historic system context, not a present count of privately owned companies. Census likewise distinguishes a physical establishment from a company or enterprise. Even a statistically valid establishment count answers a different question from a verified company ledger. (www.census.gov)

This report proposes a source-specific ownership filter and a reusable ledger. It does not identify real acquisition candidates or assess sale readiness. Its fictional records illustrate decisions, not completed research engagements. The method preserves what each source actually establishes, separates an absent answer from an adverse finding, and assigns the next verification step before a system is promoted into a company-level map.

Key Changes in the Ownership Screen

Replace a single private flag with review paths

A useful ownership-code filter retains the original value and adds a separate analyst classification. EPA's federal reporting dictionary supplies the labels in *Table 1*; the review actions are proposed research rules for a mandate limited to for-profit utility ownership. They are not EPA classifications of acquisition suitability. (www.epa.gov)

Raw ownership code and label	Initial business-model review	Proposed mandate action
P: Private	For-profit, nonprofit and ancillary distinctions remain unresolved.	**Hold** until state and entity evidence identify the model.
Y: Private for profit	Check whether water utility service is the business being mapped.	Potential **keep**, subject to owner and entity verification.
Z: Private non-profit	Record nonprofit status separately from operating activity.	**Exclude** from this for-profit mandate when corroborated; retain classification.
A: Private ancillary	Water may support the principal business.	Ancillary review; **exclude** when the attachment is corroborated.
B: Private ancillary non-profit	Both ancillary function and nonprofit form require preservation.	**Exclude** when verified; otherwise **hold** the conflict.
M: Public/Private	Establish which party owns assets and which performs services.	**Hold**; do not infer equity ownership from mixed participation.
F: Federal; L: Local; N: Tribal; S: State or territorial government	Preserve the public ownership category and any separate contractor relationship.	**Exclude** verified public ownership from this mandate.
Missing, unrecognized or conflicting value	No ownership conclusion.	**Hold** with the raw value intact.

The table prevents an unresolved “private” label from becoming an automatic retained company. Exclusion means outside the specified ownership mandate, not an assertion that the activity lacks commercial value. A contracted operator, nonprofit or campground might matter to another strategy. GAO’s distinction between water companies and water supplied as part of another business supports keeping those models separate. (www.gao.gov)

Compare the dictionary with the product actually used

The detailed federal labels should not be silently imposed on every SDWIS-derived dataset. ECHO’s bulk dictionary currently enumerates **F, L, M, N, P and S** for its owner-type field. Analysts should record that discrepancy alongside the reporting dictionary’s richer categories. This is documented schema variation, not proof that detailed codes are absent from every current extract. (echo.epa.gov)

A practical rule follows: **never manufacture detail from a broad code**. A transformation from P to Y needs separate evidence and must appear as an analyst conclusion. Keep both fields, the source dictionary version and the supporting source.

Replace deadline assumptions with dated evidence

GAO’s ownership-data recommendation remains open on its current page. The February 2026 update describes continued work on SDWIS and a projected completion date. It does not certify a corrected national ownership universe. (www.gao.gov) Improved documentation and verified changes to actual records are separate observations. Research teams should recheck both, keeping old values available for comparison.

Implementation Considerations and Process Changes

Freeze the mandate and observation cutoff

Start with a written rule such as: “Retain verified for-profit businesses owning community drinking-water systems within the selected jurisdictions.” Decide separately whether non-community systems, bulk supply businesses, contract operations and ancillary real-estate supplies belong in scope.

The **community water system**, or CWS, category supplies the same population year-round. EPA’s non-transient non-community examples include schools, factories, offices and hospitals; transient examples include gas stations and campgrounds. These describe populations served and operating patterns, rather than corporate form. (www.epa.gov) A mobile-home supply can therefore require ancillary review even when its system type satisfies a community-system screen. New York’s private-community examples make that distinction explicit. (www.health.ny.gov)

Apply the status rule to a specified observation period. Do not equate “active” with continuous year-round operation: ECHO’s documentation allows a seasonal system to remain active when it is expected to resume within the year. (echo.epa.gov)

Use these analyst-defined import controls:

- **Scope:** Record included jurisdictions, system types and ownership mandate.
- **Cutoff:** Name the submission period and collection date.
- **Status:** Preserve the raw activity value before applying inclusion rules.
- **Exceptions:** Retain excluded observations with a reason and review date.
- **Unknowns:** Keep missing type, owner or status values available for resolution.
- **Revision:** Record which mandate version produced each decision.

Inspect the interface and export schema

The live federal reporting form was accessible during this research. It exposes PWSID entry and filters for owner, primacy agency, system type, activity, population, connections and submission period. Its availability establishes a retrieval route, not the completeness of a particular result set. (sdwis.epa.gov)

The **Enforcement and Compliance History Online, or ECHO**, bulk dictionary describes rows as system observations in a particular quarter. It documents PWSID, submission information, owner type, population and service connections, together with contact and facility fields. Those columns support a system evidence layer, not a ready-made corporate ownership table. (echo.epa.gov)

Preserve population and connections as separate measures. Do not use either as a generic revenue multiplier. Before downloading, check the chosen interface’s result limits: ECHO documents Excel availability only for **10,000 or fewer records**. (echo.epa.gov) A search export should not be called a national extract merely because the file opened successfully.

No national extract or individual ownership match was produced for this report. The verified scope was interface availability and published field documentation. Similarly, the Apify listing reviewed here disclaims a complete national catalogue; its actor was not run. Its documented extraction boundary should travel with any

future use of that tool. (apify.com)

State Evidence and Jurisdiction Boundaries

State records are the next verification layer, but their roles differ. The analyst should establish which office maintains drinking-water permits, which commission regulates economic service, and which registry records the legal entity.

California and Texas: match the owner role

California's current electronic Annual Report, or **eAR**, includes system identity, classification, ownership and regulating agency. It is a current state inventory route for checking an observation against the relevant system. (www.waterboards.ca.gov) Historical California instructions for the **2018 reporting year** explicitly describe the owner as the entity named in the water supply permit and identify contract-operator contacts separately. (ear.waterboards.ca.gov) That historical wording illustrates distinct roles; it is not a current nationwide definition.

The California Public Utilities Commission, or **CPUC**, describes its Water Division as regulating investor-owned water and sewer utilities within its jurisdiction. Use its regulated-utility resources to corroborate a business role, while obtaining current permit-owner evidence from the drinking-water regulator. (www.cpuc.ca.gov)

Texas offers a more explicit current role crosswalk. Its Drinking Water Viewer guidance permits searching by **PWSID or system name, not both**. (www.tceq.texas.gov) Its update instructions distinguish owner information from a PWS contact who may be an operator, lessee or plant manager. They also provide a separate annual operator and operating-company notification process. (www.tceq.texas.gov)

For utility systems, Texas identifies the owner with the **Certificate of Convenience and Necessity, or CCN**, holder. The PUC describes a CCN as an exclusive retail-service right in a defined area. Record the holder and boundary as their own evidence, rather than treating the geographic polygon as a corporate family. (www.tceq.texas.gov) (www.puc.texas.gov)

Commission coverage is not an ownership test

North Carolina's stated traditional utility exclusions include certain small operations, municipal and county systems, rent-included mobile-home parks, homeowners associations, and nonprofit or consumer-owned corporations. Its certificates attach to specific service areas. A missing commission entry therefore needs an explanation, not an automatic public-ownership label. (ncuc.gov)

Florida's **2026 statute** includes exemptions for qualifying government systems, including specified privately operated facilities, and for manufacturers supplying water solely alongside their operations. (www.flsenate.gov) This directly illustrates why a private operating company need not own the utility assets. The Florida commission also provides a territory lookup and a separate jurisdictional-counties map; county coverage should be checked before interpreting absence from its listings. (www.psc.state.fl.us)

Kentucky's current FAQ includes water districts and associations alongside investor-owned utilities. Commission presence therefore cannot be generalized into a for-profit classification. (psc.ky.gov) New York's health guidance adds another boundary issue: its public-water-system definition includes systems with **five**

service connections, compared with EPA's federal threshold of **15**. (www.health.ny.gov) (www.epa.gov) Reconcile the inclusion rules before comparing state and federal counts.

These are source-selection rules, not legal conclusions about a particular business. Ask state utility counsel to assess disputed jurisdiction, ownership-change requirements or transaction perimeter.

The System-to-Business Evidence Ledger

The ledger should preserve source observations before linking them to a company. California's current inventory categories support keeping system identity and ownership fields together; Texas's separate owner and operator guidance supports recording roles independently. (www.waterboards.ca.gov) (www.tceq.texas.gov)

Table 2 is a fillable schema. Copy its field names into a worksheet, use one observation row per system and vintage, and store repeatable relationship evidence in linked rows. The blank-entry column is intentionally unfilled.

Field group	Required fields and entry rule	Blank entry
System key	PWSID; source product; submission period; raw system name. Preserve identifiers as text.	PWSID: ____; period: ____
Regulatory classification	Raw system type; raw activity status; raw owner type; dictionary reference.	Type: ____; status: ____; owner code: ____
Jurisdiction	Primacy agency; state; service area; relevant commission jurisdiction.	Agency: ____; area: ____
Vintage	Source effective date; publication or update date; collection date; unresolved date conflict.	Effective: ____; collected: ____
Scale	Population served; service connections; counting basis and observation period for each.	Population: ____; connections: ____
Permit owner	Exact permit-named owner; permit or state-record reference; effective date; supporting excerpt.	Owner: ____; date: ____
Contract operation	Operator person or firm; relationship type; contract or designation evidence; dates.	Operator: ____; evidence: ____
Legal entity	Legal name; registration jurisdiction; registry entity ID; registration type; identity evidence.	Entity: ____; registry ID: ____
Corporate parent	Direct and ultimate parent separately; relationship definition; dated supporting source; unknown reason.	Parent: ____; basis: ____
Match status	System-to-owner, owner-to-entity and entity-to-parent decisions separately; reviewer and conflict references.	Match: ____; conflict: ____
Mandate outcome	Keep, exclude or hold; utility, ancillary, nonprofit, public or unresolved classification; decision reason.	Outcome: ____; class: ____
Open questions	Missing answer; next source; responsible analyst or specialist; recheck trigger.	Question: ____; next source: ____

This structure makes a useful distinction: a verified permit-owner name can coexist with an unresolved corporate parent. Oregon also warns against careless registry deduplication indirectly: an assumed business name has its own registry number even when owned by an LLC or corporation. Record registration type, rather than counting every registry hit as a separate legal company. (sos.oregon.gov)

The following analyst-designed role diagram shows which relationships require evidence. Its arrows represent research links, not assumptions about every system.

```
flowchart LR
    F["Facility"] -->|"belongs to"| S["System observation: PWSID and vintage"]
    S -->|"serves"| A["Service area"]
    S -->|"state permit identifies"| O["Permit owner"]
    S -->|"contract or designation identifies"| C["Operator"]
    O -->|"registry evidence resolves"| E["Legal entity"]
    E -->|"dated ownership evidence supports"| P["Corporate parent"]
    P -->|"mandate defines"| G["Potential acquisition group"]
```

In a documented contract-operations arrangement, the operator can sit alongside the owner rather than above it. Maine explicitly permits contracting with another utility or operator firm. (www.maine.gov) New Jersey's database also reports which systems buy water from or sell water to other systems. A water-supply relationship should therefore have its own relationship type; it does not by itself establish common ownership. (dep.nj.gov)

Apply the outcome field only after recording the missing evidence:

- **Keep:** Business model and legal entity meet the stated mandate; remaining limits are explicit.
- **Exclude:** Evidence establishes an out-of-scope operation or ownership form.
- **Hold:** A material identity, owner, operator or jurisdiction question remains.
- **Classify:** Preserve ancillary, nonprofit and public categories even after exclusion.
- **Escalate:** Assign questions about title or control to appropriate counsel.

Deduplication and Corporate Parent Verification

The company layer should have a stable entity key and a separate relationship history. Start with jurisdiction, registry number and registration type. Names, addresses and contacts can propose matches, but should not complete them.

Oregon's registered-agent guidance illustrates the risk: an agent's responsibility is accepting legal documents, and an attorney or accountant may fill the role. Shared agent details cannot establish common ownership. (sos.oregon.gov) Census's enterprise concept, based on common ownership or control across establishments, is useful conceptual context; it is not a ready-made crosswalk from SDWIS records. (www.census.gov)

Use the following evidence sequence:

- **System identity:** Match the PWSID and relevant state record.
- **Owner identity:** Transcribe the named owner without dropping legal suffixes.
- **Entity resolution:** Obtain jurisdiction-qualified registry evidence and registration type.

- **Business model:** Establish whether the entity supplies utility service or supports another activity.
- **Parent relationship:** Record the specific source, date and meaning of control.
- **Group assembly:** Combine entities only where the relationship evidence supports the mandate.
- **Reversibility:** Preserve the component records and the reason for every merge.

For companies with securities filings, the Securities and Exchange Commission's **Central Index Key, or CIK**, identifies a filer, which can be an entity or an individual. It should be retained as a cross-reference rather than used as independent parent proof. (www.sec.gov) Regulation S-K's subsidiary exhibit rule also permits certain subsidiaries to be omitted when they are not significant in the aggregate. Absence from an Exhibit 21 list cannot prove that a subsidiary relationship does not exist. (www.ecfr.gov)

The **Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation, or GLEIF**, defines its highest accounting-consolidating parent through consolidated financial statements. Preserve that definition when using Legal Entity Identifier, or **LEI**, relationship data. It may help identify a corporate chain, but should not be relabeled a complete beneficial-ownership register. (www.gleif.org) GLEIF also publishes reporting exceptions, including parents without an LEI and nonpublic relationship information. A missing parent is not equivalent to verified independence. (www.gleif.org)

For unresolved corporate relationships, maintain provisional groups separately from verified groups. Analysts can assign a research cluster to organize work, but that cluster must not reduce the verified-company count until the identity evidence supports a merge. A utility lawyer or corporate counsel should review disputed title, control or transaction-boundary questions; an origination screen should keep those questions open.

Data Analysis and Evidence

The quantitative question is not simply "how many private systems exist?" It is "how many distinct observations were reviewed, how many owners were resolved, and how many verified entities meet this mandate?"

Published figures illustrate incompatible measurement units. CRS's **November 19, 2024** report states that **81%** of community systems serve **3,300 or fewer people**, and that **more than 95%** of privately owned community systems fall within that size range. (www.everycrsreport.com) Its system-characteristics source is SDWIS accessed **July 15, 2024**. (www.everycrsreport.com) These figures describe a historic system population, including ownership models requiring further classification.

Separately, Census's industry profile reports **4,554 employer establishments in 2023** for North American Industry Classification System, or **NAICS**, **221310: Water Supply and Irrigation Systems**. (data.census.gov) That industry includes drinking, irrigation and other water uses. (data.census.gov) The count therefore differs in unit, coverage and vintage from a drinking-water-system count. It is not an acquisition-company denominator.

Population served and connections also measure different things. ECHO defines population as an estimated average daily population and service connections as a separate count. Keep them in distinct columns and do not add populations across potentially overlapping territories without checking their counting basis. (echo.epa.gov)

Batch calculations (Hypothetical Example)

The following numbers are entirely fictional and demonstrate arithmetic only. They are not national estimates or observed research results.

- **Imported observations:** 15 rows, including repeated observations across vintages.
- **Unique reviewed systems:** 12 distinct PWSIDs after selecting the mandate's observation period.
- **Owner-resolved systems:** 9 of the 12 reviewed systems have verified permit-owner identity.
- **Owner-resolution rate:** 9 / 12 = **75%**, measured across reviewed systems.
- **Unique verified legal companies:** 5 distinct jurisdiction-qualified entities account for those 9 resolved systems.
- **Unresolved systems:** 3 of 12, retained outside the verified-company count.
- **Parent coverage:** 3 of the 5 verified entities have supported parent determinations, giving **60% entity-level parent resolution**.

The company count is not 12, and the unresolved systems cannot each be assumed to represent one additional company. Nor does an owner-resolution rate establish mandate fit: some resolved owners may be public, nonprofit or ancillary.

For production reporting, publish the distinct-system formula, reviewed-record denominator and entity-resolution rule beside every percentage. Label any broader coverage measure "coverage of the reviewed source-defined subset." Without a verified company universe, a national market-completeness percentage would lack a defensible denominator.

Fictional Screening Examples

All names and record labels below are invented. They are not valid PWSIDs, real companies, transaction opportunities or findings about actual owners. The mandate is the fictional for-profit community-utility ownership mandate described earlier.

Table 3 applies the proposed decisions. "Verified" refers only to evidence stipulated inside the hypothetical exercise.

Fictional record	Stipulated evidence and unresolved role	Decision and next required source
FICTION-UTILITY-A and FICTION-UTILITY-B (Hypothetical Example)	Two active community-system observations name the same permit owner. Registry evidence verifies one for-profit legal utility entity; parent is unresolved.	**Keep one provisional company lead**, preserve both systems. Obtain dated corporate-parent evidence before grouping further.
FICTION-PARK (Hypothetical Example)	A private community system supplies an invented mobile-home property. State and entity evidence show water is ancillary to the property business.	**Exclude from this utility-ownership mandate; classify ancillary.** If that conclusion were uncertain, obtain current permit and business-model records.
FICTION-MEMBER (Hypothetical Example)	A broad private code is paired with verified member-owned nonprofit governing documents.	**Exclude; classify nonprofit.** Record the documents and jurisdiction rather than translating P into for-profit.

Fictional record	Stipulated evidence and unresolved role	Decision and next required source
FICTION-OPERATOR (Hypothetical Example)	A government-owned system names a separate operating contractor; no transfer of utility ownership is established.	**Exclude public asset ownership; record operator separately.** Use the operative contract and current owner record for any services mandate.
FICTION-CONFLICT (Hypothetical Example)	An older federal observation and a newer state owner entry differ; legal-entity identity is not resolved.	**Hold.** Obtain effective-date evidence and the current regulator record, then resolve the entity.

The utility example shows why systems should consolidate into a company only after identity verification. The park example reflects a legitimate classification possibility: New York explicitly includes mobile-home parks among private community suppliers. That source does not decide the fictional record; the stipulated evidence does. (www.health.ny.gov)

The contractor example likewise illustrates a supported relationship type rather than a real case. Maine permits contracted operator services, while Florida's statute recognizes specified government-owned facilities operated by private firms. Neither fact transfers asset ownership to the contractor. (www.maine.gov) (www.flsenate.gov)

A conflicting owner record needs an event timeline. Texas's instructions state that utility ownership information cannot be updated until the relevant sale, transfer or merger application has been approved. Analysts should therefore distinguish a transaction announcement, approval, effective event and database update, asking the relevant regulator or counsel which document establishes the date at issue. (www.tceq.texas.gov) No one date should silently overwrite all the others.

Implications and Future Directions

The useful upgrade from an SDWIS search to a water utility database is an evidence model that can be corrected. The recommended refresh unit is the individual relationship: system-to-owner, owner-to-entity, operator-to-system or entity-to-parent. A new address need not trigger a corporate merger, and an updated operator designation need not change the permit owner.

Source changes should trigger focused checks. GAO's projected **December 2026** ownership-definition milestone is a reason to revisit published definitions and actual records after the stated date. It remains a forecast on the live recommendation page, not evidence that implementation has occurred. (www.gao.gov) If definitions change, compare raw historical codes with new observations instead of retroactively rewriting the archive.

Extraction tools can help retrieve observations but do not eliminate relationship gaps. Apify's documentation states that operator names, emails, phone numbers and street addresses are dropped. Such a dataset cannot answer an operator-identification question through fields it deliberately omits. The documentation was reviewed; the scraper's actual output was not tested. (apify.com)

State discovery should also remain source-specific. New Jersey supports system-ID and system-name searches; Florida offers geographic territory discovery. Those are useful routes into evidence, with different purposes and jurisdictional boundaries. (dep.nj.gov) (www.psc.state.fl.us) A growing source list is useful only when each new source answers a defined unresolved question.

Before handing a retained lead to the deal team, include:

- **Identity:** The verified entity and the systems linked to it.
- **Mandate fit:** The evidence for utility ownership and for-profit classification.
- **Relationships:** Separate owner, operator and supported parent determinations.
- **Conflicts:** Competing values with their effective dates and unresolved questions.
- **Coverage:** Reviewed-source boundaries and explicit denominators.
- **Expert review:** The legal or engineering issue requiring specialist assessment.
- **Next action:** The next public record or authorized diligence question.

These controls improve reviewability. They do not establish legal title, beneficial ownership, available transaction perimeter, financial performance or willingness to sell.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How can private water utilities be identified in SDWIS?

Use raw owner type with system type, activity and geography to generate observations for review. Then obtain current state owner evidence, resolve the entity and establish the business model. A PWSID is a system identifier, so the final company count requires an additional identity step. (www.epa.gov)

Are non-community systems always outside the mandate?

No. Their treatment depends on the written mandate and verified business activity. Schools and factories are examples of non-transient non-community systems, but system type alone should not decide ownership or commercial relevance. (www.epa.gov)

Does a shared operator identify the corporate parent?

No. Preserve operator and parent as separate relationships. Maine explicitly allows a system to obtain operator services by contract from another utility or operator firm. A contract is evidence of the stated service relationship. (www.maine.gov)

Can a registry number prove that two names are two companies?

Not by itself. Oregon gives an assumed business name its own registry number. Check the registration type and underlying entity before counting companies or merging records. (sos.oregon.gov)

Conclusion

A defensible SDWIS ownership screen produces an auditable research decision for each system observation. It preserves the raw ownership code, system classification, source product and observation date, then asks what evidence is still needed to identify the business.

The central distinction is between a regulated public water system and a company that owns or operates it. GAO distinguishes for-profit, nonprofit and ancillary private arrangements. That distinction supports separate review paths rather than one private-ownership flag. (www.gao.gov)

The proposed ledger makes those paths concrete. A record can identify a permit owner while leaving the operator relationship or parent unresolved. Verified systems can be linked to a documented legal entity without inventing ownership above it. Ancillary, nonprofit and public observations can be classified and excluded from a particular mandate while remaining available for another research scope.

For origination teams, the practical output is a retained lead with evidence, an exclusion with a stated reason, or a hold with a named next source. Report system counts, verified-company counts and resolution rates separately. Keep unknown parents visible, preserve conflicting dates, and obtain specialist review when the question concerns title, jurisdiction, control or transaction boundaries.

That approach supports a reviewable company map while respecting the limits of the underlying records. It does not turn a system code into a conclusion about acquisition suitability, current beneficial ownership or sale readiness.

Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.

1. https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/information-about-public-water-systems
2. https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-291
3. https://www.epa.gov/DWdata/sdwis-federal-reporting-services-data-dictionary
4. https://echo.epa.gov/tools/data-downloads/sdwa-download-summary
5. https://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/dwv/update
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7. https://ncuc.gov/Industries/water/water.html
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28. https://www.gleif.org/en/lei-data/access-and-use-lei-data/level-2-data-reporting-exceptions-2-1-format
29. https://data.census.gov/profile/221310_-_Water_Supply_and_Irrigation_Systems?codeset=naics%7E221310

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Docket provides deal-origination research software and managed research for private equity firms. We help investment teams investigate acquisition targets using structured screening criteria, retained sources and reviewable company evidence. Teams can work through a self-serve platform or use managed research, depending on how they want research delivered.

Research against a defined mandate

A useful target list needs more than company names. Docket focuses on the questions that determine whether a company fits an investment mandate, including the evidence needed to support or qualify each answer. Our research approach makes the connection between screening criteria, source material and conclusions visible to the team reviewing the work.

Triage, Scout and Audit

Docket's three named research agents perform complementary tasks. Triage resolves company identity and screens fit. Scout collects sourced answers against the mandate. Audit checks retained evidence, addresses contradictions and leaves unsupported answers visibly unresolved. This structure helps reviewers distinguish established findings from missing information and questions requiring further investigation.

Evidence that supports investment-team judgment

Our research library covers market mapping, screening criteria, private-company data, succession and ownership, source evaluation and evidence standards. These resources explain the methods and limitations behind origination research. Findings support a team's judgment; they do not establish that a company is for sale or guarantee a transaction or investment outcome.

Work with Docket

Visit Docket to explore the platform, managed research and the current contact path. Read about screening criteria, evidence standards, AI research agents and market mapping.

Public examples are illustrative unless explicitly identified otherwise. Research preparation and authorized outreach are separate activities; confidential target lists and customer outcomes should never be inferred from an educational example.

Website: https://docket.capital

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