

Protecting the Source

Upcoming SWP Classes in 2008 (CEU):

#873—SWP Managing Risks (6)

- 1/29—Pittsburgh
- 1/31—Meadville
- 4/3—PRWA Conference, State College

#1660—WHP for Small Systems (4.5)

- 2/13—Slippery Rock
- 2/20—Johnstown
- 2/27—Gettysburg
- 3/5—Scranton
- 3/12—Coatesville
- 3/19—Lock Haven
- 4/1—PRWA Conference, State College

Attention small PWS systems!!

Starting in 2008, PRWA Source Water Protection technicians will be focusing on the smaller PWS in Pennsylvania—the life blood of PRWA. So, for any system that serves less than ~1,000, this is your chance to become a part of our target for the next few years. Contact PRWA for more information.

What is Source Water Protection?

The process by which a public or private entity works to protect and/or preserve the area(s) that influence(s) their raw drinking water. So, instead of treating what is given to them naturally (or not so naturally), they will create partnerships and projects that will improve the quality of the water before it reaches the treatment system.

How does the process work?

The ultimate goal of this effort is to create a Source Water Protection Program and Plan document. The public water supplier and the community will form a Steering Committee to guide the process. Other specific tasks include:

- Delineate the watershed/wellhead area
- Identify Potential Sources of

Contamination in the watershed/wellhead area

- Discuss Management options
- Create a Plan document and long-term Source Water Protection Program

PRWA staff are responsible for guiding this process from start to finish and also assisting the system after the Plan is complete.

Why is it important?

Particularly for public water suppliers, many contaminants are removed during the treatment process, thanks to newer technologies. However, new technologies and chemistry are sometimes costing systems more than they can afford to run their daily operation.



Therefore, the importance is twofold:

- By creating partnerships and performing this process, you will inherently be improving the water quality, which helps environmentally; and
- By creating cleaner raw water, the water supplier will save money on treatment costs, having a trickle-down effect to the customers of the system.

Small System Wellhead Protection Correspondence Course (#1659) Earn up to 15 Water Operators Contact Hours!!!

PRWA has developed a wellhead protection correspondence course specifically for groundwater systems serving less than 500 population. The course consists of a detailed guidebook and wellhead protection plan templates along with supplemental information. The

guidebook will walk you through all the steps to develop a wellhead plan for your water system. Successful completion of the course consists of implementing at least 1 management approach that you have proposed for your protection area (education, policies, security

updates, etc.). The WHP Plan that you develop is then submitted to PRWA for evaluation and feedback.

Contact Joel Jordan at 800-653-PRWA (7792) or jjordan@prwa.com

System Spotlight: Ligonier Township Municipal Authority

We would like to congratulate the Ligonier Township Municipal Authority on the approval of their Source Water Protection Plan by DEP. Ligonier Township is one of very few surface water systems with an approved Source Water Protection Plan.

Ligonier Township is located in southwestern Pennsylvania in Westmoreland County. The water system consists of two wells and a surface water reservoir. The Waterford Water Works System Well serves 180 connections in the town of Waterford. The Gamelands Well and the South Fork Reservoir serve 1,300 connections in Ligonier Township and a small number of residential connections within Ligonier Borough.

In 2001, the Ligonier Township Supervisors recognized that potential threats to its water supply existed and the Ligonier Township Source Water Protection Steering Committee was created to make recommendations to Ligonier Township, the Waterford Service Area, and Westmoreland County Planning. The Township applied for both a Wellhead Protection grant and a Source Water Protection grant totaling \$46,000.



Casselberry and Associates was hired to perform a Source Water Assessment of the three water sources including rigorous delineations of the water sources. With assistance from the engineering firm of Morris Knowles & Associates, DEP's southwest regional office and PRWA, the Source Water Protection Plan was developed. For each Potential Source of Contamination threat identified, specific measures were developed to reduce, eliminate or respond to the potential contaminate. Emergency Response Plans were revised to address contamination threats to each source and an education / public outreach program was developed.



A key component to the Source Water Protection Plan is educating the residents of the area as to how their drinking water can be contaminated and what they can do to prevent contamination of their drinking water sources. The Committee, working with the Loyalhanna Watershed Association and PRWA developed educational material to target both the public and Potential Sources of Contamination.

A Source Water Protection educational program was developed for the Ligonier Township School District's Middle School and the Holy Trinity School. Educational material was purchased through the Source Water Protection Grant.

The Township is working on developing a Wellhead Protection Overlay Ordinance to protect the current well locations and to protect potential future well locations.

The Municipal Authority realizes that it is much more cost effective to have plans in place to protect the water source than it is deal with a contamination event after it takes place. The Ligonier Township Municipal Authority, the Township Supervisors and the Source Water Protection Steering Committee should be commended for their excellent work.

How to Begin and Enhance Your SWP Program

After looking through this newsletter, beginning a Source Water Protection Program may appear to be a little overwhelming. To be sure, there are a lot of pieces to consider. Maybe you are even doing some of your own Source Water Protection work, and just need a little spark to move on to the next level. So, here are a few avenues that you can take to either get your program jumpstarted or take your existing program to the next level.

1. Find a local “sparkplug”. Any successful SWP program needs strong leadership, and someone who is devoted to seeing the program grow and expand. Other parts of this newsletter detail the importance of SWP, but sometimes these points are difficult sells to entities outside of your system or authority. You need someone that can be persistent, yet understanding when partnerships take some time to create and solidify.

2. Money! Although money does not solve all problems, in this case, it can gain you some understanding, or give you the piece you need to really strengthen your effort. During the summer of 2007, PA DEP un-

veiled a new funding opportunity (SWAPTAP) for systems that want to do some large-scale SWP work.

Check their website for more information about this opportunity. Also, there are a number of small grant opportunities available, including one from the League of Women Voters Water Resources Education Network (WREN). They offer grants of up to \$5,000 for educational efforts related to SWP. For examples of past projects, please visit their website at <http://www.palwv.org/wren/>

3. **Enlist the help of PRWA.** Our staff has the most expertise in the field of SWP in the state and can help to guide your effort as it moves forward. Our services are free and our goal is to ensure that your source water is as protected as it can possibly be. Please contact our office to track one of us down and let us answer any questions that you have.

Water Supply Protection Area Signs

In the 1990’s PRWA worked with DEP, PEMA, PA-DOT and the League of Women Voters to establish a standardized sign to designate areas of protection for public drinking water resources in Pennsylvania. The sign was designed to be used for both surface and groundwater sources (Wellhead Protection and Watershed Protection areas).

For those water systems implementing a Wellhead Protection Plan or a Watershed Protection Plan the sign is available for purchase after the Program is approved by DEP. Once the approval is received, the water system can notify their local PENNDOT office and they will come out and give them placement sites for the signs. The signs are placed outside the Zone III of the delineation so that the location of the signs do not actually pinpoint where your sources are located.

While developing the sign program, there was concern about putting up signs that would identify where wells and intakes were located. In the 10+ years since the first signs were put up, they have proven to be very pro-active.

In Lancaster County, five systems along Route 283 (a four lane highway from Harrisburg to Lancaster), have worked with their County Emergency Response personnel to provide immediate spill response to the recharge areas. The time of travel from the highway to the wells is less than one hour and the immediate spill response has proven to be one of the most important parts of their Wellhead Protection Program.

In the Williamsport area, a semi-truck driver had a leak in his gas tank and because he saw the signs posted, he drove until he was out of the area, where Emergency Response crews met him. The leak could have been a disaster had he stopped within the area. The travel-

ing public have also contacted 911 when they have seen an accident or spill on the highways or roads.

WREN Grant Application Period Now Open

What: Educational projects that raise awareness about protecting the **community’s drinking water source** and/or **preventing nonpoint source pollution** in the watershed. Projects must aim at building an informed citizenry who will protect water resources with actions at home, at work, and within the community, including encouraging local officials to make decisions that will promote clean water. Grant award: up to **\$5,000** per project.

To receive an Application send email to wren@palwv.org or call 800 692-7281 ext 10.

Complete Application may also be downloaded from websites:

Applications due 4/2/08

Note: To qualify for drinking water grant monies, the PWS must be a partner!

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For more information about Pennsylvania's Source Water Assessment and Protection Program, visit their website at www.dep.state.pa.us, click on "Water" and choose Source Water and Groundwater Protection

This newsletter has been established by the Source Water Protection staff at the Pennsylvania Rural Water Association. Please note that some of the articles have been shortened to allow a wide variety of topics. The full articles and more information on Source Water Protection can be found at our website:

<http://www.sourcewaterprotection.org>

Suggestions for SWP related articles are Always welcome!

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If you would like to continue receiving this newsletter, please contact one of the PRWA staff listed above via email