

Official Publication of Southwest Water Authority and the Southwest Pipeline Project

# Water Works



SOUTHWEST WATER  
AUTHORITY  
*Quality Water for  
Southwest North Dakota*

## From Southwest Water Authority

As we go into a new year, all of us at Southwest Water Authority (SWA) want to express our extreme gratitude to everyone who helped us deal successfully with all the challenges in 2020. These are the invaluable people who continue to believe in our mission and share our vision of People and Business Succeeding with Quality Water. So, "Thank You!" to SWA's professional staff and its dedicated Board of Directors, consultants, and all of the regional and state partners helping us bring quality water to southwest North Dakota. Even though three people were recognized with awards (read inside), all of the people who work with and for SWA are award-winning people.

Especially, we want to thank the Southwest Pipeline Project's (SWPP) owner, the great state of North Dakota – and most especially our State Water Commission (SWC), legislators, and Governor Doug Burgum and his staff. If it were not for state ownership and the unique funding of the project, the economic benefits and quality of life impacts that quality water brings to southwest North Dakota likely would never have happened.



Construction continued even during the pandemic, including completion of the Second Davis Buttes and the Second Belfield reservoirs. These reservoirs provide an additional 1.75 million gallons of treated water storage to help meet peak demands.

Preliminary design and easement acquisitions are ongoing for the Main Transmission Line expansion from the Davis Buttes, Belfield and New England reservoirs, back to the Ray Christensen Pump Station in Dickinson. This expansion will further increase the SWPP's water-distribution capacity. Also, construction continues on the supplemental intake at Renner Bay on Lake Sakakawea.

This year marks the 67th Legislative Session in the North Dakota Legislature and SWA's Board of Directors and management are working to aide in obtaining funding for the SWPP. At a recent monthly board meeting, Senator Rich Wardner presented his legislative proposal for a bonding bill which could potentially free up RTF money for water projects such as the SWPP. SWA will be working diligently this session in support of the SWC's agency funding bill, House Bill 2020. Securing Project funding is always at the forefront of our endeavors.



Due to the loss of the one-mill levy at the end of 2020, SWA's Board of Directors approved a small rate increase, effective January 1, 2021, to help offset the lost revenue. This translates to an additional ten cents per thousand gallons for both rural and contract customers, and a one dollar increase on the rural monthly minimum.

Certainly, there is no more important endeavor in sustaining human life than sustaining the supply of quality water. Yet, hundreds of people in southwest North Dakota remain on SWA's waiting list for connection to its award-winning quality water – a strong motivation for SWA to remain vigilant in our mission and diligent in gaining the SWPP's required funding. Here at SWA, the dream of water for southwest North Dakota continues – *because quality water matters.*

**Happy New Year From Southwest Water Authority**

## Mobile-Friendly Website

Southwest Water Authority launched its new website to make it easier to use. Whether you prefer a tablet, cell phone or desk computer, this will provide easy navigation and a wealth of information. Visit [SWwater.com](http://SWwater.com) to see for yourself.



# Streamline Your Payments with Autopay

Sign up for FREE Automatic Payment Authorization. By enrolling in Autopay, you can save time and mailing costs. Just complete the automatic payment authorization form, provide a voided check and mail both back to SWA. Once the payment withdrawal has been established, payment will automatically post to your SWA account on its due date.

## Water Education for Kids

Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) is an award-winning, nonprofit water education program and publisher. The program facilitates and promotes awareness, appreciation, knowledge, and stewardship of water resources through the dissemination of classroom-ready teaching aids and the establishment of internationally sponsored Project WET programs.

Check out “Soap and Water Science” as the newest activity on Project WET’s interactive learning site. There you will discover all about water. Developed by the Project WET Foundation with support from Ecolab, “Soap and Water Science” uses animated, game-based learning to teach kids how germs spread and how soap and water work together to stop that process. Play on your computer, tablet or smart phone today!

Visit the Project WET website at [www.projectwet.org](http://www.projectwet.org).

## Rate Increase to Offset Mill Levy Loss

Towards the end of each year, the SWA Board of Directors reviews current and forecasted financials to determine the need for any rate changes. At its October meeting, the Board approved a small rate increase, effective January 1, 2021, primarily to offset the expiration of SWA’s one-mill levy.

The net effect of the decision was a ten-cent increase per 1,000 gallons of water to the rural customers. Rural rates per thousand gallons will go from \$6.26 in 2020 to \$6.36 in 2021, and the rural minimum will increase by \$49 to \$50 per month. Rural customers in southwest North Dakota continue to pay less than one cent per gallon of water, ranking just about average in comparison with other rural water systems across the state.



## Safety in Quality Water

Clean water is important to protect human health, and everyone at Southwest Water Authority (SWA) is doing everything they can to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. What’s important to know....

- SWA’s water remains safe to drink. As always, SWA adheres to all drinking water regulations that have been established to prevent waterborne pathogens, such as a virus like COVID-19, from contaminating drinking water.
- SWA continues to deliver safe water to its customers. SWA has plans in place for handling emergencies of this type and routinely conducts exercises to prepare itself for a variety of events.
- SWA is dedicated to keeping employees, partners, contractors and vendors safe and healthy. SWA has made numerous changes to accomplish this including: practicing social distancing guidelines for employees by providing alternative work locations, requiring employees to wear masks at the work site, increased cleaning and disinfection at work areas, and closing the Administration building.



# Quality Water Because of Quality People

Three people at SWA recently were honored by peers for their dedication to North Dakota's water. At all levels of SWA's operations, the awards are an indication of what it takes to provide quality water 365 days a year, 24/7, to southwest North Dakota.



Grace Rixen-Handford with Jesse Penor

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's Patriot Award is granted to individual supervisors, such as Southwest Water Authority's (SWA) Water Treatment Manager, Grace Rixen-Handford, through a nomination by a Reservists of the National Guard, such as Jesse Penor. Jesse is a SWA water treatment operator who, with Grace's support, has been able to balance the importance of being a Reservist and the essential job of being a water operator.



Mary Massad

Mary Massad received the Riverman Award from the Missouri River Joint Water Board at the virtually conducted annual 2020 North Dakota Water Convention. The Riverman Award signifies appreciation for a lifetime of leadership, resource management and water development in the Missouri River Corridor. Mary received the award for demonstrating an on-going commitment and dedicated involvement in representing North Dakota's water.



Larry Bares

Larry Bares, a member of Southwest Water Authority's Board, received the Commodore Award at the North Dakota Water Convention in December. The Commodore Award is the highest honor given by the North Dakota Water Users Association. Once nominated, recipients are selected by an awards committee and then approved by the Governor of North Dakota. Those receiving the award hold the rank of Commodore in North Dakota's Mythical Navy. Like all of the recipients of this award, Larry previously received the Water Wheel.

## Our Vision

People and Business  
Succeeding with Quality  
Water

## Our Mission

Quality Water for  
Southwest North Dakota

Water Works is the Official  
Publication of Southwest  
Water Authority and  
the Southwest Pipeline  
Project.

Visit our website... from  
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it's all online

[www.swwater.com](http://www.swwater.com)

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## Congrats on your Retirement Bruce!

Congratulations on your retirement Bruce! Water Distribution Operator Bruce Mutschelknaus located in the Southwest Water Authority's (SWA) Elgin office, retired at the end of October 2020. Bruce has been a dedicated employee of Southwest Water Authority for 14 years and will be missed. Bruce says his retirement plans are to do repair work for local farmers and tinker in his shop. SWA wishes Bruce and his family well in their future endeavors. Thank you for your years at SWA!



## No Operator - No Water

Join us in thanking Southwest Water Authority's water treatment and distribution operators. Visit our website at [SWwater.com](http://SWwater.com) and click on "Thank an Operator" and let them know how much you appreciate what they do to deliver award-winning water to your home.





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