



WESTERN AREA
WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY

For Immediate Release

Williston WTP Monitors Missouri River to Protect Public Health in Wake of Montana Spill

(January 22, 2015) – Operators at the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant are working with the North Dakota Department of Health to monitor the Missouri River for contaminants related to an oil pipeline spill near Glendive, Montana. The Bridger Pipeline Co. spill occurred on January 17 at the company’s Poplar pipeline near the Yellowstone River, a tributary of the Missouri River. The Western Area Water Supply Authority’s (WAWSA) primary water source is the Missouri River. WAWSA’s service area includes the City of Williston as well as all or parts of Burke, Divide, McKenzie, Mountrail, and Williams Counties in northwestern North Dakota.

At this time, there is no evidence water contaminated by the spill has entered the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant. However, the Plant’s operators are working with the North Dakota Department of Health to continuously draw water samples for testing. In addition, the Water Treatment Plant is equipped with a powdered activated carbon treatment system that can be used to treat elevated organic matter concentrations such as benzene.

“The City of Williston’s water plant operators are monitoring the situation closely alongside representatives from the State Health Department. If any threats to the health or safety of the public arise, steps will be taken immediately to maintain the highest quality drinking water. We will communicate with the public in a timely manner if any water service interruptions become necessary,” says Jaret Wirtz, WAWSA Executive Director.

About WAWSA

The Cities of Williston, Watford City, Ray, Tioga, Stanley, Wildrose, Crosby, Fortuna, Noonan, Columbus, and Ross currently receive WAWSA service. The population of the Western Area Water Supply Project’s five county service area is forecast to reach 160,000 people by the year 2038, according to a 2014 study completed by the North Dakota State University Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics.

The WAWSA Board includes representatives from five of the project’s member entities - the City of Williston, McKenzie County Water Resource District, Williams Rural Water District, R&T Water Supply Commerce Authority, and the Burke-Divide-Williams Water System Association. All of these entities have agreed to pool their individual infrastructure resources to efficiently deliver high quality water to WAWSA’s customers.