

Purdue University

Purdue e-Pubs

Historical Documents of the Purdue
Cooperative Extension Service

Department of Agricultural Communication

10-1-1966

Thinking About a Community Water System?

Donald R. Sisson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/agext>

Sisson, Donald R., "Thinking About a Community Water System?" (1966). *Historical Documents of the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service*. Paper 38.

<https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/agext/38>

For current publications, please contact the Education Store: <https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/>


This document is provided for historical reference purposes only and should not be considered to be a practical reference or to contain information reflective of current understanding. For additional information, please contact the Department of Agricultural Communication at Purdue University, College of Agriculture: <http://www.ag.purdue.edu/agcomm>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Thinking About a Community Water System?

information
guides
data sources

by Donald R. Sisson, Agricultural Engineer
and Harvey Wilke, Civil Engineer



Homeowners in small towns and built-up rural areas may want to consider a community water supply. This is especially true in areas where private wells are not dependable or in congested areas where private wells are polluted.

To have a dependable and efficient community water supply, systematic and orderly planning is necessary before construction is started. The following information is provided to help guide any group during their initial planning.

What is a Community Water Supply?

Water supply facilities serving more than one dwelling or serving any public building are classed as a public water supply. Plans and specifications for the water source, any proposed treatment and the distribution system of a public water supply must be approved by the State Board of Health before contracts are let for construction or purchase of equipment. Under certain circumstances, plans for reservoirs or dams require the approval of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The establishment of rates and some phases of financing may require approval of the Public Service Commission of Indiana.

Providing a satisfactory water source will usually involve an extension from an existing municipal waterworks or private company, drilling wells or constructing a reservoir. In some instances water may be available from reservoirs to be constructed for other purposes.

Engineering Service

Since plans presented to the State Board of Health and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources must be certified by an engineer licensed to practice in Indiana, professional help should be chosen early in the planning stage. Hire a competent engineer or engineering firm experienced in water supply development. The engineer will appraise the feasibility of the proposed project, comment on available water sources and project costs, and prepare the necessary plans and specifications for the project, obtain approvals, tabulate and interpret bids, assist with fiscal details and rate schedules and advise about the establishment of operating procedures.

Legal and Fiscal Services

Most small communities will find it desirable to organize a mutual cooperative association. Legal counsel is essential for incorporation, to help represent the new utility at hearings, to assist in financial arrangements and other legal services.

Financing

Most municipal waterworks are financed by revenue bonds which hold no lien against the properties served by the water utility. A private company usually obtains its financing by selling bonds or issuing debentures. This type of financing may not be available to small communities.

State law enables small communities to obtain low interest loans for water supply

development to help them get started. Potential water users in the community usually should expect to provide some of the funds for financing.

Loans for planning and construction are available in some cases from the Federal government. Information may be obtained from the Housing and Home Finance Agency, 2000 Bankers Building, 105 W. Adams Street, Chicago, Illinois 60603; Farmers Home Administration, 311 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 or your county FHA representative.

Resource Information

The State Board of Health will answer questions and make recommendations to communities planning water systems. Contact the Director, Division of Sanitary Engineering, Indiana State Board of Health, 1330 W. Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202 or one of the branch offices; northeast branch office, Indiana State Board of Health, 709 Clay Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802; southwest branch office, Indiana State Board of Health, 307 Harned Avenue, Washington, Indiana 47501; northwest area, Indiana State Board of Health, 205 Harrison Street, LaPorte, Indiana 46350; central and southeast areas, Indiana State Board of Health, 1330 W. Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202.

Information on ground and surface water may be obtained from the Division of Water, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, State Office Building, 100 N. Senate Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

The county extension agent can help community groups organize for action. He can also help obtain initial planning assistance from the Agricultural Engineering and Civil Engineering Departments of Purdue University.

Public Relations

In most cases community interest will need to be developed before you can organize

and proceed to establish a community water system. Advantages and disadvantages will need to be discussed and accurate information provided on which to make sound decisions.

Every opportunity should be used to enlist local support for the water supply project. Discuss the need for a community water system at meetings of business and service clubs, civic groups, youth organizations and others. Your engineer, attorney and other sources of help mentioned in this leaflet can help inform local residents. A representative from the Speakers Bureau of the Indiana Section, American Waterworks Association, will assist if requested. Write to the Secretary, Indiana Section, American Waterworks Association, 1330 W. Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202.

Every community needs a safe, dependable water supply. Good, plentiful water is a must in the home for the health and welfare of the family. Schools and hospitals cannot exist without safe water. A plentiful water supply can open the door to new industry and new jobs in the community. Adequate fire protection can be incorporated in a community system and result in lower fire insurance rates. Water from a community system will cost less than hauling water, and it will be cleaner than cistern water.

Developing a community water supply will be a big job and there will be many problems to overcome. For instance, using greater quantities of water may intensify sewage disposal problems in some areas. This kind of problem should be anticipated in the planning of your community water system. Skilled professional advice, as suggested throughout this publication, will help you get your project off on a soundly-planned basis.