

WASHINGTON COUNTY SERVICE AUTHORITY IN THE PIPE

NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2021

No. 34

Waterline Extension Project Brings Safe, Reliable Drinking Water to Sugar Cove Road Residents

Last fall, WCSA completed its Sugar Cove Road Waterline Extension Project, which brought municipal water service for the very first time to 12 residences that previously relied on wells and springs, and were often presented with taste, discoloration and water volume issues.

The project was initiated by Sugar Cove Road resident Dorothy Kennedy, who first approached WCSA in early 2016 about the possibility of a waterline project to serve the residents along the road.

"Some of us had springs, but the majority were well water," Mrs. Kennedy said. "A lot of people had to watch their water because the wells were very dry, and the majority had iron water and were not good. Even with a purifier, there was a bad smell in the water and our clothes never looked completely clean. Water pressure was low, which was hard for showering or running the washing machine. If you used water outside, you had to be careful so that it didn't affect the well. When WCSA checked our water, a lot of us had impurities. We really needed better water.



Sugar Cove Road Water Line Extension Project

"Waterlines were installed nearby on Brumley Gap Road way back in 2002, and an effort was made then to also bring service to Sugar Cove Road, but only two people were interested in doing so at that time," she said. "In 2016, there had been very little rain and everybody's well water was low. I called WCSA and set up an appointment to speak with them about trying again. They were all so kind. They needed a project coordinator to talk with our neighbors about signing up and said I could do that if I'd like."

When Washington County residents call WCSA to inquire about obtaining water service in an area that is not currently supplied by the service authority, WCSA representatives talk with them about serving as project champions and talking with their neighbors about signing up for water. The project champions usually distribute the needed paperwork to each of



Elvis and Dorothy Kennedy

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WCSA Project Updates

To learn more about WCSA projects, visit www.wcsawater.com.

Ongoing Projects:

The **Meter Replacement Project** will replace all water meters throughout WCSA's system with new, non-metallic ultrasonic meters, combined with Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) technology. This new system will automatically collect readings multiple times a day and on-demand, and will eliminate drive-by readings. It will also provide customers with greater access to their water usage data throughout each billing period. The project is currently underway and expected to be completed this summer.

The **Hidden Valley Phase 2 Project** will extend water service to 31 additional residences currently relying on wells and springs. The project is funded by the Virginia Department of Health, the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission, and the Department of Housing and Community Development. The project is underway and is expected to be completed in June.



Abingdon Water Storage Tank Improvements Project

The **Abingdon Water Storage Tank Improvements Project** will provide a new 1.5 million-gallon tank, which will directly impact approximately 6,600 water connections. The project is funded by USDA Rural Development. The project is underway and expected to be completed in July.



Galvanized Line Replacement — Phase 3 Project

The **Galvanized Line Replacement — Phase 3 Project** is the third step in a three-phase project to replace all galvanized pipe in WCSA's distribution system over the next several years. The project is widespread across Washington County and consists of seven divisions. The approximately \$30 million project is funded by USDA Rural Development. Construction is underway and expected to be completed by the spring of 2022.



Galvanized Line Replacement — Phase 3 Project

Upcoming Projects:

The **Lee Highway Corridor Sewer Expansion Project** will extend public sewer service to residents and businesses along Lee Highway between Exit 13 and the city of Bristol, Virginia. The first phase of the project is currently in the preliminary design stage. The project, which is funded by USDA Rural Development, is expected to begin in the spring of 2022 and be completed by the summer of 2023. 💧

Protecting Our Local Water Sources

As summer approaches and we spend a great deal more time outdoors, it's a good time to remember that our activities can impact the quality of our local water sources. It's important to pay attention to the ways our everyday habits can negatively affect our source water quality.



Protecting our water sources ensures both the quality and quantity of water used for drinking. It reduces risks by preventing exposure to contaminated water, lowers treatment costs, and protects water quality for wildlife and recreational use.



Drinking water sources for both tap and bottled water include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs and wells. WCSA's water sources include:

- Reservation Spring — an artesian spring that flows to the Middle Fork Drinking Water Plant;
- Holston River (Middle and South Forks) — which flows to the Middle Fork Drinking Water Plant;
- Jones Spring, Cole Spring and Widener Spring — groundwater source that flows to the Mill Creek Water Treatment Plant;
- Mendota Well — groundwater source;
- Big Moccasin Gap Creek — surface water source;
- Cardwell Town Well — groundwater source that draws water from the Tonoloway Limestone aquifer;
- Saltville No. 10 Well — groundwater source that draws water from the Honaker Formation aquifer; and
- Big Cedar Creek — surface water source.

As water travels over the land's surface or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and other materials, and can pick up substances resulting from animal or human activity. These can include viruses and bacteria, salts and metals, pesticides and herbicides, organic chemicals and radioactive contaminants.

Agriculture, industrial activity and urban development can negatively affect our water quality, but many of us don't realize that our individual activities can also directly and indirectly introduce contaminants into our water sources. There are numerous steps we can take each day to reduce our impact:

- Dispose of hazardous waste properly, not down the drain, onto the ground or into storm sewers (including motor oil, pesticides, leftover paint, solvents, gasoline, flammable liquids, mothballs, household cleaners);
- Limit use of pesticides and fertilizers;
- Substitute "weed and feed" fertilizers with natural organic, slow-release or composted fertilizers;
- Use lawn compost and grass clippings as fertilizer;
- Maintain your septic system, including professional inspections and periodic pumping;
- Wash your car at a commercial car wash, which is designed to prevent runoff from entering storm sewers;
- Sweep rather than hose down your driveway and walkways;
- Disconnect drain spouts from the sewer and redirect the flow to an area where it can soak into the soil; and
- Pick up after pets.

Adopting these practices can make a difference in protecting the quality of one of our most precious resources, and help ensure that we can all safely and affordably access clean drinking water for generations to come. 💧



The new pump station for the Sugar Cove Road Water Line Extension Project

their neighbors in order to get a potential project started.

The paperwork includes user agreements, which are commitments from residents to connect to a new waterline and use the service. These commitments are necessary for allowing WCSA to use income generated from water use charges to pay back project loans acquired for constructing the projects.

“WCSA gave us a list of people in our area and told us how many commitments they needed,” Mrs. Kennedy said. “They guided us through each step of the process. My husband and I called everyone on the list, then took a letter from WCSA to each neighbor and explained everything to them. We told them we’d had so many problems with our well. A few said they had good wells, but we let them know that if they ever had to have a new one put in, the cost would start at \$10,000.

“The majority were interested because they’d also had lots of issues with their wells,” she added. “One family hadn’t had water at all at various times during the previous summer. We were really excited that more than half of everyone we spoke with signed the paperwork, and we kept them updated on the project’s progress.”

With Mrs. Kennedy’s assistance, WCSA

was able to obtain the needed user agreements from residents in order to apply for funding for a waterline extension project for Sugar Cove Road. WCSA applied for funding through the Virginia Department of Health and was offered an acceptable funding package. The water line project was then designed, and all necessary easements and permits were obtained. Construction took place from April to September 2020, and more than 5,000 feet of 4- and 6-inch water lines were installed.

“We’ve really enjoyed having the water over the past several months,” Mrs. Kennedy said. “It’s wonderful to have good running water for drinking, showering, washing dishes and clothes, and just seeing that good, clean water coming through the faucet, knowing you have good pressure, can depend on it, and don’t have to worry about maintaining the purifier.

“One of our neighbors had to get their water from a spring coming down from the mountain,” she said. “They always had to worry about dragging the line from the creek or the water freezing in winter. We always had to worry about the pump for the well going out or having to carry water when it goes out. That’s hard to do in winter and as you get older. It’s well worth the monthly bill not to have to worry about any of those things anymore.” 💧



WCSA Calendar

WCSA offices will be closed on the following holidays:

Memorial Day	May 31
Juneteenth	June 18
Independence Day	July 5



Board Meetings

UPCOMING BOARD MEETING DATES

May 24, 2021
June 28, 2021
July 26, 2021

Board meetings are held at WCSA in the E.W. Potts Board Room at 6 p.m. The public is welcome to attend.

Actual dates may vary. Please contact our office to confirm meeting schedule.

Customer Contact Information

Should WCSA need to contact you regarding your water service, we generally do so via text message, email or telephone. If you prefer not to be contacted by one or more of these methods, please call our office at 276-628-7151.

If you would like to be contacted but are not sure we have your information, please contact us at 276-628-7151 or inquiry@wcsa-water.com with that information.

E-CHECK PAYMENTS

**WCSA NOW OFFERS
A 24/7 E-CHECK METHOD
FOR PHONE AND ONLINE
PAYMENTS. YOU MAY PAY
BY CALLING 276-628-7151
AND CHOOSING OPTION 2,
OR BY ACCESSING YOUR
ONLINE ACCOUNT. CALL
CUSTOMER SERVICE AT
276-628-7151 FOR DETAILS.**

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