

THE OGALLALA AQUIFER

Planning for Tomorrow



New Mexico American Water is planning for tomorrow to ensure a sustainable water supply for Clovis. We are pursuing a number of short and long term solutions to combat declining water levels in the Ogallala Aquifer.

The Ogallala (High Plains) Aquifer is being overpumped. All water users in our area draw water from this aquifer, which stretches over 174,000 square miles in eight states. Approximately 3% of the water pumped from the aquifer in Curry and Roosevelt Counties is withdrawn for municipal purposes.



FACTS ABOUT THE OGALLALA

Water levels in the Ogallala Aquifer are declining.

- ◆ New Mexico American Water had 29 wells in 2000 and by this summer will have 64 wells to pump the same amount of water.
- ◆ Water levels in New Mexico American Water wells, on average, lose three feet of water each year, a loss of about 10% capacity.
- ◆ On hot summer days water use in Clovis doubles. (This is a common occurrence for most water utilities and is known as “peak demand.”)

Short Term Solutions and Peak Demand

New Mexico American Water applied for a Rights Combination Permit application with the Office of State Engineer (OSE) on July 30, 2008.

- The permit affects only 15 of our wells and covers about 7100 acre feet of the water rights. New Mexico American Water holds total water rights of over 51,000 acre feet in the area.
- The change will allow New Mexico American Water to turn on two wells and increase the pumping from a handful of wells while decreasing the pumping from other wells.
- Technical work with OSE and protestants has occurred and a pumping schedule was developed.
- OSE issued emergency authorization for up to one year based on a determination that neighboring water rights would not be impaired.

Water Conservation

- Our customers are eligible for rebates of up to \$150 for water efficient toilets and clothes washers and rebates of up to \$800 to replace grass turf with water efficient landscaping.
- New Mexico American Water encourages everyone to follow our three day per week watering schedule.

- **Odd-numbered addresses:** Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday; **even-numbered addresses:** Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday. *Please water your yard before 10 a.m. to prevent evaporation waste especially on hot or windy days.*

Long Term Solutions Deeper Aquifer

- Water quantity and quality is unknown in the Lower Dockum Aquifer.
- New Mexico American Water is drilling a deep test well and will be test pumping it around Labor Day 2010.
- This aquifer may prove to be an additional source of water for Clovis and the surrounding area.

Ute Pipeline

- New Mexico American Water has been a strong proponent of the Ute pipeline.
- This source of water is the best long-term supply because surface water is a renewable supply.

Basin Guidelines

- The OSE has drafted guidelines to regulate withdrawals from the aquifer to help sustain it.