

A Message From –

The Files Valley Water Supply Corporation Board of Directors

Incorporated on July 23, 1971, Files Valley Water Supply Corporation (FVWSC) is a not-for-profit, member-controlled organization with a mission of providing safe, reliable, affordable water for homes and businesses in our service area. The board of directors is composed of nine members who are elected by the membership and tasked with making difficult decisions on behalf of the entire water system.

Water is heavily regulated. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) requires water samples to be taken every day to ensure your water is safe to drink. These samples are tested in laboratories to ensure contaminants harmful to humans and animals are not found. Additionally, the TCEQ imposes standards on all water systems such as required water pressure. For this reason, anytime someone requests a new water meter an engineer has to analyze if the existing pipes and equipment can continue to deliver the required pressure with the addition of the new meter. We call this a hydraulic study.

The TCEQ also imposes regulation to ensure each system has adequate water supply capacity. Because of this, FVWSC is required to ensure there is enough water either produced or purchased so that each connection could be provided with .6 gallons of water per minute.

Property in the FVWSC service territory is prime for new development. Many large pieces of land are being purchased and divided up into smaller homesites or subdivisions. While growth in our area can be a positive thing, it does bring with it challenges. Not only do new pipes need to be installed to extend service, but existing ones are often too small to support the additional connections. When this occurs, entire sections of line must be replaced with pipes of a greater diameter. But adding larger pipes does not increase the actual amount of water FVWSC has - it only allows it to get there faster. As mentioned earlier, FVWSC must ensure that every connection can be supplied with .6 gallons of water per minute. So as more and more meters are added to the system, the amount of water required also increases. And here lies the challenge. Where is FVWSC going to get more water?

Currently, 100% of the water supplied to all FVWSC members is purchased from Aquilla Water Supply District. Aquilla Water Supply District treats water obtained from Lake Aquilla and sells it to FVWSC, the City of Hillsboro, Hill County Water Supply Corporation, Chatt Water Supply Corporation, and Brandon-Irene Water Supply Corporation.

FVWSC has contacted Aquilla Water Supply District as well as each of their customers listed above, trying to purchase additional water. Unfortunately, every system that purchases water from Aquilla Water Supply District is experiencing the same growth as is occurring in the FVWSC territory and none have any water to spare. There is no additional available water in Lake Aquilla as the amount of water that can be removed, treated, and sold as drinking water is regulated and at capacity.

In fact, there is no available water in Lake Whitney or Lake Pat Cleburne as those sources are also already at the maximum allocation allowed. FVWSC has met with the Brazos River Authority, the Texas Water Development Board, as well as State and National representatives of Congress, expressing our concern about the lack of available surface water. At this point, we have exhausted our options to obtain additional surface water. Hopefully, our efforts and those efforts of systems who are in a similar situation will result in some changes.

Are we actually running out of water? No, but we are running out of water on paper. While not everyone uses .6 gallons of water per minute, in fact, system-wide usage is much less; however, the regulations require that amount. Without any available surface water the only other option is ground water.

Drilling new water wells appears to be the solution to addressing the needs of our system as it grows exponentially. FVWSC has obtained land and begun the permitting process required to drill a well. Approval must be obtained by the Prairieland Groundwater Conservation District and the design approved by TCEQ. Drilling a new well takes time, and it takes money.

The FVWSC board of directors' struggle with balancing the need to ensure existing members have safe, reliable water with providing upgrades needed to increase water production and distribution. Raising rates or fees is never an easy decision. In order to finance the new well, the decision was made to increase the fee that new members pay when they join the existing FVWSC system. The current Equity Buy-In amount represents what the new well is estimated to cost versus the number of connections it is estimated to be able to supply water at the .6 gallon per minute level.

The new well will only serve as a band aid. More wells will be needed as the population in the FVWSC service territory continues to swell. But just as it was in 1971, our mission continues to be providing safe, reliable, affordable water.