

Upper Leacock Township Water Department Newsletter - Spring 2009 -

Benjamin Franklin once said, "When the well's dry, we know the worth of water". This statement is truer now than ever! Did you know that only 3% of the water we use on a typical day is used for drinking? Most of the rest goes for outdoor watering, bathroom use, and clothes and dish washing.

As of the end of April, Lancaster County was already about 3 ½ inches of rain fall below normal for the year. As summer approaches, water usage normally increases, and we should be aware of how and when we use water outdoors. When watering plants and lawns, try to water in the early morning or evening hours to avoid evaporation from the hot mid-day sun. Mulching flower beds helps to retain moisture and discourages weeds which will compete for water with your plants. Wash cars with water from a bucket and control water flows from your hose with an automatic shut off nozzle.

Inside the home, repair all leaks as soon as possible. Since toilets consume more than 25% of all water used around the home, they should be checked for leaks several times each year. Place a few drops of food coloring in the water tank and see if the colored water appears in the bowl. If so, most likely the tank flapper valve is leaking and stealing water. It's a good practice to replace these inexpensive flappers a least once a year. Run washing machines and dish washers only when full.

Following good water conservation practices will save you money and help to insure our "well" doesn't go dry.

Wellhead Protection

Upper Leacock Township Water Department has been working on a wellhead protection plan for some time. Work began on the original plan in 1998 and after securing a grant from PA DEP in 2005; the plan was updated and submitted to DEP for approval in April of this year. You may have noticed on some of our Township roads signs that indicate you are entering a *Water Supply Area*. The areas inside these postings are areas where the ground water drains to the wells which supply the Leola area with our drinking water. Any spills from auto / railroad accidents, chemical spills, or illegal dumping of hazardous materials, could potentially contaminate our water supply. Anyone observing a spill should notify Lancaster County Control by dialing - 911, who will dispatch emergency response teams to clean up the spill and prevent the material from getting into the aquifers that supplies our drinking water. With approval of our wellhead protection plan by PA DEP, signs will also be erected on Penndot roads around our wellhead protection zones. This signage project was possible because of a \$5000.00 grant from WREN, (Water Resources Education Network), a project of The Pennsylvania League of Women Voters.

Spring 2008



**What
does this sign
mean to you?**

Upper Leacock Township Well Head Protection Plan Nears Completion

The Wellhead Protection Committee has been working to complete the Source Water Protection Plan for Upper Leacock Township. One of the elements of the plan is public education. Later this year when PA DEP approves our WHP plan, we are planning to install signs along the major roadway as you enter the well head areas that contribute to the supply of drinking water for our community. Large volume chemical or fuel spills in these sensitive areas pose a significant contamination risk to our local water supply if immediate action to contain and clean-up the spill is not taken. If you see a spill or accident in these sensitive areas please call 911 and report the incident. If you see suspicious activity in the water supply area, report it to the Water Department at 656-6111 or to Lancaster County Control at 911.

Posting signs is just one of the steps that our Well Head Protection Committee plans to take to raise awareness and protect our drinking water supply. The Water Department has been busy surveying local business and industries to identify the types of chemicals and other hazards that are present on these properties that would

need special attention in the case of a spill or fire to prevent contamination of our water supply recharge areas. In the future we plan to work with the local schools to educate students on Source Water Protection using ground water models to show how pollution can move through the sub-surface and contaminate a water supply. The committee is also recommending the Township Supervisors adopt a Wellhead Protection Overlay Zone to restrict development that could pose additional threats of contamination in our current well recharge areas.

Other proposed projects include stenciling storm water inlets to remind the public not to dump wastes that may contaminate our wells; educating the public on proper disposal of household hazardous wastes such as old paint and solvents; and also working with Ag Extension on Best Management Practices (BMP) for pesticide / fertilizer uses in the wellhead protection areas.

The Water Department has recently updated our Vulnerability Assessment and Emergency Response Plans to prepare to deal with these threats and emergencies should they arise. As always, the Upper Leacock Township Water Department continues to work to supply the Leola community with a safe and abundant supply of water at a reasonable cost.