

A Learning Process

By Charles Bausch

I hope everyone that attended our spring conference enjoyed themselves, and for those that could not get away I liked to introduce myself. My name is Charles Bausch and I am the new Groundwater Specialist here at NeRWA. It is a great honor to be here, and I looking forward to meeting as many water operators that I can. A little bit about myself I grew up near Pawnee City Nebraska. I am attending college and finishing a degree in biology at the University of Nebraska. I worked for Village of Bennet for four and half years where I was the water and sewer superintendent. But enough about me lets talk about what I am hired to do, Wellhead Protection Plans (WHPP). There are six steps to completing a good WHPP.

1. The first step is to delineate a wellhead protection area. This is area that DEQ can provide to you on a map. This map will contain your wellhead protection area and show your twenty-year groundwater flow. So if you have recently put in a new well let DEQ or myself know and we can get you a new map.
2. The second step is too do inventory of possible contaminates in the wellhead protection area. This is where we go out and look for possible containments and GPS them to put on your map for later reference.
3. This step is to manage potential source of contaminates. This usually can include ordinances, zoning, having abandoned wells capped, or by working with local landowners to install better agricultural management practices.
4. Develop Emergency and Contingency Plans. A short term (emergency) plan and a separate long term (contingency) plan to address contamination, natural disaster, mechanical problems or other unforeseen events will enable a community to effectively deal with these situations.
5. Plan ahead for new wells. New wells may be needed as a community grows, as existing wells age, or due to a contamination threat.
6. The final step public awareness and involvement will help to ensure that an effective plan is put together to protect drinking water. This can be done through educational process, by develop a pamphlet about WHPP and the importance of public involvement in protecting this area.

I would gladly help with any of these steps. Having a WHPP in place is a good way to help the public learn what is going on and how they can help to protect their sources of water. Once all these steps are done the final step is to send a draft of your WHPP to DEQ for a preliminary approval. Once again if you have any questions just give me a call.