

In the News: Contingency Plans

This past year, several communities have made the headlines because of contamination to their drinking water supply. The cost of repair to a public water supply due to contamination is high. When an emergency occurs, a contingency plan can be a community's best resource. Through the development and continued use of a contingency plan, communities can feel more confident about what to do in the event of an emergency.

On January 23, 2008 many citizens temporarily lost access to public drinking water due to herbicide contamination in the Lone Grove Public Water Supply. A pesticide applicator was diluting concentrated pesticides in a 500 gallon tank through a hose connected to a city water tap, when a line break and loss of pressure caused the pesticides to be drawn into the public water supply. It was estimated that about 120 homes were impacted. After an evaluation of the incident, it was decided that the city should shut down the entire water system until the situation could be fully addressed. It took several

weeks and nearly \$100,000.00 to restore the public water supply to the citizens of Lone Grove.

Windmill Run Marina is a non-community water system on Grand Lake that serves 30 vacation condos and a marina. This past summer, Windmill Run residents became ill due to norovirus contamination of the public water supply well. The Department of Environmental Quality required the condos to notify residents not to drink the water and remove the well from service. DEQ continues to work with the owners on getting a safe drinking water supply for the small community. The cost of the contamination is still being tabulated.

When an emergency occurs many important questions arise. Who should be contacted? What is the first course of action? Is there a backup water supply? Who will handle the media? For a well

prepared community, the answer to these questions can be found in their contingency plan.

A contingency plan would not have prevented the emergencies of Lone Grove or Wind Mill Run. However, a contingency plan provides direction in the event of a crisis. A contingency plan can only be effective, when it is treated as a living document and updated often. Review your contingency plan often to ensure that all information is accurate and up to date.

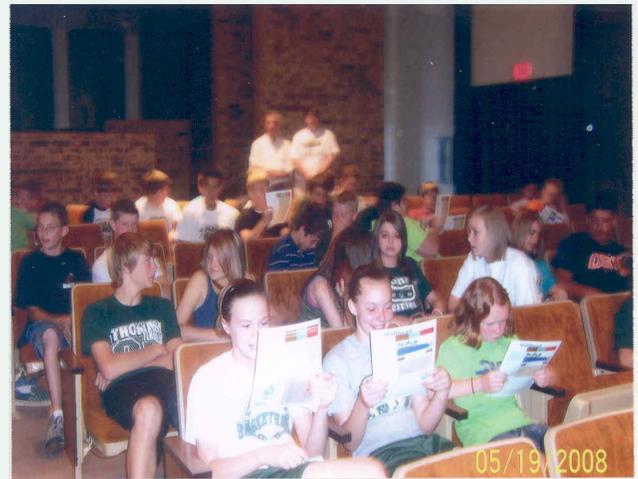
The events of this past year emphasize the importance of having an updated contingency plan. In our next issue we will look at specifics with Wind Mill Run and Lone Grove and identify ways that potential sources of contamination can be addressed. If you have questions regarding contingency plans contact the Groundwater Protection Team or your local DEQ environmental specialist.

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Spotlight on Success

This past May, the City of Thomas completed the education/ outreach component of achieving substantial implementation. Vicki Litsch visited the Thomas grade school, junior high and high school and gave a presentation educating the students about the importance of Wellhead Protection. She taught the students how they can conserve water every day by turning the faucet off when washing their face or brushing their teeth. She explained to the students how contaminants move through the soil and into the groundwater supply. She also educated the students about how using a slow release fertilizer can reduce the threat of contamination to their drinking water supply. The City of Thomas is an excellent example of a successful Wellhead Protection Program in action. Great Job!



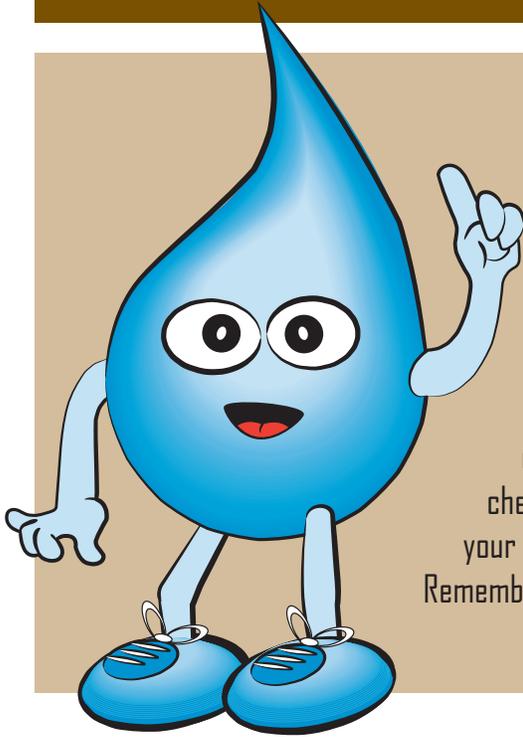
Groundwater Protection Team

The Groundwater Protection Team is a part of the Environmental Complaints and Local Services Division of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality. Groundwater Protection Team members educate the public about the Wellhead Protection Program and the importance of protecting our states groundwater supplies. The team has developed education and outreach material

to help communities get the word out about the Wellhead Protection Program. Some of the items available for use are bill inserts and fact sheets. The team is available to give presentations about the Wellhead Protection Program to your school or organization. Please call 405-702-6100 for more information.



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Hello! My name is H2O Joe and I am the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality spokesperson for the Wellhead Protection Program. My job is to educate the citizens of Oklahoma about the importance of groundwater protection. I protect wellheads all over the state by encouraging communities to preserve, prepare and prolong their water sources. I also encourage communities to develop contingency plans to protect their wells and groundwater from contamination. You can help protect groundwater every day by disposing of chemicals properly; limiting the amount of fertilizers and pesticides you use on your lawn and in your garden and by taking used motor oil to a recycling facility. Remember... "Your Water, Your Decision!"

Environmental Complaints and Local Services Wellhead Protection Contacts

If you would like to share ideas, success stories or offer suggestions for how we can improve our program please submit them to the Amber McIntyre @ amber.mcintyre@deq.ok.gov or to the following mailing address:

**Groundwater Support
Oklahoma City:
Groundwater Team
ECLS/ODEQ
P.O. Box 1677
OKC, OK 73101
(405) 702-6100**

Local Offices

Ada.....(580) 332-3157	Guymon.....(580) 338-1357	Tulsa.....(918) 293-1600
Alva(580) 327-2649	Henryetta... (918) 652-0446	Sallisaw (918) 790-2498
Ardmore....(580) 226-2554	Jay(918) 253-4656	Shawnee....(405) 275-7967
Bartlesville (918) 333-2734	Lawton(580) 357-9733	Stillwater ... (405) 372-7387
Burns Flat. (580) 562-4394	McAlester... (918) 423-3482	Tahlequah....(918) 456-5714
Chouteau....(918) 476-8588	Miami.....(918) 540-0150	Valliant..... (580) 933-5566
Claremore ... (918) 341-7179	Oklahoma City(405) 702-6100	Wagoner.... (918) 485-8873
Duncan.... (580) 255-6068	Ponca City (580) 762-1907	Wheatland... (405) 745-7120
Durant.....(580) 920-2037	Poteau(918) 647-5734	Wilburton ... (918) 465-5218
Enid.....(580) 234-0997	Purcell (405) 527-8738	Woodward. (580) 256-0641

Web Site: www.deq.state.ok.us

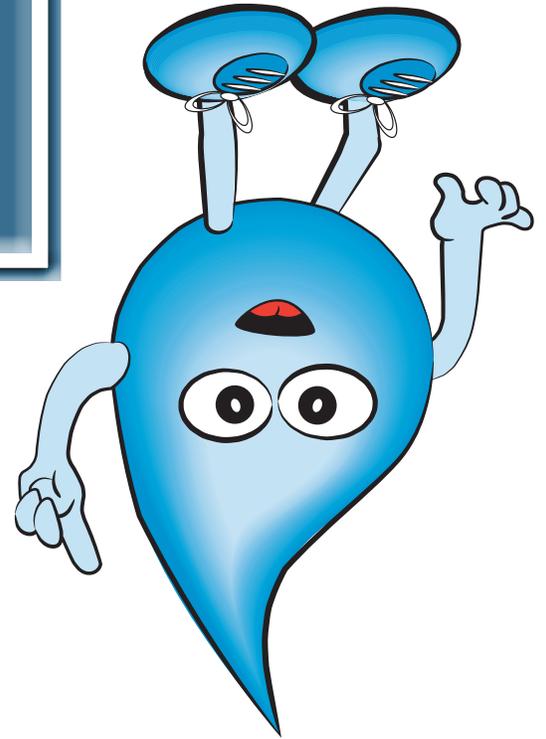




That one quart of oil can contaminate
2 million gallons of drinking water.

Did you know?

**H₂O Joe Says...
"Your Water, Your Decision!"**



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