

Back to the Basics

By Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider

Much of the conversation I have with water operators these days seems to always turn to some newly regulated contaminant or treatment process. With new EPA proposed regulations this isn't surprising. For example there is the Arsenic rule, Uranium and the Groundwater rule. I could go on and on. Sometimes it is easy to get caught up with all of the things we are possibly going to have to face in the future.

The reality is we all need to do a better job of taking care of the basic aspects of our water systems. How much do you really know about your distribution system? Many systems are in need of simple maps of the distribution system. Valve locations are another very important part of operating the system. Another very important aspect of a water system is the source. Below are some questions to ask yourself and find out just how good of shape your system is in and just how much do you know about your water system.

1. SOURCE

A. Availability

- a. Is your water source readily available for future wells?
- b. Do you own the land? If not, is it for sale?
- c. What is the land and the area around your water source used for?

B. Draw Down

- a. What is your draw down rate and is it increasing?
- b. How deep is your well?
- c. How many more feet of water can you draw down until other sources need to be investigated?
- d. Do you take draw down at least monthly?

2. WATER STORAGE

A. How many gallons are you capable of storing?

B. How long will it take to use stored water?

- a. During normal usage
- b. During fire usage
- c. If your pumps malfunction for any reason
- d. Can your water storage satisfy the demand of two fires at one time and for how long?

3. DISTRIBUTION GRID

A. Flushing the system

- a. Do you flush the system?
- b. How often do you flush?
- c. How many gallons are used for flushing?

- B. Number of fire hydrants
 - a. GPM flow of each hydrant
 - b. Static pressure
 - c. Flow pressure

- C. Is the system mapped
 - a. Are lines located with size?
 - b. Are valves located?
 - c. How many turns to shut the valve off?
 - d. Are customer service lines located?

If NeRWA can help you with any of these things give us a call.