



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Department
of Health

Department
of State

Agriculture
and Markets

DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAM: **PROTECTING YOUR DRINKING WATER**

June 2019

Overview

Protecting drinking water is a high priority for New Yorkers. In response, New York State is launching an initiative to provide municipalities with resources and tools to proactively protect their drinking water sources. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Department of Health (DOH), in consultation with the Department of State (DOS) and Department of Agriculture and Markets (DAM), are building a comprehensive, statewide, sustainable Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2). The goal is to help municipalities develop and implement a drinking water source protection plan for the source of their drinking water. The State will assist municipalities with understanding the risks to their drinking water sources and what protection actions might be appropriate.

Soon the State will have a document that municipalities can use to develop their drinking water source protection plan. In addition to the document, the State will have staff available to assist municipalities with the development and implementation of their community-specific drinking water source protection plan.

How Will Drinking Water Source Protection Benefit Your Community?

- Protect public health by preventing pollutants from entering a drinking water supply.
- Avoid preventable drinking water treatment costs.
- Increase community confidence in their local public drinking water.
- Create long-lasting partnerships that support implementation.
- Utilize a broad array of existing funding sources to aid with project implementation costs.

Opportunities for Assistance

The State encourages all public water supplies to develop a drinking water source protection plan. The State is preparing a document that will be available soon. See the DWSP2 Framework section of this fact sheet for details.

Earlier this year, the State solicited for communities to work with a state-hired consultant to develop and implement their protection plan. The application period closed on February 15, 2019. The State received more than 50 applications and are pleased with the significant interest. The State is currently evaluating all the applications and will announce which communities have been chosen and which consultant has been selected to participate in the program later this year. All communities that applied will be notified once the selections have been made.

For communities that were not selected to work with the state-hired consultant, DOH is hiring staff that will be placed throughout the state to assist communities with developing and implementing their protection plan. Also, municipalities can contact their regional planning boards and request assistance with source water protection plan development and implementation. In addition, municipalities can inquire with New York Rural Water Association to aid with plan development and implementation.

Lastly, DEC and DAM have funding available to acquire land or conservation easements to protect source water through the Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program and the Source Water Buffer Program, respectively. See the More Information/Resources Section of this fact sheet for links to those programs.

DWSP2 Framework

The DWSP2 framework will be available to help municipalities develop their community-specific protection plans. This document includes an easy-to-follow summary touching on the key components of a protection plan, and a resource kit with more detailed information to help communities accomplish each component.

Key components of a protection plan include:

- **Form a stakeholder group**
 - To oversee the process and ensure the community is involved.
- **Establish goals and formulate a vision**
 - Designed to be unique to the community and guide their drinking water source protection planning.
- **Develop an overview of the water system**
 - Beginning of the technical portion of the plan. Communities will need to gather basic information about their systems, including analyses of both water quality and water quantity.
- **Update the drinking water source protection map**
 - Inventory potential contaminant sources and create protection areas to help communities identify areas needing protection. The document provides a methodology to delineate protection areas for either surface water (lakes, reservoirs, and rivers) or groundwater sources of public drinking water.
- **Prioritize potential contaminants sources**
 - The document provides communities with information to aid with the prioritization process of potential contaminant sources.
- **Identify protection methods**
 - The document provides information on both regulatory and non-regulatory protection methods communities can choose to use, such as intermunicipal agreements and encouraging best management practices, to protect their source of drinking water.
- **Develop an implementation timeline**
 - Once protection measures are identified, the next step is for the community to develop a timeline of how they are going to implement the protection measures and make use of the different funding sources that are currently available.
- **Designate a plan management team**
 - This team is responsible for ensuring the community-specific drinking water source protection plan is completed, and the previously identified protection methods are being implemented.
- **Create a revision schedule**
 - To be successful, a community's protection plan needs to be kept up-to-date. The document recommends methods to track changes in the community and ensure the protection plan is updated on a regular basis.

More Information/Resources

- [Learn more about DWSP2 \(https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/115250.html\)](https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/115250.html)
- [Learn more about Drinking Water Source Protection \(https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/\)](https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/)
- [New York State Association of Regional Councils Contact Information \(http://www.nysarc.com/contact_.htm\)](http://www.nysarc.com/contact_.htm)
- [New York Rural Water Association Source Water Protection Program \(https://www.nyruralwater.org/technical-assistance/source-water-protection\)](https://www.nyruralwater.org/technical-assistance/source-water-protection)
- [Learn more about the Water Quality Improvement Project \(WQIP\) Program \(https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html\)](https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html)
- [Learn more about the Source Water Buffer Program \(https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html\)](https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html)

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