

**NOTICE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Press Release – Wisconsin Rural Water Association

350 Water Way
Plover, WI 54467

Telephone: 715-344-7778 Fax: 715-344-5555

Contact: Kathy Savonne, Kathy@wrwa.org

April 10, 2007

COMMUNITIES WORK TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES

APPLETON, WI – March 2007 Communities from around the Fox Cities Area are coming together to work toward protecting their drinking water supplies. Recently a source water protection plan was completed for the area consisting of 27 cities, villages, and townships. The plan focused on groundwater quality and quantity issues and suggested proactive steps that communities can do to assure this vital resource can be protected. After the plan was completed in the fall of 2006, a workgroup, the Fox Communities Groundwater Partnership (FCGP), was formed to focus on implementation of the plan. The plan and its implementation, focus on both urban and rural areas.

The plan was completed with assistance from the Wisconsin Rural Water Association's source water protection program. Initial interest for the plan came from the East Central Regional Plan Commission and further interest, involvement and support was generated through the Fox Cities Chamber's Local Issues Committee. Wisconsin Rural Water Association provided the planning assistance and further technical assistance, at no cost, through their federally funded source water protection program.

The Fox Cities Area Source Water Protection Plan identified threats to the areas aquifers. Arguably, the largest threat identified was water quantity. The plan included data and analysis previously completed by the United States Geological Survey. Further data from area wells show water levels in the sandstone aquifer in this area are dropping dramatically – up to two feet per year! Declining aquifer levels have been linked to numerous groundwater quality problems, most notably the occurrence of arsenic. The plan suggests steps communities can take to protect supplies, including water conservation.

The newly formed Fox Communities Groundwater Partnership now meets every three months to discuss steps that can be taken in implementing the plan and other ways of protecting our groundwater resources. The FCGP invites each of the 27 communities to have at least one representative participating in the group. For more information on the Fox Cities Source Water Protection Plan or the Fox Communities Groundwater Partnership contact: Patrick Harrington, Source Water Specialist with the Wisconsin Rural Water Association at wrwa-sourcewater@sbcglobal.net.

Wisconsin Rural Water Association (WRWA) is a non-profit organization of rural and small water and wastewater systems. Its mission: "To assist water/wastewater systems improve and preserve the quality and quantity of water resources in the State of Wisconsin". WRWA is the largest utility association in Wisconsin.