

# Support, involvement and leadership make KRWA

**I**t has been a distinct pleasure to serve as President of your Board of Directors of the Kansas Rural Water Association this past year. I would like to use this column to express some thoughts about KRWA and the hundreds of water systems – rural and municipal – that KRWA represents and serves.

First, the Kansas Rural Water Association is among the premier organizations in the United States. I can attest to this as I have attended many other state association conferences and meetings of other organizations. The programs and services KRWA provides are bringing untold benefits to water and wastewater systems and the citizens of Kansas. Thanks to those agencies

that have allowed KRWA to partner with them in making services available. In return, KRWA's professionalism is reflected across the board – in an outstanding rapport with nearly ever city and RWD in the state, in KRWA's publications, the Web site and in the training and conference programs that are available. We can all be proud of having and belonging to an organization that has such vitality and integrity.

**Who are KRWA's members?**  
KRWA staff provides a membership report at each board of directors meeting. I want to share the last report with you.



*Dennis Schwartz  
KRWA President*

KRWA membership is growing – and I am pleased to report that four first time members and 21 associate members joined in 2005. In the sidebar below is a report of membership fees received for the past five years.

**average of 324 meters for “small” RWDs.**

- **428 City members (or Board of Public Utility members)**
- **52 serve more than 1000 meters**

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KRWA's board reviewed membership and membership fees in depth at the board meeting

- **376 Member cities serve 105,632 meters for an average of 280 meters by small municipalities.**

## KRWA MEMBERSHIP DUES 2000 - 2005

Year	RWDs	Municipals	Associates	RWD / Municipal Dues
2000	\$66,793	\$107,242	\$28,900	62%
2001	\$67,197	\$124,225	\$27,480	54%
2002	\$70,574	\$125,270	\$35,045	56%
2003	\$73,019	\$118,470	\$32,040	62%
2004	\$69,480	\$128,848	\$28,375	54%
<b>2005</b>	<b>\$70,868</b>	<b>\$128,406</b>	<b>\$32,400</b>	<b>55%</b>
Total	\$417,931	\$732,461	\$184,240	57%

January 27, 2006. Here is a summary of KRWA membership:

- **252 RWDs, or others (PWWSDs, several privately owned systems)**
- **17 RWDs serve more than 1000 meters**
- **235 Member RWDs serve 76,103 meters for an**

There have been approximately 150 first-time RWD or city members since November 15, 1999. Of those, 30 were RWDs or public wholesale districts. Consolidation of RWDs reduced RWD membership by six systems in 2005.

**Everyone is treated alike**

KRWA provided training to more than 5,300 operators, managers, board/council members and other staff in 2005. KRWA does not differentiate in its services to members or non-members. Members support KRWA because they appreciate the help that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and yes, 365 days a year. Logs of all staff members are computerized. I am proud of the fact that KRWA's approach has always been to streamline processes wherever possible. I am proud that KRWA has never resorted to treating any member or non-member any differently.

KRWA's overarching goal is to improve the economy and the well being of Kansas residents by helping to assure that residents have the opportunity to receive a safe, reliable and affordable supply of drinking water. When issues arise that may impact that goal, KRWA attempts to address

that issue. Many larger systems do not need KRWA's assistance on such matters as they have the technical, administrative, legal and financial resources to protect their residents' interests, although

legislation and will continue to be involved in promoting legislation and a regulatory agenda that is reasonable and responsible. There are many examples of KRWA legislative initiatives that have

**It is one thing to desire to have some new legislation passed; it is quite another thing to be persistent enough to see a bill make it all the way to the Governor's signature.**

KRWA has cooperated with them when they have interests in common.

**Legislative leadership**

It is one thing to desire to have some new legislation passed; it is quite another thing to be persistent enough to see a bill make it all the way to the Governor's signature. Not only does it require financial resources, it requires an incredible investment of time by staff and board members and others. KRWA has provided leadership on

provided major benefits to public water systems and their users over the last few decades. Additionally there have been many times that KRWA intervention into the legislative process has prevented measures that would have been detrimental to our systems. Visit the KRWA Web site at [www.krwa.net](http://www.krwa.net) under "legislation" to review some highlights of KRWA's legislative efforts.

Many of the legislative initiatives that KRWA has pursued



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were the result of suggestion from member systems. The following is KRWA's legislative agenda for the 2006 Session:

- relaxation of restrictions on investment of idle funds; KRWA hopes to work in concert with the League of Municipalities and Association of Counties to gain this legislation
- obtain legal review of a proposal to have RWD-owned vehicles eligible for government tags
- closely monitor any challenge to eminent domain
- determine the requirements for mailing of the Consumer Confidence Report to customers and if possible, to not require that systems be required to mail the report but to provide it upon request
- continue to monitor and suggest improvements where possible on territorial issues and to defend 1926b protection in conjunction

with federally backed loans to RWDs

KRWA has provided a weekly update on legislation that it monitors through its Web site and has involved members as needed. Copies of the bills are linked for easy access by readers. KRWA's testimony has also been provided through links on that Web site or summarized in the KRWA magazine.

#### **A proud past – a tremendous future**

Serving as president of your KRWA Board of Directors has increased my appreciation for the level of excellence that the Association has attained. The staff's expertise ranges from basic requests, such as leak detection to operator training, to complex management and financial issues facing the modern utility. I know that the KRWA staff is often challenged to learn and understand new drinking water regulations, just as is the staff at the Kansas Department of Health &

Environment or other agencies. But we work together for the good of the citizens of the state. That's what KRWA has done and that's what KRWA will continue to do.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend the 2006 Annual Conference. I especially call on board and council members to consider attending. There are numerous sessions that are available as you can see from the conference program printed in this issue. From rates to reaching agreements, from board/council training to improving office skills, the KRWA conference has something for everyone, all the time. Put the KRWA conference on your calendar, March 28 – 30 at Wichita. It's an investment that you will find of great benefit.



*Senator Sam Brownback paused for this photo with KRWA President Dennis Schwartz and KRWA General Manager Elmer Ronnebaum at the Senator's office in Washington on February 8. Dennis and Elmer visited with Senator Brownback and staff in support of funding for USDA Rural Development's water and wastewater loan, grant, training and technical assistance programs administered by National Rural Water Association and operated by NRWA state affiliates.*

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