

THE SOURCE Missouri Department of Natural Resources PROTECTOR

The Official Newsletter of the Missouri Source Water Protection Program

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Our Source Water Specialists:

Kenneth P. Tomlin
Source Water Protection and Assessment Coordinator
PO Box 176
Jefferson City, MO, 65102-0176
573-526-0269
ken.tomlin@dnr.mo.gov

Rich Morrow
Environmental Specialist
1709 Prospect Dr.
Macon, MO, 63552
660-385-8052
richard.morrow@dnr.mo.gov

Public Drinking Water Branch Unveils Newsletter

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Public Drinking Water Branch is excited to unveil the premier issue of *The Source Protector: The Official Newsletter of the Missouri Source Water Protection Program!* This biannual publication will keep you informed of the latest developments within our program and highlight the accomplishments of communities across Missouri that have taken proactive steps to protect the source of their drinking water now and for generations to come. Missourians are fortunate the quality of drinking water in our state is exceptional, but it is up to every one of us to keep it that way!

The Missouri Source Water Protection Program is dedicated to helping communities and public water suppliers increase protection of their drinking water sources through guidance, education, technical and financial assistance, and other resources. Unlike many other programs, ours is not designed to “spring to life” when contamination has been identified - the whole point is to establish a management framework that allows communities in Missouri to take actions now to recognize existing sources of contamination and prevent future additional contamination.

Regulated contaminants are monitored by public water systems on a continual basis, and any pathogen or chemical pollutant identified within raw water must be treated to safe levels prior to distribution to the public - the dirtier the source water, the more treatment required.



Prevention of contamination through education, awareness and locally-led action is far less costly than having to adapt new treatment techniques after a source has been degraded.

The Public Drinking Water Branch is proud to serve the citizens of Missouri in our mission to keep our public water supplies safe, clean and affordable but it takes more than regulations and laws to make it happen! It is likely there are already people in your community ready to take action! Every Missourian can help with this mission and keep our most vital resource safe. Remember to protect your drinking water!

Kenneth P. Tomlin,
Source Water Protection and Assessment Coordinator

Our Missouri Waters Initiative

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources announced in November 2011 a new initiative to protect water quality in Missouri. The “Our Missouri Waters Initiative” is intended to provide the department with the insight and experience needed to protect water quality on a regional basis using a comprehensive, holistic approach. Three 8-digit hydrologic units have been selected as pilot watersheds for this effort: the Spring River watershed in southwest Missouri, the Big River watershed in eastern Missouri, and the Lower Grand River watershed in north-central Missouri. Each watershed has been assigned a department watershed coordinator responsible for facilitating cooperation and collaboration with local leaders, stakeholders and organizations already active in each region. Check out the department’s website for additional information about this initiative and how it can protect water quality and benefit the regulated industry.



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NATURAL RESOURCES



Letter from the Chief

Source water protection is a common-sense approach for minimizing contamination to a community's source of drinking water. Modern water treatment processes are truly remarkable in its ability to purify degraded water, but the maintenance and operation of these systems can be costly. Practicing source water protection is one step any community can take to minimize treatment costs and protect its most vital resource—drinking water.

I encourage you to explore our source water protection program and use its benefits to help your community today. Please enjoy this new publication and share it with your friends and neighbors. Together we can make a real difference in protecting our water resources now and for future generations!

Best regards,

Steve Sturgess

“Enabling Source Water Protection” Pilot Project a Success!

In 2010, Missouri was selected as one of eight demonstration states for the “Enabling Source Water Protection” pilot project sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. A panel of national experts (representing the Trust for Public Land, the River Network, the Smart Growth Leadership Institute and the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators) met with department staff and external stakeholders to discuss strategies to increase protection of drinking water sources by better aligning and integrating existing resources and opportunities.

Historically, water quality protection has been a mission of state and federal governments and various other nongovernmental organizations. One drawback to having several entities working on source water protection independently is that organizations may only focus on the programs they administer and miss opportunities for collaboration.

A key issue identified through the Missouri Source Water Protection Project is the need to realign existing programs so they can be effectively used in tandem through a holistic approach to protecting drinking water sources. The department is in a great position to guide water quality protection efforts in Missouri by aligning its programs and resources with those of other organizations to maximize protection efforts on the ground. The strategies under consideration are described in An Action Plan to Protect Missouri's Drinking Water Sources, which can be found online at landuseandwater.org/final-reports/mo-final-swp-report.pdf.

“...the plan identifies ways the department can become a national leader by incorporating actions to prevent future water quality degradation into its plans as they align programs on a watershed basis.”

Excerpt from *An Action Plan to Protect Missouri's Drinking Water Sources*

(How can I...?) Get with the Program!

Are you interested in affordable and safe drinking water? Are you curious if your water provider is engaged with source water protection? A simple call to your water system would be the first step to determine what actions, if any, your water system is taking to prevent source water contamination.

The Missouri Source Water Protection program is a voluntary program that helps a water system and the community, protect their source of drinking water from potential contamination. Often, a water provider will be unable to initiate the effort without buy-in from the community at large. Experience has shown the best plans are those initiated from within the community itself. Let your water provider know now you would like to see more action!

Every protective measure acts as one additional barrier to protect public health and prevent unnecessary additional treatment costs in the future. The availability and stability of a safe and plentiful source of drinking water is essential for growth in any community. Availability of safe and affordable water is increasingly a major factor in terms of whether a community has what it takes to grow and expand. Don't let your community fall behind!

Contact the department's Public Drinking Water Branch if you have any questions about our program or about how to engage your community in preventive, protective planning to ensure safe drinking water now and for the future.

Honors for Southwest Missouri Community

The city of Willard was presented the Missouri Rural Water Association's Source Water Protection Plan of the Year award in 2011. The honor is meant to draw attention to public water systems and the communities that have shown the ability to go above and beyond with their protection and prevention efforts.

Randy Brown, Director of Development for the city of Willard, recognizes the value of source water protection. He initiated a local effort to enlist support for establishing a program in Willard and was able to develop an initial plan that will serve the community for many years to come and help protect their water source.

The department sincerely appreciates the efforts of Randy Brown and the city of Willard, as well as the Missouri Rural Water Association, which was instrumental in assisting with initial development of the plan. This type of collaboration, persistence and drive, is a model for other communities around the state to follow!

Thank You to Missouri Rural Water Association

The Missouri Rural Water Association has been an invaluable partner in promoting source water protection in Missouri and has helped thousands of Missourians decrease the threat of contamination to their water source. The Public Drinking Water Branch would like to thank these professionals who have helped make source water protection in Missouri a reality and a success.

Through continued efforts of the Missouri Rural Water Association, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and communities across Missouri, greater protection of our most vital resource can extend to even more Missourians in the years to come!

The Watershed Protection Corner

Source water and watershed protection are very similar. The only real difference is source water protection focuses more on human health and drinking water. Almost anything we do to protect drinking water sources benefits other uses such as aquatic life protection and recreation. Since the reverse is also true, watershed protection invariably benefits drinking water, the approaches for both are remarkably similar.

In the days before water treatment, protecting sources was the only way to prevent the pollution of drinking water. With advances in treatment methods, source protection suddenly seemed old fashioned or redundant. Only later, when industrial chemicals and pathogens had found its way into finished drinking water, did we see the fallacy in this reasoning.

Now, source water protection has taken its rightful place alongside water treatment as a practical tandem strategy to protect water supplies. The “watershed approach” is touted as the best way to work across the lines between wastewater, stormwater and drinking water, coordinating activities to support the goal that all of these disciplines have in common—clean water.

Loring Bullard, Executive Director (retired),
Watershed Committee of the Ozarks

Source Water Protection Basics

1. Start a planning team and engage the public.
2. Identify or define the source water areas.
3. Compile a potential contaminant inventory.
4. Assess the threat of contamination to the source water areas.
5. Develop a management plan.
6. Prepare a contingency plan (just in case!)

Highlight: Missouri American Water—Joplin District

The May 2011 tornado that destroyed almost one-third of the city of Joplin is one of the most destructive single tornadoes on record in the United States. Certainly, the residents of Joplin will never forget the moments of destruction and the slow journey towards recovery.

The city of Joplin is served drinking water by Missouri American Water—Joplin District. The water system developed a robust source water protection plan in 2010 with the support of civic leaders, local emergency planners, customers, the Missouri Rural Water Association, and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

As evidenced by the planning and resources that made source water protection in Joplin a reality, Missouri American Water was quick to respond to the unfolding situation following the storm to



assess the critical needs of the partially damaged water system and ensure the availability of safe drinking water. “Previous table top exercises focused on emergency planning, as well as having a tangible action plan to follow, played an instrumental role in our ability to resume normal system pressures after 24 hours and to lift the boil advisory after 5 1/2 days,” said Matthew Barnhart, Southwest Operations Manager for Missouri American Water.

The fact the system was able to lift the boil order so quickly is truly impressive given the massive scale of destruction that affected the region. Thorough contingency planning undoubtedly placed Missouri American Water in the right position to respond and garner assistance when the residents of Joplin needed it most.

Kudos to Missouri American Water—Joplin District for taking all potential threats to their service seriously. Its diligence and professionalism, a testament to the resolve of the greater community, saved lives and set the stage for Joplin to flourish again.

“Previous table top exercises..., as well as having a tangible action plan to follow, played an instrumental role in our ability to resume system pressures after 24 hours and to lift the boil advisory after 5 1/2 days.”

Matthew Barnhart,
Southwest Operations Manager,
Missouri American Water



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This publication is funded through the Missouri Drinking Water State Revolving Fund - Set Asides under the authority of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and is intended to promote and publicize the benefits of source water protection planning. If you have any questions about the Missouri Source Water Protection Program or would like more information contact the Public Drinking Water Branch's Source Water Protection and Assessment Coordinator at 573-526-0269 or 573-751-5331. You may also write to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Water Protection Program, Public Drinking Water Branch at P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO, 65102-0176.

For questions or comments about this newsletter or to contribute materials call 573-526-0269. Thank you for your interest in source water protection!

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Public Drinking Water Branch
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176

