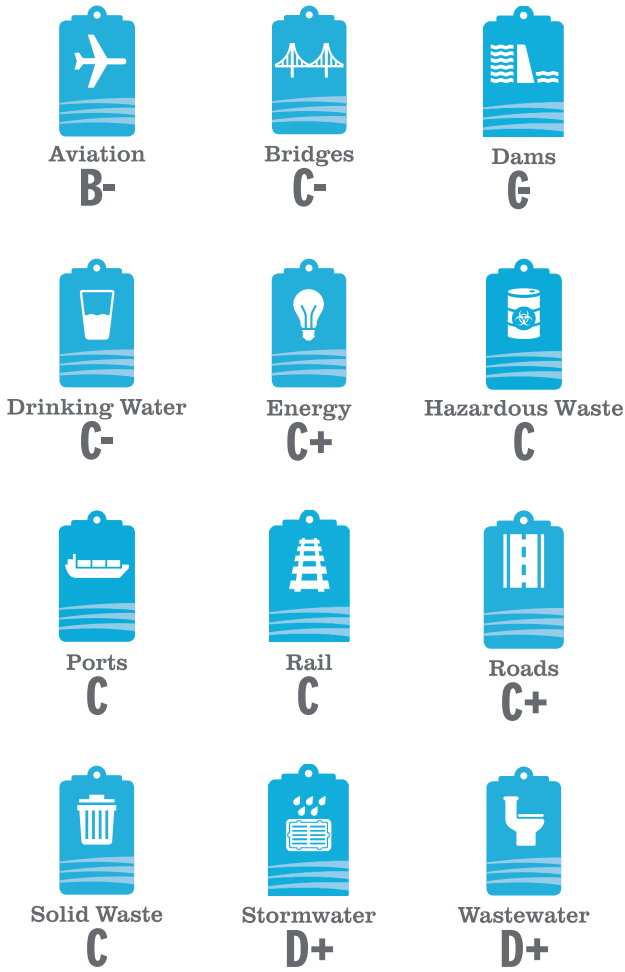
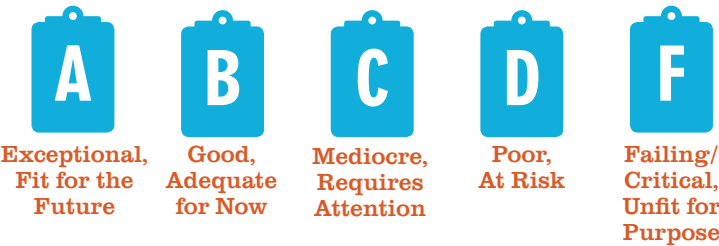


New Hampshire Grades



About the Grades

The 2026 Report Card for New Hampshire’s Infrastructure was written by a committee of more than 20 civil engineers across New Hampshire who volunteered their time to collect and analyze data, prepare and review their findings and present their conclusions. The committee worked with staff from ASCE National and ASCE’s Committee on America’s Infrastructure to provide a snapshot of our state’s infrastructure, as it relates to us locally and on a national level. The Report Card Sections are graded based on the following eight criteria: capacity, condition, funding, future need, operation and maintenance, public safety, resilience and innovation. ASCE defines these grades as follows:



Solutions to Raise the Grade

- 1

Secure dedicated, long-term funding to replace one-time federal infusions.

Much of New Hampshire’s recent progress has relied on recent federal programs while state revenue sources have not kept pace with needs. Dedicated, predictable funding is needed, and existing state funds should be maintained.
- 2

Set NH rates and fees for proactiveness rather than reactiveness.

New Hampshire’s utility and resource rates are not sufficient to sustain infrastructure programs and assets. Aligning rates and fees with the actual cost of service, supported by public education on those costs, will allow owners to plan for replacement rather than react to failure.
- 3

Expand asset management and preventive maintenance.

Knowing what assets exist, what condition they are in, and what they will cost to replace allows owners to prioritize limited dollars. Statewide support is needed for asset inventories, condition assessments, and planning.
- 4

Build resilience into planning, design, and funding decisions.

Heavier storms, drought, and rising seas already affect infrastructure statewide. Resilience should be integrated into capital plans, including coastal protection at harbors, system interconnections, and storage and transmission improvements for the electric grid.
- 5

Improve the built environment for safer, healthier communities.

As key next steps, New Hampshire should fund positions to develop and manage dam Emergency Action Plans, fully fund and expand roadway safety programs, invest in treatment and source evaluation for emerging contaminants, and strengthen cybersecurity at water systems.
- 5

Invest in the infrastructure workforce.

Staffing gaps affect infrastructure programs across categories and limit what the state and its partners can deliver. Expanded training, certification, and career pathways, along with retention of experienced staff, are essential.
- 5

Strengthen partnerships, technical assistance, and regional coordination.

State support should include technical assistance for municipal bridges and grant administration, measures allowing small water systems to interconnect or merge, funding programs open to non-state dam owners, support to local stormwater funding programs, and regional partnerships for rail.

About ASCE-New Hampshire

Established in 1958, the New Hampshire Section is a local section of ASCE. The local sections provide an opportunity for members to address issues and be involved in activities which are of a more local or regional nature.

The New Hampshire Section of ASCE has the mission to uphold and enhance the integrity and ethics of the civil engineering profession; to serve the community of engineers and the community as a whole; to improve interaction with and education of the public and legislators; to foster professional and technical interaction among students, younger members, and experienced professionals; and to instill enthusiasm in the profession and Section membership.

How You Can Get Involved

Get the full story behind this Report Card at www.infrastructurereportcard.org/NewHampshire. Ask your elected leaders what they’re doing to keep up with your neighborhood’s infrastructure. Use your zip code to get your list of elected officials at www.infrastructurereportcard.org/take-action.



INFRASTRUCTURE MATTERS

The 2026 Report Card for New Hampshire’s Infrastructure, prepared by the New Hampshire Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE-NH), evaluates twelve infrastructure categories. Category grades range from a high of B- for aviation to a low of D+ for stormwater and wastewater. Since 2017, though solid waste slipped from C+ to C, aviation, ports, rail, and roads improved, and the overall grade rose from a C- to a C.

Aging assets are a recurring theme across all of New Hampshire’s infrastructure systems. New Hampshire’s dams average more than 100 years old, and of its bridges, 8.4% are on the “Red List.” Many drinking water systems are exceeding their intended service life, and much of the wastewater collection infrastructure, with some systems dating to the 1870s, is in poor or failing condition. Only about 35% of the rail network can handle industry-standard 286,000-pound carloads. However, targeted investments are paying off: 86% of the state highway system is in good or fair condition, an 18% improvement over the past decade, and recent projects have strengthened the ports, which contribute approximately \$1.9 billion annually to the state’s economy.

Future funding, though, is uncertain. Much of the recent progress has leaned on one-time federal funding, including the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the American Rescue Plan Act. The state gas tax is not indexed to inflation, and about \$23 million per year that once supported roads and bridges now repays a federal loan. New Hampshire’s Dam Bureau annually receives roughly 1% of the estimated \$408 million needed for the state’s share of hazardous dam rehabilitation. Stormwater needs have reached \$1.3 billion, and New Hampshire is one of only six states without a municipal stormwater utility. Wastewater needs are estimated at \$2.2 billion through 2042, and a current statewide estimate of the drinking water funding gap has not been identified.

Public safety and resilience concerns are growing as well. More than 80,000 residents are within potential inundation zones downstream of significant and high hazard dams. Heavier storms are straining bridges, dams, stormwater, sewer, and drinking water systems, and sea levels are predicted to rise between two and four feet by 2070, threatening the state’s ports and coastal roads. Roadway fatalities rose 30% from 2019 to 2025. In solid waste, in-state disposal capacity is estimated to last only about 10 years. Additionally, emerging contaminants such as PFAS have added cost and complexity to biosolids disposal, site cleanup, and drinking water treatment, and cybersecurity has emerged as a risk for drinking water systems.

Innovation is not yet widespread, but is progressing, from new pavement materials and all-electronic tolling to regional water interconnections, dam removals, and the state’s first utility-scale battery storage project. However, workforce shortages limit progress: NHDOT has reported a vacancy rate of 20–25% for several years, and the water sector estimates a need of 40 to 50 new certified drinking water operators each year through 2030.

The 2026 Report Card calls for stable, long-term funding to replace reliance on one-time federal infusions; utility rates that reflect the true cost of service; stronger asset management, staffing, and technical assistance, particularly for municipalities and small systems; and investment in resilience against extreme weather and coastal flooding. With sustained investment, proactive planning, and collaboration among state, local, and private partners, New Hampshire can move its infrastructure from mediocre but serviceable to resilient and ready for the future.

Contact Us

reportcard@asce.org

www.infrastructurereportcard.org/NewHampshire

The 2026 Report Card on New Hampshire’s Infrastructure

gave the state an overall G.P.A. of C. New Hampshire’s civil engineers studied twelve infrastructure categories. Of those twelve, one infrastructure category is in good condition, nine are in mediocre condition, and two categories are in poor condition.

The good news is there are solutions to all these challenges, and we can raise the grades of New Hampshire’s infrastructure. By learning more today about the conditions of the infrastructure you use every day, you too can help raise the grade.



Aviation

New Hampshire’s aviation system includes 25 public-use airports, 105 private-use airports, and three commercial service airports, supporting more than 1,500 registered aircraft and contributing approximately 6,600 jobs and \$643 million in payroll. Total annual economic output from aviation exceeds \$1.7 billion, with an additional \$1 billion generated and 3,600 additional jobs through aviation manufacturing. While aircraft operations have remained relatively stable through the COVID-19 pandemic, commercial passenger activity remains approximately 15% below pre-pandemic levels. Over the past two decades, New Hampshire’s airport planning and investment priorities have increasingly emphasized safety improvements, pavement rehabilitation, navigational upgrades, and preservation of existing facilities, while capacity expansion has generally been pursued when supported by operational demand or economic need. Workforce shortages in technical aviation roles continue to constrain system performance. Federal and state funding programs provide critical support, but administrative and resource limitations may prevent some airports from fully utilizing available funds. To sustain and improve system performance, New Hampshire must modernize planning efforts, strengthen workforce pipelines, and ensure consistent access to funding programs.



Bridges

New Hampshire’s public bridge inventory includes 3,860 bridges (10 ft. or greater), consisting of 2,161 State/Turnpike bridges and 1,699 Municipal/Other bridges. As of December 2024, 324 bridges (8.4%) are in “Poor” condition and on the “Red List”, representing approximately 801,000 square feet (6.0%) of bridge deck area. Bridges included in the “Red List” have at least one major structural element rated in poor condition but are still considered safe for use, in accordance with posted weight restrictions.

Over the last decade, the state has made measurable progress in reducing the number of Red List bridges, with significant declines in both state and municipal inventories. However, this progress is offset by an aging bridge network, increasing construction costs, and growing maintenance demands. Many bridges are approaching or exceeding their intended service life, placing additional strain on limited funding resources. Sustained investment and proactive asset management will be essential to maintain system reliability and prevent further deterioration.



Dams

New Hampshire has approximately 2,600 state-regulated dams, the average age of which is over 100 years old. Consequently, many of the state’s hazardous dams are in poor condition when evaluated using modern design criteria and performance standards.

Downstream development has further elevated risk, resulting in the reclassification of many dams into higher hazard categories where failure could result in loss of life. In addition to the new risk, dam owners are faced with costly rehabilitation projects to address things like discharge capacity and structural deficits, emergency action planning needs, and other requirements associated with upgraded classifications.

While recent federal investment has supported improvements at nearly 60 dams, these one-time infusions of funding are not expected to continue to support infrastructure needs. Most dam owners, particularly private owners, are rarely eligible for the limited funding opportunities that are made available for such projects.



Drinking Water

New Hampshire’s drinking water infrastructure is aging, with many treatment facilities and distribution systems exceeding intended service life. The state has approximately 2,500 public water systems, and about 750,000 residents receive water from public systems; many others rely on private wells. Growth and deferred maintenance add pressure, even as larger systems continue to provide reliable service.

New Hampshire relies on customer rates and state and federal funding, including the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) and the Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services has provided approximately \$306 million in DWSRF financing, and the state is projected to receive more than \$400 million for drinking water and clean water infrastructure in fiscal years 2022–2026. These resources are time-limited. PFAS and other contaminants, climate risks, and cybersecurity threats reinforce the need for sustained investment and proactive asset management to protect reliability, public health, and future growth.



Energy

New Hampshire is part of a regional power system, regulated by ISO-NE that forecasts sufficient supply through 2033. However, investments in clean energy, storage, and transmission can mitigate the risk and cost of imported gas supply and unexpected demand increases.

Investments in the transmission and distribution system have reinforced the existing system against weather events and improved communication to reduce outage times. Additional investments are needed to address constraints that limit imports and distributed generation interconnection.

New Hampshire has less than 25% of the EV chargers needed to meet 2030 projected demand. Available funds should be distributed and the NH Department of Energy should explore other funding mechanisms or subsidies.



Hazardous Waste

New Hampshire, like many states in the Northeast, faces a wide range of environmental legacy concerns stemming from its industrial and manufacturing history. The state has approximately 2,200 active hazardous waste generators producing 12 million pounds of hazardous waste annually, an estimated 1,100 petroleum release and remediation sites, approximately 1,600 other hazardous waste sites under investigation or remediation, 21 federal Superfund sites, and more than 360 Brownfield properties.

Meaningful progress continues through federal and state programs, but funding has not kept pace with rising costs, increased regulatory demands, and long-term monitoring needs. Emerging contaminants, particularly per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), have added complexity and cost to environmental management efforts. NHDES implemented targeted fee increases in 2025, representing a step toward stabilizing funding. Continued evaluation of fee structures, funding mechanisms, and resource allocation will be necessary to ensure sustainable oversight and timely remediation while protecting drinking water resources.



Ports

New Hampshire’s coastal port system plays a critical role in the state’s economy despite having only 13 miles of coastline. The state maintains a highly productive and economically vital maritime system, centered around Portsmouth Harbor, the state’s only deep-draft harbor, which sits on the Piscataqua River. The system supports bulk cargo movement, commercial fishing, marine construction, marine research and education, and tourism. Additional facilities at Hampton-Seabrook Harbor and Rye Harbor provide essential access for commercial and recreational users.

Between 2018 and 2025, major investments improved infrastructure conditions, expanded navigational capacity, and extended the service life of key assets. Projects included rehabilitating the Market Street Marine Terminal, upgrading the Portsmouth Commercial Fish Pier, and expanding the Piscataqua River Turning Basin. Together, these investments increased capacity, revitalized port infrastructure, and fostered new opportunities.

While these improvements have strengthened system performance, challenges remain. Aging infrastructure, limited upland capacity, and increasing vulnerability to coastal flooding constrain future growth. Continued investment in resilience, maintenance, and modernization will be required to sustain economic benefits and adapt to evolving demands.



Rail

The 2026 New Hampshire State Rail Plan reports 461 miles of rail track, including publicly and privately owned within the State of New Hampshire. While primarily used for transporting freight, the state’s rail also includes two Amtrak-operated passenger services supported by the States of Maine and Vermont on selected routes and three tourist excursion railroads on trackage not currently included in the national system. Approximately 195 miles of the state’s rail track is state-owned (42% of the in-state total). The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) has management responsibility and leases this trackage to private (tenant) railroad operators for freight and tourist excursion railroad operations. Approximately 266 miles are owned by private railroads, with one Class 1 railroad (CSX Transportation) operating 121 miles. Ridership on Amtrak’s Downeaster and Vermonter services have recovered and are returning to pre-Covid levels. Train safety incidents in New Hampshire remain low and not related to railroad operations. On both public and private operations railroad equipment and facilities are well maintained operated efficiently.



Roads

New Hampshire’s roadway system is showing measurable improvement, with 86% of the state highway system in good or fair condition, an 18% improvement over the past decade. Sustained annual investment of \$60 million to \$100 million has enabled the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) to meet or exceed condition targets across all roadway types. Strategic pavement management and prioritization have improved overall system performance. Despite this progress, funding challenges remain. Revenue sources such as the gas tax are becoming less effective due to increased fuel efficiency and adoption of alternative-fuel vehicles, while upcoming shifts in debt service obligations will further constrain available funding. Although capacity is generally adequate, safety concerns persist, including elevated traffic fatality trends. NHDOT also faces ongoing staffing challenges, with an average vacancy rate of 20–25% for several years. Maintaining current conditions and advancing performance will require continued investment, improved revenue strategies, and a focus on workforce, safety, and resilience.



Solid Waste

New Hampshire’s solid waste industry has remained relatively stable for the last several years. The current infrastructure is considered satisfactory as the existing facilities are required to meet or exceed applicable federal, state, and/or local regulations. However, recent estimates suggest that the current in-state disposal capacity will only sustain New Hampshire’s needs for approximately 10 years.

Despite a state waste management hierarchy that prioritizes diversion, New Hampshire continues to rely heavily on disposal. The estimated recycling rate (estimated to be 16.7% in 2024). The state waste disposal reduction goals, which were established by legislation (see RSA 149-M:2), are based on the quantity of municipal solid waste (MSW) and construction and demolition (C&D) debris disposed in 2018. The goals look for a 25% decrease by 2030 and 45% decrease by 2050, holding the per capita disposal of all other waste type quantities the same. At present, infrastructure for waste diversion, such as recycling and organics processing facilities, is limited. Legislative efforts, including food waste disposal restrictions, represent progress but have not yet significantly shifted system performance.

Projected long-term capacity shortfalls, combined with limited diversion infrastructure and policy uncertainty, highlight the need for investment, improved data collection, and stronger alignment between policy and waste reduction goals.



Stormwater

Stormwater infrastructure in New Hampshire is aging, underfunded, and increasingly strained by development pressures and more severe storm events. Many systems were constructed prior to 1970 and are approaching or exceeding their intended service life. Development expansion increases impervious surfaces which continues to increase runoff volumes and flooding risk.

Under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit program, communities face expanding requirements related to reducing pollutants, improving infrastructure mapping, and maintaining existing systems. However, funding remains limited and is primarily supported through local property taxes. Unlike neighboring states, New Hampshire has no municipal stormwater utilities.

Increasing weather extremes are expected to further stress existing systems through more frequent and intense precipitation events. The 2022 Clean Watersheds Needs Survey, New Hampshire requires nearly \$1.3 billion in stormwater infrastructure needs to improve capacity, reduce flooding, and protect water quality. Significant investment is needed to reduce costly flooding and protect water resources that support communities, ecosystems, recreation, and local economies.



Wastewater

Well-functioning wastewater collection and treatment systems are critical to protecting public health and maintaining the quality of New Hampshire’s rivers, lakes and coastal areas. Overall, New Hampshire’s wastewater systems need significant upgrades to replace aging infrastructure and comply with more stringent regulatory requirements. Limited funding assistance, workforce availability, and lack of community engagement are significant barriers to maintaining and upgrading wastewater infrastructure.