

Program Background

In 1996, Congress amended the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) to emphasize the protection of surface and ground waters used for public drinking water supplies. The amendments require that each state develop a Source Water Assessment Plan (SWAP) to complete the assessments of public drinking water sources and make them available to the public. In Delaware, the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) has been given the responsibility to develop and implement the SWAP.

A committee of concerned citizens, and members of environmental groups, water suppliers, municipalities, and state and federal government agencies was formed in December 1998 to develop the SWAP. This Citizens and Technical Advisory Committee (CTAC) worked for over a year to develop the framework that would address the issues of protecting the sources of public drinking water. On February 5, 1999 DNREC submitted, to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Delaware Source Water Assessment Plan. Almost nine months later, on October 27, 1999 the EPA approved Delaware's SWAP. The State was given until April 2003 to complete the following tasks:

- 9 Delineating the boundaries of the areas that provide drinking water to public water systems;

- 9 Identifying the origins of regulated and certain unregulated contaminants in the delineated areas;
- 9 Determining the susceptibility of public water systems to contamination; and
- 9 Providing all of the results to the public.

The goal of the Source Water Assessment and Protection Program is to promote local and vol-

Funding Available for Protection Efforts

untary efforts to protect the sources of drinking water.

Realizing that protection can not be achieved without a cost, the U.S. Congress allocated funds to be used for source water protection. A portion of the money given to Delaware for source water protection has been set aside to establish a long term, low interest loan program for the purchase of land or conservation easements in source water areas by eligible public drinking water systems.

Requirements

- 9 Landowner must be a willing seller
- 9 A significant portion of the property being acquired or made into an easement must be located in the delineated source water area for both ground water and surface water systems.

- 9 The public water system must demonstrate how the land acquisition or conservation easement to be purchased will directly promote the protection of the public health and / or compliance with national drinking water regulations.

Groundwater and surface water protection is just one of the many benefits the program offers.

Other benefits include:

- 9 Preservation of valuable ground water recharge areas.
- 9 Creation of open space.

Some of the activities that can result from protected land through this program include:

- 9 Conservation measures such as the planting of trees and / or grasses to help reduce the nutrients in both soil and groundwater.
- 9 Low impact recreational activities such as hiking and biking in areas where these activities are not prohibited by steep slopes.

This loan fund is not intended to be used for system upgrades or rehabilitation of existing infrastructure. Please contact the Division of Public Health, Office of Drinking Water for more information regarding the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund which addresses those issues.

For more information Please Contact the following:

**DNREC Source Water Assessment
and Protection Program**

Technical Questions - DWR Water Supply Section

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Phone: (302) 739-5081

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**Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund
Questions**

Division of Public Health, Office of Drinking Water

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Internet addresses:

Delaware's Source Water Protection Page:

<http://www.wr.udel.edu/swap/swp1.html>

DNREC: <http://dnrec.state.de.us>

US EPA: <http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw>



**The Source Water
Protection Loan Fund**

*A Revolving Loan Fund for
Drinking Water Systems
to Acquire Land &
Conservation Easements
for
Drinking Water Protection*

State of Delaware
Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
Division of Water Resources
Water Supply Section
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