

Well Connected®



A Publication of the Water Systems Council

WSC Calendar

- July 31-August 1, 2006 ■ South Atlantic Well Drillers Jubilee, Myrtle Beach, SC
- August 1, 2006 ■ WSC Board of Directors Meeting, Myrtle Beach, SC
- November 8-10, 2006 ■ WSC Fall Members Meeting ■ Gaylord Texan® Resort & Convention Center on Lake Grapevine (Dallas), Texas
- 11/8 Golf Tournament
- 11/9 Committee Meetings, Members Meeting
- 11/10 Board of Directors Meeting
- December 5-8, 2006 ■ NGWA Expo - Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
- February 27-March 2, 2007 ■ WSC Spring Members Meeting, (Hotel TBD), Washington, DC
- 2/27-28 Congressional Meetings
- 3/1 Committee Meetings, Members Meeting
- 3/2 Board of Directors Meeting

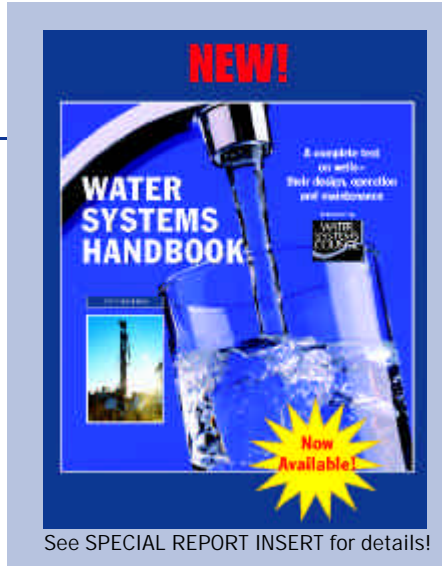
WSC MEMBER NEWS

WSC Board Formally Supports Screven County Project

WSC continues to work with county officials and others in Georgia to get funding for the wellcare® model project in Screven County. This important project will provide safe drinking water to unincorporated areas of Screven County using a combination of individual household wells, shared wells and small community wells. The savings to the citizens of Screven County and the federal government are substantial. Projected costs for Phase One of the project total approximately \$300,000, compared to an estimate of \$8.5 million to extend service from an existing public water system.

The WSC Board of Directors has been solidly behind this project from its inception. At its May meeting, the Board reasserted its support in a letter formally committing WSC to the project.

Continued on page 4



See SPECIAL REPORT INSERT for details!

Inside this issue:

WSC Member News	2-4
Upcoming 2006 WSC Workshops	
New & Revised Special Reports Available Soon	
Children's Water Festival Comes to North Carolina	
wellcare® Hotline Update & Commonly Asked Questions	
WSC Welcomes New 2006 Members	
Around the States	4, 6
New Mexico Proposed Domestic Well Regulations Move Forward	
SPECIAL REPORT INSERT:	5
New WSC HANDBOOK Now Available	
Washington Update	7
wellcare® Briefs	7-9

AROUND THE STATES

Who Owns the Water? Water Bottlers, States and the Public Embroiled in Water Rights Struggle

The *Washington Post* reported in its June 12 edition a struggle that many in the industry have anticipated and witnessed. The article described increasing conflicts between bottlers of spring water, state regulators and the public. As reported in the Winter 2006 edition of *Well Connected®*, the case of **Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation v. Nestle Waters North America, Inc.** involved this type of conflict.

Continued on page 4

Colorado Supreme Court Gives State Engineer Authority to Set Groundwater Limits

The Colorado Supreme Court has upheld a ruling that allows the State Engineer to set limits on pumping groundwater, a key issue for farmers in the state, now experiencing a drought, in **Harmony Ditch Company v. Ground Water Management Subdistrict of the Central Colorado Water Conservancy District** (Colorado Supreme Court, No. 05SA205, June 12, 2006). The Ground Water Management Subdistrict of the Central Colorado Water Conservancy District filed an

Continued on page 6

WSC MEMBER NEWS.....

UPCOMING 2006 WSC WORKSHOPS

August 4

Colorado wellcare® Workshop Denver, Colorado

Co-sponsors with WSC: The Groundwater Foundation, AWWARF and USGS

August 11

Missouri wellcare® Workshop Springfield, Missouri

Co-sponsors with WSC: The Groundwater Foundation, Springfield MO Groundwater Guardian Team

September 13 and 14

Teachers wellcare® Workshop (in conjunction with the 2006 North Carolina Children's Water Festival)

Salisbury, North Carolina
Co-sponsors with WSC: Horizons Unlimited, Rowan-Salisbury Schools, NC Division of Resources/ NC Project WET

September 21

Iowa wellcare® Workshop Ames, IA

Co-sponsors with WSC: The Groundwater Foundation, IWWA

September 21

Connecticut wellcare® Workshop Meriden, CT

Co-sponsors with WSC: CT WWA, CT Environmental Health Association

September 22

Connecticut wellcare® Water Well Contractor Training

Meriden, CT

Co-sponsors with WSC: CT WWA

New & Revised Special Reports Available Soon!



Special Report #1: "An Analysis of Mandatory Hookup Law – Cases & Statutes" is being updated to include new cases and laws impacting mandatory connection. The revised report also includes some significant new developments in anti-mandatory connection legislation.

A new report, **Special Report #5: "Household Wells Data: Number and Types of Wells by State and County or Other Locality,"** will be

available in July. This new report compiles data on wells by state, county or other local entity in each state.



To order, visit <http://www.watersystemscouncil.org/bookstore/index.cfm> or contact Charlene Greenstreet at (202) 625-4387 or charlene.greenstreet@watersystemscouncil.org

Children's Water Festival Comes to North Carolina

Water Systems Council, the North Carolina Ground Water Association and others are in the midst of planning a children's water festival in Salisbury, North Carolina, to be held this October. The 2006 North Carolina Children's Water Festival – themed "**H₂O: Ready, Set, Go!**" – will take place at Horizons Unlimited, an Environmental Education Center recognized by North Carolina's Office of Environmental Education.

More than 1,500 fifth graders and their teachers from public and private schools in Rowan County will attend the festival. Activities will include edible aquifers, water jeopardy, an exhibit hall featuring a stream table and a groundwater simulator, and more!

WSC will sponsor teacher workshops on September 13 and 14 at Horizons Unlimited. Certified Environmental Educators from Horizons Unlimited and the Coordinator of North Carolina's Project WET will present programs on integrating water education into classroom activities through literature, technology, science and other subjects. The workshops will help teachers and their students get the most out of the festival, and will give them tools to continue water education in their classrooms.



For more information on the 2006 North Carolina Children's Water Festival, contact Angela Stanley, NC Festival Coordinator, at (202) 625-4387 or e-mail angela.stanley@watersystemscouncil.org

The *H₂O: Ready, Set, Go!* Organizing Committee includes: Horizons Unlimited, NC Division of Water Quality, NC Ground Water Association, NC Division of Water Resources/NC Project WET, NC Well Contractors Certification Commission, Rowan-Salisbury Schools, Salisbury Parks and Recreation, and Water Systems Council.

wellcare® Hotline Update

wellcare® Hotline Keeps Busy This Spring!

The wellcare® hotline was full of activity this spring, with 1,032 calls received between April and June, reports Hotline Specialist Charlene Greenstreet. Well owners and homebuyers continued to utilize the hotline more than any other group, with the majority of calls concerning topics such as mechanical pumps, contaminants, water treatment and WSC publications.

Callers from 48 states, the District of Columbia and Canada contacted the hotline, with the highest number of calls coming from Pennsylvania, New York, Florida and California.

wellcare® Hotline Commonly Asked Questions

Q.

The water pressure to my sprinkler system seems to be low; however, the water pressure in my home is fine. Could this be a problem with the pump?

A.

Most sprinkler systems use more water than it takes to operate the faucets in your home. This higher water consumption from the sprinklers could be the reason the pressure is low while they are operating. If your well has enough volume to supply the sprinklers, installing a larger pump would help.

In addition, some sprinkler systems have filters or strainers on their main water supply line that could become clogged over time, leading to low water pressure from the sprinklers. Cleaning these filters could correct the problem.

For questions about wells and well water, contact the wellcare® hotline: 888-395-1033 or www.wellcarehotline.org



Remember to Visit the Members-Only Section of the WSC website for...

- ★ **Around the States**, a summary of state legislative issues related to wells and drinking water, including a summary of legislative actions impacting the water well industry. **Around the States** is a monthly publication for WSC members only.
- ★ **WSC Membership Directory**. If you have any additions and/or changes to your membership listing, please email them to memberservices@watersystemscouncil.org

If you need assistance logging on to the members-only section of the website, e-mail memberservices@watersystemscouncil.org or call Kathie Auth at (202) 625-4387.



UPCOMING 2006 WSC WORKSHOPS

October 14

wellcare® Pump Installer Training

Hood River, OR

In cooperation with the Oregon Water Well Association

October 24-27

North Carolina Children's Water Festival

Salisbury, NC

NC Children's Water Festival Organizing Committee: Horizons Unlimited, NC Division of Water Quality, NC Ground Water Association, NC Division of Resources/ NC Project WET, NC Well Contractors Certification Commission, Rowan-Salisbury Schools, Salisbury Parks and Recreation, and Water Systems Council

November 16

"Different Points of View/ Shared Issues - Working Together to Find Solutions for Water Quality & Supply Issues"

A Listening Forum for Leaders in Industry, Agriculture and Government in the Southeast
Asheville, NC

Other workshops are being planned for Texas and Washington state. For information on these workshops, contact the WSC National Office at (202) 625-4387.

WSC MEMBER NEWS.....

WSC Board Formally Supports Screven County Project

Continued from page 1

Elected officials in Georgia are also champions of this project. Recently, Congressman Jack Kingston (R-GA) met with representatives from Screven County, the Georgia Well Drillers Association, Georgia Department of Community Affairs and WSC to discuss how the wellcare® model project could be extended to other areas of coastal Georgia. His support, and the support of other Congressional and state leaders in Georgia, is critical to the success of this important project!

WSC Welcomes New 2006 Members!

Water Systems Council welcomes the following new 2006 members:

Manufacturers	Allied Interest – Associations	Individual Members
Jim Baldwin	John Schmitt	Bryan Brewer
Flint & Walling	Michigan Ground Water	Central Wells & Pumps, LLC
Kendallville, IN	Association, Inc.	Muskegon, MI
Richard Mest	Manchester, MI	Edward Butts
Master Water	Allied Interest –	4B Engineering and
Conditioning Corp.	Manufacturers Reps	Consulting LLC
Pottstown, PA	Don Childers	Salem, OR
Jana Bullock	DJC Sales Company, L.P.	Michael J. Frey
Wayne Water Systems	Irving, TX	Hudson Valley Drilling
Harrison, OH	Greg Harmon	Salisbury Mills, NY
Distributors	Harmon & Co., Inc.	A. Jarrell Greene
Elliot Collier	Poland, ME	Greene's Water Wells, Inc.
First Supply LLC	Donald Bean	Gray, GA
Madison, WI	Pacific NW Sales Company	Tommy Newton
	Clackamas, OR	Rapidan Plumbing Inc.
	Dan Collins	Fredericksburg, VA
	TAM Marketing	Rudy Saldanha
	Houston, TX	R. Saldanha & Associates,
		Inc.
		Toronto, ON, Canada

AROUND THE STATES

Who Owns the Water?

Continued from page 1

These cases entail groundwater pumping that impacts surface water, calling into question which rights prevail: groundwater or surface water. These conflicts will continue to increase and the court resolutions will impact the industry profoundly.

New Hampshire and Vermont have recently tightened restrictions on large-scale water withdrawals, targeting water bottlers. The Michigan legislature is considering a bill that would do the same. Citizens groups have filed lawsuits against bottling companies in California, Michigan and New Hampshire.

The Washington Post reports another troubling development. A citizens group in Maine, declaring public ownership of water, proposed a tax on every gallon withdrawn. Such a tax has been discussed in California and other western states. This issue promises to continue to be raised, discussed and fought over in the near future.

New WSC HANDBOOK Now Available!



A major revision to WSC's Water Systems Handbook, a reference for water well construction and maintenance, has been completed! The 12th edition includes up-to-date information on well construction, well components, questions and answers for self-testing, new graphics, and more safety information.

THANK YOU!

WSC WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE WSC HANDBOOK REWRITE TEAM WHO REVIEWED AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE REVISED HANDBOOK:

WSC Member Contributors:

Chris Achorn
Premier Pump & Supply, Inc.
Stephen Anderson
Merrill Manufacturing
Bo Andersson
Danfoss Flomatic Corporation
Henry Boyd
ESWWDA and Boyd Artesian Wells
Julie Bullock
ESWWDA and Boyd Artesian Wells
Dennis Coggins
Goulds Pumps/ITT Industries
Bill Corey
Pentair Water Group
Emery Davis
Campbell Manufacturing, Inc.
Tom & Sally Desmond
Desmond Well Drilling
Alan Dretel
D&S Pump and Supply
Marty Dretel
D&S Pump and Supply
Jim Dunbar
Franklin Pump Systems
Kevin Hancock
Pentair Water Group
Mike Keen
Franklin Electric

Chris Kellner
Kellner Well Services
Bernie Kistner
GroupOne, Inc.
Paul LaFramboise
LaFramboise Well Drilling
Joseph Lane
Amtrol, Inc.
Bob Lombardi
Flexcon Industries
H.A. "Buzz" Mills
2M Company, Inc.
Patrick Reiss
Franklin Electric
Larry Seitter
Grundfos Pumps Corporation
Jeff Smith
Smith Well Drilling, Inc.
Tom Sterzing
Austin Pump and Supply Co.
Robert Stone
Franklin Electric
John Surinak
Maass Midwest Manufacturing
Robert Ubriaco
Goulds Pumps/ITT Industries
Dennis Wierzbicki
Grundfos Pumps
Carl Wood
Franklin Pump Systems

Other Contributors:

James E. Cawley, PE.
NIOSH
Gerald T. Homce, PE.
NIOSH

The Complete Handbook includes the following 7 booklets and is available for \$65 (\$48.75 for WSC Members):

- Book I: Well Fundamentals**
- Book II: Pumps**
- Book III: Service**
- Book IV: Components**
- Book V: Water Quality Assurance**
- Book VI: Electrical Safety, Controls & Regulators**
- Book VII: Community Water Systems, Shared Wells & Groundwater Heat Pumps**

To order, visit <http://www.water-systemscouncil.org/bookstore/index.cfm> or contact Charlene Greenstreet at (202) 625-4387 or charlene.greenstreet@watersystemscouncil.org

Colorado State Engineer to Set Groundwater Limits

Continued from page 1

application for approval of a plan for augmentation for approximately 1,000 wells in the South Platte River basin. The plan for augmentation proposed to allow out-of-priority well pumping by replacing the resulting out-of-priority depletions.

The Harmony Ditch Company and others appealed the state water court's approval of the augmentation plan. The water court, in its decree, imposed a curtailment against the well owners to limit the amount of water that could be pumped if they didn't own the water rights.

Harmony Ditch said the water court erred, arguing that curtailment of out-of-priority diversions is authorized only when the augmentation plan is not being operated in compliance with other terms and conditions of the decree. The Colorado Supreme Court agreed with the water court, finding that the State Engineer can approve augmentation plans and set limits, even when there is no evidence well owners are violating water rights.

New Mexico Proposed Domestic Well Regulations Move Forward

Following the April 21 public hearing on the proposed domestic well regulations in New Mexico, the State Engineer issued revised draft regulations on "The Use of Public Underground Waters for Household or Other Domestic Use" on May 24. The revisions appear to pay lip service to the most prominent public comments on the first draft. However, the revisions fail to substantively address several key issues.

For example, in response to public comments on the lack of any link to hydrologic conditions on the declaration of a domestic well management area, the State Engineer added a clause to the provisions allowing declaration of an area, "as hydrologic conditions require." In addition, the regulations now state that the guidelines for declaration of a domestic well management area will be based on hydrologic conditions. These cosmetic changes leave absolute discretion with the State Engineer and fail to give any concrete guidance to homeowners.

In addition, the revisions add many requirements for metering of domestic wells, or reinforce metering requirements in some instances. Other revisions are mainly for clarification.

The comment period on the revised draft ended on June 9, 2006. Those close to the situation anticipate that the State Engineer will finalize these regulations in the near future. The impact on the industry could be dramatic. For more information, see the website of the Office of the State Engineer at http://www.ose.state.nm.us/water_info_rights_rules_domestic_wells.html



WASHINGTON UPDATE

USGS Report Shows More VOC Contamination in Public Wells than Domestic Wells

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) released a report on April 28 describing the occurrence of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the nation's ground water and drinking-water supply wells. Produced in large volumes, volatile organic compounds have been linked to products such as plastics, adhesives, paints, gasoline, fumigants, refrigerants and dry-cleaning fluids.

The report concludes that VOCs were detected in aquifers across the nation, and not limited to just a few specific aquifers or regions. Despite the nationwide occurrence, VOCs were not detected in most of the sampled wells (about 80 percent had no detections above a threshold of 0.2 parts per billion), and were detected in twice as many public water supply wells versus domestic water wells.

According to senior author John Zogorski, "VOCs were detected in drinking-water supply wells – specifically, in 14 percent of domestic wells and 26 percent of public wells, but only a small number of samples (less than 2 percent) had VOC concentrations that were greater than federal drinking-water standards... It is likely that the higher rate of detection of VOCs in public wells is a result of their larger withdrawal rates and their proximity to developed areas."

The report is based on analysis of groundwater samples from nearly 3,500 wells that are distributed randomly across broad regions and represent 98 aquifer studies across the nation, plus a regional study in the High Plains aquifer system.

Although the USGS study did not analyze drinking water after treatment, the results from drinking-water supply wells were compared to federal drinking-water standards and other human-health-based benchmarks as an initial screening-level assessment.

The report is available at http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/vocs/national_assessment/

USGS Preparing Comprehensive Report on Domestic Water Wells

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is preparing a report that will incorporate and analyze all existing data on domestic water wells. USGS officials expect to send the draft for peer review by the end of the year and issue a final report in 2007. The study's author will discuss the report during a presentation at the WSC Fall Members Meeting in Dallas on November 9.

EPA Initiates Water Efficiency Program

In early June, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) unveiled a new program aimed at educating American consumers about water efficiency. WaterSense seeks to raise awareness about water conservation

and water-efficient products and services. For example, consumers can trim their water bills by 80 percent just by correcting household water leaks.

WaterSense-certified products will be required to meet EPA specifications for water efficiency and performance, and will be available to the public early next year. Products will be independently tested, and manufacturers can also follow specific testing protocols to ensure their product meets the criteria for its category.

For more information on the WaterSense program, visit www.epa.gov/watersense

EPA Launches "Virtual Trade Show" on Arsenic Treatment

In an effort to assist water systems in complying with revised arsenic standards implemented earlier this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) launched a learning portal on arsenic treatment. This "virtual trade show" includes a description of arsenic treatment options – including adsorption media, ion exchange, coagulation filtration, oxidation filtration, point-of-use/point-of-entry treatment devices and non treatment options – and provides interactive decision trees to help water systems select the most appropriate arsenic treatment for their situation.

The website also includes a guide to evaluating treatment providers and a database of vendors. To view the portal, visit <http://www.arsenic-tradeshow.org/>

wellcare® Briefs

Charlotte Company Drills Test Wells on Site of Future Shopping Complex

Early last spring, Charlotte-based McCall Bros., Inc. Well Drilling began drilling test wells on the 215-acre site of a future shopping complex in Mint Hill, North Carolina. The proposed upscale retail center – the Bridges at Mint Hill – has posed some controversy since its inception, due to the site's proximity to Goose Creek, which houses the endangered Carolina heelsplitter mussel.

Continued on page 8

wellcare® Briefs

Continued from page 7

In order to protect the species' habitat and assure the mussel's survival, Charlotte Mecklenburg Utilities is prohibited from running new water lines in that part of Mint Hill, and from piping water from the nearby Catawba River into Goose Creek. This presents a challenge to the developers in getting water to the complex.

The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources reportedly plans to propose its own solution to the problem. If state and federal agencies and the developer are unable to reach an agreement, the project could continue with the use of private wells to provide water for fire protection, irrigation and other uses at the shopping center.

Connecticut Towns Test for Arsenic in New Wells

Following the recently revised arsenic standards for public water, health officials in 42 Connecticut towns are recommending testing of new private wells. The revised standards left jurisdiction over private wells to local municipalities. Beginning in March of this year, the Greenwich Department of Health required new wells to comply with the revised standard of 10 parts per billion. Testing of existing wells remains optional.

Greenwich's Director of Environmental Services, Michael Long, said wells tested thus far are within the federal standards.

Maryland Officials Seek Maximum Fines from Exxon Following Gas Leak

In late April, the Maryland Department of the Environment filed a lawsuit against Exxon Mobil Corp., alleging a major gas leak

contaminated wells in Baltimore County. The state is seeking almost \$12 million in penalties – the maximum the law allows – from Exxon and Storto Enterprises Inc., which operates the Jacksonville, Maryland Exxon station.

MDE alleges that more than 25,000 gallons of gasoline leaked when a hole was accidentally drilled in a fuel line at the station last January. Though the station's operator allegedly logged 700 gallons of gasoline lost per day since the accident, the situation was not reported to environmental officials until more than a month after the spill.

While only six wells in the area exceeded safe drinking water guidelines for methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), 62 wells showed traces of the gasoline additive.

A class-action lawsuit seeking \$535 million in damages has also been filed on behalf of Jacksonville's well owners.

PG&E Proposes New Measures for Containing Chromium 6 Contamination

California-based Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) has proposed three new measures to contain Chromium 6 contamination in Hinkley, California.

The proposals, presented to Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, include: (1) injecting milk, sugar and vegetable oil in the groundwater near PG&E's compressor station; (2) pumping the groundwater with extraction wells to contain contaminated water between the Santa Fe Railroad and Highway 58; and (3) performing a pilot study that would inject whey into the groundwater along with milk and vegetable oil.

PG&E used Chromium 6 in the 1950s and 1960s to prevent corrosion in their cooling towers, and dis-

charged the wastewater from those towers into the ground. The contamination led to health problems for residents of Hinkley, and multiple lawsuits against PG&E.

Residents of Massachusetts Town Blame Building Project for Perchlorate Contamination

Residents of Acton, Massachusetts criticized the town's planning board for its inaction against a builder whose project they claim contaminated their wells with perchlorate.

Two private wells in the Brabrook Road neighborhood showed signs of perchlorate following the blasting that was done to connect a new housing complex for seniors to public water. No traces of the chemical were found in the wells prior to the blasting.

The project developer, Ellsworth Village LLC, and the company that did the blasting claim no materials containing perchlorate were used during the blasting.

The planning board has not yet closed the matter, but its authority on the case is likely limited. There are no state or federal standards on acceptable limits of perchlorate in drinking water.

Massachusetts recently became the first state to propose drinking water standards for perchlorate at 2 parts per billion.

Illinois Companies Face Contamination Lawsuits

Three Illinois companies face lawsuits alleging spills of toxic chemicals on their properties contaminated well water in a nearby community, causing three residents there to develop brain cancer. One suit was filed by two next-door neighbors in the community of McCullom Lake Village who claim the companies "knowingly concealed evidence and

Continued on page 9

wellcare® Briefs

Continued from page 8

information about the extensive toxic contamination on their sites," and are legally responsible for their cancers.

According to the Philadelphia-based law firm that filed the neighbors' suit, a separate lawsuit will be filed soon on behalf of another resident of McCullom Lake Village, who died of brain cancer in June 2004.

The companies – Modine Manufacturing Co., Rohm and Haas Co., and Huntsman – are located one mile north of the McCullom Lake Village.

The law firm also filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of all current and former residents of McCullom Lake Village. The class action suit seeks money to develop a medical monitoring program to determine whether any other residents of the community have developed cancer as a result of the pollution, and to compensate them for lost property values, water treatment expenses and other costs.

Raleigh Newspaper Reveals State's Need for More Oversight of Private Wells

The last issue of *Well Connected*® briefed readers on the failure of North Carolina's Public Water Supply Section in overseeing the safety of state public water systems, as revealed by the *Raleigh News & Observer*. Since that article was published, the *News & Observer* exposed another of the state's shortcomings when it comes to water: the lack of oversight of private wells.

According to the *News & Observer*, private wells provide drinking water for more than 2 million North Carolinians. Despite at least three attempts in the past 15 years to develop a state standard requiring testing of private wells, only 14 North Carolina counties require

tests for water contaminants and only 4 of those require testing for contaminants other than bacteria.

The most recent attempt at well regulations, proposed by Rep. Bernard Allen (D-NC), failed due to questions about who would fund the testing, and concerns from realtors.

Officials at the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources said they would again push for well-testing legislation during the next legislative session.

Lead Poisoning in Young Child Linked to Drinking Water

A case involving lead poisoning in a young child has been traced to tap water in a Durham, North Carolina townhome complex. Durham County health officials are still investigating the source of the lead in the water, but say lead exposure typically comes from pipes and plumbing parts, and not the water source itself.

County health officials and the county water system plan to test water at other rental units in the townhome complex, Penrith, as well as at single-family homes in the area. Tests of 32 townhomes, conducted since the child was diagnosed, found elevated lead in nine other units. Officials suspect the problem may be traced to a certain type of water faucet or the use of water pipes to ground electrical equipment at Penrith. Tests conducted at fire hydrants near the complex did not show elevated lead levels, indicating the problem was not related to the water source.

Health officials must investigate the source of lead exposure in cases involving young children because the risk of brain or emotional damage is great. A recently-adopted North Carolina policy requires water testing in lead poisoning investigations.

WHH Trice & Co., which manages

Penrith, distributed informational packets to its residents, informing them that tests in some of its rental units showed elevated lead levels. The packets also offered advice in limiting lead exposure, such as running water from pipes before drinking and using only cold water for cooking and drinking.

Parents of young children living at Penrith are being urged to have their children's blood lead levels tested. A larger study of lead levels involving 127 Durham homes was scheduled to begin in June to examine whether a switch in sanitizing chemicals led to the elevated lead levels in some residences.

Washington Post Examines Septic System Care

In its May 11 edition, *The Washington Post* brought to light one challenge that results when exurbanites move away from areas with city water and sewer services to farmlands with their own septic tanks: lack of awareness of how to care for septic systems.

Maintenance companies say some new owners of septic systems do not know that their tanks should be pumped out every two to five years, and others are not even aware that their home has a septic system until it is too late.

In an effort to raise awareness, county officials in Maryland and Virginia have initiated educational campaigns – including fliers, classes and training videos – and are considering adopting regulations to require that septic tanks be pumped or inspected.

The cost to flush septic systems is about \$200, but the cost of not flushing them is much greater. Left untreated, systems can become clogged and fail, and can potentially contaminate groundwater that supplies wells, pollute waterways and spread illness.



WSC NATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE
1101 30th Street, N.W.
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20007



Make Plans NOW for the
WSC Fall Members Meeting!
November 8-10, 2006

Gaylord Texan® Resort & Convention Center
on Lake Grapevine ■ Dallas, Texas



For more information,
contact Kathie Auth at (202) 625-4387 or
kathie.auth@watersystemscouncil.org

