

Addressing challenges, finding solutions

For me, my work as Manager of Shawnee RWD 8 and my involvement with the Kansas Rural Water Association and the National Rural Water Association, have grown to be both professional and personal. My lifetime of rural water experience has nurtured a passion for helping systems to have clean, affordable and adequate water supplies for every customer or potential customer's tap. This makes it an honor for me to serve as President of your Association's board of directors for 2005.

Water and wastewater utilities, cities and rural water districts, agencies, associate members and many other guests recently took part in KRWA's 38th Annual

Conference & Exhibition. Your Association is able to host the best and largest state rural water association conference in the nation not only because there is an overpowering need in our communities, but also because Association

members have the enthusiasm and desire to want to learn and share ideas with others.

The cooperation and support the Association has from state and federal agencies mirrors their participation with KRWA in many state and national programs. These relationships also ensure the success of the conference at a much higher level. If you were not able to attend, a tremendous learning experience was missed.

I hope you will mark your calendars, checking the dates of March 28 – 30, 2006 for next year's conference. As of July 1, there have already been requests for nearly 200 of the 268 + exhibit spaces – plus hotel rooms are booking fast.

Association update

First and foremost, KRWA exists to provide educational opportunities and assistance to public water and wastewater systems. Just who are these system entities? They have developed in the form of rural water districts, public wholesale water supply districts, cities (water and wastewater departments), trailer courts, and county sewer districts. A handful of systems statewide are

few available workers. As I look back over the past 25 years of regulatory development, I wonder just what these systems would have done, were it not for KRWA's outreach programs. State and federal agencies likely would have needed a much greater presence in our communities as they would have been charged with providing needed boots-on-the-ground assistance. But that wasn't the scenario – your KRWA, your Association, was there then and is here today, providing help to our system decision makers, managers, operators and customers. That high level of comprehensive support often means grabbing hold of the shovel and pitching in, day or night, to help local people maintain utility services. Take note

Dennis Schwartz
KRWA President



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privately owned. Regardless of organization, they all have problems keeping up with the ever-changing and ever-increasing number of regulations and requirements, much less ensuring delivery of services round-the-clock.

KRWA has increased the ways it works to sustain Kansas communities by developing an expanded presence beyond the classroom or field training session. The Association is doing much more to provide on-site help for all water and wastewater systems that want, and need the help.

Hundreds of our rural Kansas systems have little resources and

of the ads on pages 2 and 41 of this issue. They mean just what they say: 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year. KRWA is ready, willing and able, statewide! No one else does this.

Just how is KRWA able to provide such a remarkable number of services through a staff that now numbers no more than 20 and with no dues increases since 1989? It is because of the participation I mentioned earlier, with state and federal agencies. Contracts made by them have allowed KRWA to work in partnership with the agencies to provide these essential services. The Association has never

Ongoing National Rural Water Policy



Ongoing National Rural Water Policy Activity

Issue	Status
Bureau of Reclamation Bills	Senate bills
Clean Water Issues	TMDLs, blending
Data Quality Act	EPA suits and industry findings
Disinfection ByProducts	Stage II; new studies
Domenici Arsenic Bill	Bill and statement
Endangered Species Activity	Legislation and hearings
Arsenic Risk Review	SAB Review
EPA Regulatory Reform	Bottled Water & Exemptions
EPA Responses, Exemptions	States and Texas Model
Farm Bill	Reauthorization, backlog, 1926(b)
Ground Water Rule	OMB delayed
Infrastructure Funding	House, Senate bills
Lead Rule (DC crises)	EPA rule, Jeffords' bill
MTBE - Energy Bill	House & Senate legislation
Naturally Occurring Contaminants	House & Senate legislation
NEPA Reform	House Task Force
Perchlorate	DOE bill and Study - EPA
Privatization	SRF/Tort bills, GATT's USDA sales
SDWA Challenge	DC Circuit Rling
Section 1926(b)	Le-Ax
Security	IG, GAO & Senate bills
Source Water	EPA 305b list policy, TMDLs, SWP
Tax Exempt Financing	USDA guarantee bill; S 157
Tort Reform (Private Water)	House bill
USDA backlog	
Water Dev. Act	House and Senate bills

“chased funding” because funding was going to be available. KRWA has submitted responses to requests for proposals offered by agencies because of work that needed to be done for systems or work that agencies requested help on.

Rally at the Rural Water Rally

Water and wastewater systems in Kansas benefit because of KRWA’s affiliation with the National Rural Water Association (NRWA). KRWA was one of the seven charter members of the NRWA in 1976. Today KRWA receives funding through contracts with NRWA that provides services for a total of six programs. These programs include: two Circuit Rider positions filled by Jon Steele and Doug Guenther; Wastewater Tech, Charlie Schwindamann; Groundwater/Wellhead Protection Tech, Douglas Helmke; RUS Source Water Tech, Jim Jackson and EPA Training and Technical Assistance Director, Randy Johnson.

How is this funding available? Funding for these contracts happens because of an appropriation process at the national level. KRWA representatives have gone to Washington every year since 1976 to lobby Congress to support funding for water and wastewater loans and grants through FmHA (now USDA Rural Development) and support for training and technical assistance programs. Various KRWA board members and Association General Manager Elmer Ronnebaum have made dozens of trips to Washington, DC. This year, Elmer and I made two trips to meet with Kansas’ elected officials in their offices.

This year, the President’s budget proposed cuts or elimination in USDA Rural Development funding for water and waster loans and grants. Also, funding for training and technical

assistance programs operated through the NRWA was on the chopping block. I am pleased to report that our lobbying visit, along with visits from all the 45 state rural water associations through our National Rural Water Association lobbying effort, caused leaders of budget committees to reconsider and strike these cuts. On Wednesday,

water’ funding was given such strong support. This effort does not come because someone “wants it to happen.” Those of you who attended the KRWA conference may have heard Senator Roberts state how he had signed letters of support for rural water funding. Please read over the story in this issue of *The Lifeline* about his speech at the annual conference.

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May 4, the House subcommittee on Interior ‘marked up’ the proposed appropriations bill. They voted to reinstate the funding to National Rural Water Association. This was the ONLY agency whose program funding was reinstated; other organizations will have to continue to make further requests for their funding.

While there’s a long way to go, it is significant that ‘rural

Political support comes not only because of results that programs provide and the organizations that have credibility with elected officials, but also from an organized lobbying effort that gets a message heard and understood by those in Congress who can make the change.

Priorities in sync

Water and wastewater issues, including utilities expanding into



KRWA President Dennis Schwartz and KRWA General Manager Elmer Ronnebaum discuss funding for USDA Rural Development with Representative Jim Ryun (right) at his office in Washington.

new areas, replacing aging infrastructure and regulatory issues are constantly a top priority for both KRWA and NRWA, just as these issues are for many individual utility systems. Water and wastewater utilities and the state rural water associations are committed to providing the best service possible to customers. There is no question that communities in Kansas benefit beyond calculation from programs that help train and provide assistance.

Just as KRWA works to inform state and federal legislators, it is extremely important that Kansas system principals network with state representatives and senators. I encourage dialogue with them that explains challenges your rural water district or city has in operating and managing utilities. Review the following state web sites, find your senator's and representative's names and addresses. Print them and keep

them accessible so you can give them a call or e-mail when needed. State senator and representative names, addresses, contact information and districts may be viewed at the following links: www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-senate/ and www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-house/.

Thank you for your dedication to your rural water system or city,

Technologies like e-mail or the telephone allow anyone to contact me or any other member of the KRWA board or staff. The Association welcomes and encourages calls, e-mails or letters for questions or suggestions. Beyond that, I also encourage all to check out the KRWA web site at www.krwa.net. The

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and dedication to KRWA for the support with membership. A special thanks to you for political support for KRWA – and the NRWA and other like organizations that work in your interests.

professionalism of that site is evident; it is just one more tool that your Association makes available to provide education and assistance. I encourage its use.

Questions, comments

Technology has provided us unparalleled access to information.

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INTAKE SCREENING PROCESS

aeration, flash mixing, flocculation, lime softening, contact basins, packaged systems, ion exchange

CLARIFICATION

circular charlifiers, rectangular chain & scraper clarifiers, telescoping valves, baffles, launder covers

FILTRATION

membrane, gravity, pressure, packaged systems, tube settlers, underdrains, air/water backwash systems

CHEMICAL FEED

gas chlorination, gas sulfonation, liquid metering, lime slaker / silo, dry chemical feed, carbon dioxide, chlorine dioxide, scales, leak detectors

FLOW METERS

open channel, magmeters

DISINFECTION

ultraviolet, ozone, chlorine

PUMPS

booster, packaged stations

SCADA

process control, instrumentation/controls, telemetry



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“ if we supply it, we make it work! ”