



THE **BUZZ**

Second Quarter 2016

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Easements Urgently Needed for WAWSA Pipeline Construction

As the 2016 construction season nears the midway point, the need for approved easement agreements becomes increasingly urgent. The Western Area Water Supply Authority (WAWSA) currently needs to acquire hundreds of easements in order to install pipelines that will serve hundreds of rural drinking water customers near Ray, Tioga, Stanley, White Earth, Crosby, and Watford City.

“One of the challenges we’re facing is that landowners in the Bakken region have been conditioned to believe they should be paid for each easement because of their previous experiences with oil companies. However, due to the nature of drinking water projects, which provide a public benefit, easement payments are not provided in North Dakota,” explains Jaret Wirtz, WAWSA Executive Director. “The desire to be paid, added to landowner fatigue from the high number of easement requests, has caused some confusion and frustration about the process,” says Wirtz.

If there are properties where easements have not been procured, the use of eminent domain will be considered by WAWSA. “It’s our last resort. Unfortunately, in order to move forward with construction without further delays, the eminent domain process may be necessary,” says Wirtz.

If landowners have reservations because of concerns about how their land will be treated, Wirtz says the risks associated with other pipelines do not apply to drinking water projects. “Drinking water pipelines do not carry the same risks related to oil or produced water pipelines. WAWSA only transports high-quality, treated water,” he says.

In addition, WAWSA has invested in new equipment, such as a motor grader and skid steer, to ensure land is not damaged during pipeline construction. And after construction is completed on landowners’ properties, WAWSA’s reclamation services return the land to its original state.

“It’s a big priority for WAWSA to leave the land as we found it. Many of our Board members are landowners. We understand how important this issue is to property owners,” says Mark Owan, WAWSA Board Chairman. ■

Construction Progress & 2016 Goals

Despite the downturn in oil production, the Western Area Water Supply Project (WAWSP) continues to serve thousands of people in Williston, Watford City, Ray, Tioga, Stanley, Wildrose, Crosby, Fortuna, Noonan, Columbus, and Ross, as well as rural residents. Oil prices have been gradually inching back up over the past few months. When oil prices increase to \$60 per barrel, the oil companies are expected to flock to the Bakken again.

In response to the dip in oil production, the population projections for the WAWSP service area, which covers a whopping 6,800 square miles, have been reduced to 125,000 people by the year 2038. WAWSA currently provides high-quality drinking water to 70,000 people. "The five-county area served by WAWSA needs drinking water to support the people who live in western ND now, as well as future population increases," says Mark Owan, WAWSA Board Chairman.

"We've made great progress since the project began in 2011. So far we've installed about 700 miles of pipeline, 10 reservoirs, two water towers, and 10 pump stations," says Jaret Wirtz, WAWSA Executive Director. In addition, the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant's capacity has been increased several times to accommodate WAWSA's service area. Most recently, the Plant's capacity increased from 14 to 21 million gallons per day.

"This summer, we're planning to install 720 miles of pipeline to extend service to rural customers around Tioga, Ray, Epping, Stanley, White Earth, Crosby, and Watford City. This year 600 additional customers will receive drinking water from WAWSA," says Wirtz. In addition, four new pump stations will deliver drinking water from the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant to the rural areas and a one million gallon reservoir will be built near Stanley. ■

Williston Regional WTP Provides Water Quality Info

Water quality is a hot topic in 2016. People across the U.S. may be questioning the safety of their drinking water, due to the headlines about lead contamination in the Flint, Michigan water supply. The Western Area Water Supply Authority's (WAWSA) customers receive the majority of their drinking water from the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant (WTP), with the R&T WTP providing a supplementary supply of water. "The staff at the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant take their jobs very seriously. Treating drinking water for the 70,000 people in Burke, Divide, McKenzie, Mountrail, and Williams Counties who receive water from the Plant is a very big responsibility," says Dave Tuan, Williston Public Works Director.

The Williston Regional WTP draws its water from the Missouri River. Water from the Missouri River contains muddy particles (also called turbidity); dissolved minerals that contribute hardness and alkalinity; microorganisms including bacteria, protozoa, viruses and algae; and dissolved organic matter that is washed into the river by melting snow and rain. The WTP employs several treatment processes designed to provide water that complies with the water

quality requirements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Act.

The staff at the Williston Regional WTP recently put together a list of frequently asked questions about the water treatment process. Here are two of the top questions:

Q. Does water from the Williston water plant contain lead?

A. As a result of treatment processes applied at the Williston water plant, the treated water does not contain lead. However, since the water may come into contact with lead-bearing pipes, solder, and faucets on the way to the public water supply systems, we monitor for lead and copper at customers' taps. Water samples are routinely collected from 30 sample sites in the City of Williston and are measured for lead and copper concentrations. The lead and copper concentrations found in these samples are reported in the Williston annual water quality report. The most recent results indicate the concentrations are less than the regulatory action levels. (Continued on back page.)

WAWSP PROGRESS

CURRENT PEOPLE BEING SERVED BY WAWSA



FUTURE PEOPLE WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THE WAWSP BY 2038



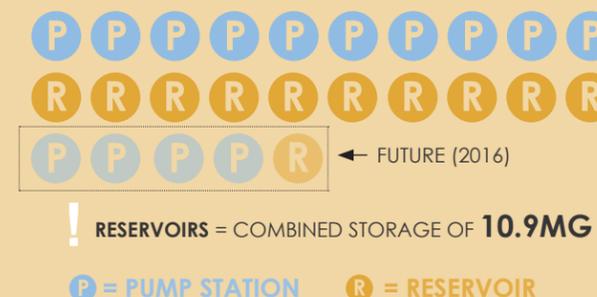
WATER TREATMENT WILLISTON REGIONAL WTP



WATER TOWERS 2 WATER TOWERS + 1 FUTURE



PUMP STATIONS & RESERVOIRS



700
INSTALLED

WAWSP MILES OF PIPELINE



720
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Williston Regional WTP Provides Water Quality Info (Continued)

Q. What qualities of the treated water help control lead corrosion?

A. The lower the pH of water, the greater its corrosiveness to lead. Operators at the Williston WTP control the treated water pH in the range of 8.5 to 9.0. This pH helps control corrosion because the potential to dissolve lead is minimized in this pH range. The water plant also improves the stability of the water against corrosion by adding a phosphate chemical. This phosphate chemical interacts with lead pipe and fittings to form a protective layer on the surface that helps prevent corrosion.

To view the water treatment FAQ in its entirety, go to WAWSP.com. The website also includes links to the most recent water quality reports for the Williston Regional WTP and the R&T WTP. ■