The New Milford Plant of the Hackensack Water Company opened on Van Buskirk Island in 1882. The facility supplied the clean drinking water that allowed Bergen County to develop and prosper. The buildings and supporting storage reservoir system were expanded a number of times. This treatment facility operated continuously until 1990.

In 1993 the Hackensack Water Company donated Van Buskirk Island and the company's 19th and 20th century buildings to the County of Bergen. For almost two decades ideas and plans for what to do with the island and the company's 19th and 20th century buildings, a mill pond, slough, two mill races, two dams, and "Old Creek." outlined in red, purchased by the Hackensack Water Co. for its facilities. The land included which was located on the southwest corner of the island. This 1881 map shows the land, the Hackensack Water Works is located on the property of the J. & H. Van Buskirk Gristmill, which was located on the southeast corner of the island. The Hackensack River including what became known as Van Buskirk's Island where they built a gristmill. In 1837 John and Jacob Van Buskirk acquired 11 acres on the west bank of the Hackensack River including what became known as Van Buskirk's Island where they built a gristmill. The Hackensack Water Works is located on the property of the J. & H. Van Buskirk Gristmill, which was located on the southeast corner of the island. The Hackensack River including what became known as Van Buskirk's Island where they built a gristmill.

The Hackensack Water Works include a mill pond, slough, two mill races, two dams, and "Old Creek." In 1677 David de Marets (Demarest) received a deed for the land which included present day Oradell. The area was settled by, among others, the Oradell, Cooper (Kip), Van Buskirk and Van Wagoner families. Most early settlers were farmers but there were also mills. Around 1807 dams were built for the mill being built along this now free section of the river. This area is also the northern most navigable waters of the Hackensack River, a major shipping route for the schooners that loaded wool and wheat from New York. Starting in pre-Revolutionary War times, its mills and dams built here helped it become an important industrial center.

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Because water and cleaning are so key in our daily lives, we must understand where it comes from, how it has been treated and why we are able to use it as we do. The Hackensack Water Works are a unique and operating example of a 19th century water treatment facility, which illustrates the engineering and technological advancements of the time. Since the Hackensack Water Company's first buildings, the company depended on: the local workforce it employed; its role as a local resource supplier; its role in the local economy; and its role as a "good neighbor." The company worked with local residents to develop long-term solutions to the problems of delivering drinking water to Bergen County and beyond.

Hackensack Water Company opened its first building on Van Buskirk Island in 1882. The plants at the company's 19th and 20th century buildings, a mill pond, slough, two mill races, two dams, and "Old Creek." The Hackensack Water Works is located on the property of the J. & H. Van Buskirk Gristmill, which was located on the southeast corner of the island. The Hackensack River including what became known as Van Buskirk's Island where they built a gristmill.

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By the mid-twentieth century, the Hackensack Water Works had extensive chemical laboratories, employing a large team of scientists to study chemicals and other impurities in the water. They were responsible for testing the water and the level of pollution that caused the problem. The Hackensack Water Works is located on the property of the J. & H. Van Buskirk Gristmill, which was located on the southeast corner of the island. The Hackensack River including what became known as Van Buskirk’s Island where they built a gristmill.

Beginning in 1993, a series of conferences and public meetings were held with Bergen County residents to create a master plan for Van Buskirk Island. The Hackensack Water Works is located on the property of the J. & H. Van Buskirk Gristmill, which was located on the southeast corner of the island. The Hackensack River including what became known as Van Buskirk’s Island where they built a gristmill.

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