



Friday, December 3, 2010

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## **DNR input on Waukesha application for Great Lakes water helps move process forward**

The Waukesha Water Utility said today that a Thursday Department of Natural Resources letter asking for additional details on certain aspects of its application for Great Lakes water will help move the process forward.

“Waukesha’s application for Great Lakes water is complex, with nearly 2,000 pages of documentation,” said Dan Duchniak, General Manager of the Waukesha Water Utility. “We have said all along that we expect there would be items that the DNR will need clarification or additional information on. That back-and-forth is part of the process.”

Duchniak added that the utility and the DNR have the same goal. “It’s the DNR’s job to provide an independent review of our conclusion that Lake Michigan is Waukesha’s only reasonable option for a sustainable water supply. We will work with them to make sure they have the information they need to do that.” However, he added that the water utility has not yet met with its scientific and technical experts to review the new requests for information from the DNR. “It’s too early to react to the individual items or requests,” he said.

“In many ways, our issue is simple,” Duchniak said. “Local groundwater supplies are not sustainable or reliable for the long term. Water from Lake Michigan, on the other hand, can be returned back to the source, ensuring sustainability. But there are a lot of details involved that we can help ensure that the DNR and the public understand. We also understand that we are the first community to make an application like this, so there is additional scrutiny that the application will get.”

He said it is important to keep the review process moving forward. “Waukesha has a court-approved June 2018 agreement to comply with federal radium standards. But the amount of time involved in construction of a new water supply means we need to move the review process forward,” he said. “A reliable, healthy water supply is a basic service that our city must provide. It’s critically important that we move forward to provide that.”

Duchniak noted that a regional planning commission recently came to the same conclusion as Waukesha about a Lake Michigan water supply for the city. On Wednesday, the Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) approved its *Regional Water Supply Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin*, a five year study by experts that concluded that a Lake Michigan water supply is the best environmental option for the City of Waukesha.