

How Do We Protect Public Water Sources in VT?

The Vermont Water Supply Division has a federally approved Source Water Assessment Program. This program includes many of Vermont's pre-existing requirements for protection of public community groundwater and surface water sources, and incorporates several new elements necessary to meet the federal requirements of the Source Water Assessment Program. The Source Water Assessment Program was developed with the help of a Technical and Citizen's Advisory Committee that included representatives from state agencies, independent consultants, environmental groups and water system representatives. All of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee were incorporated into the Source Water Assessment Program.

The federal requirements of the program include:

- Delineation of a source water assessment or protection area;
- Inventory of the potential contaminants of concern to that area; and
- Assessment of the susceptibility of the drinking water source to contamination.

These requirements must be met for all public water systems, including municipalities, mobile home parks, schools, office buildings, restaurants, motels, etc. The Vermont Source Protection Program incorporates these elements into our existing regulatory requirements and includes additional requirements to protect Vermont's drinking water.

Vermont's Source Water Assessment and Protection Program includes requirements for the three different types of public water systems. In Vermont, a Source Protection Plan includes delineation, inventory and assessment aspects required by the federal program but goes a step further to include a management plan for the potential risks and a contingency plan in case of an emergency.

Public Community Water Systems

A Public Community Water System could be a municipality, mobile home park, or retirement community that serves at least 25 residents year round or has at least 15 service connections. These systems are required to have a Source Protection Plan—delineation, inventory, assessment, management and contingency.

The system is responsible for developing the Source Protection Plan. The Water Supply Division is available to provide technical assistance in preparing the Plan. Vermont Rural Water Association is also available to assist water systems.

Non-transient, non-community Public Water Systems

A Non-transient, Non-community (NTNC) Public Water System could be a school, factory or office building with their own source of water that serves at least 25 of the same people more than six months per year. These systems are also required to develop a Source Protection Plan using the same guidelines for a Public Community Water System. The difference, however, is in how the SPA can be delineated.

Transient, Non-community Public Water System

A Transient, Non-community (TNC) Public Water System could be a restaurant, motel or campground which serves 25 or more people a day for more than 60 days a year with their own source.

These systems are not expected to develop Source Protection Plans. Instead, the Water Supply Division visits each TNC system to complete a Source Water Assessment for the system. The object of the visit is to identify the Potential Source of Contamination (PSOC) to the water source and provide technical assistance on proper maintenance of the source. The visit's purpose is also to ensure we have proper information in our database and we properly locate the sources, with a GPS unit.

Other Responsibilities

Besides the duties mentioned above, the Water Supply Division has other responsibilities. We will:

- Maintain Geographic Information Systems (GIS) files on the sources and delineations of Source Protection Areas;
- Provide assistance and training to Public Water Systems in developing and implementing source protection, including talking to local organizations, committees, and officials about source protection;
- Develop a financial assistance program for source water assessment and protection;
- Review and approve Source Protection Plans;
- Educate water systems and state officials on integrating source protection and watershed protection;
- Work with other state agencies to develop and integrate source water protection into their programs and regulations;
- Create information and educational materials on source protection for the public and water systems; and
- Provide information on Source Protection Plans to the public.

Additional Information

If you have additional questions about Vermont's Source Water Protection Program, please contact the Source Water Protection Section at the Water Supply Division at (802) 241 3400 or (800) 823 6500 (toll free in VT)

This fact sheet and related environmental information are available electronically via the internet. For information visit us through the Vermont Homepage at <http://www.vermont.gov> or visit VT WSD directly at <http://www.vermontdrinkingwater.org>

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