



THE SPIGOT

from the NORTH DAKOTA RURAL WATER SYSTEMS ASSOCIATION

And the Winner Is...

By Lisa Schatz

The Northeast Regional Water District (NRWD) was crowned the 2018 water taste contest winner. In an effort to identify the tastiest water, water samples from throughout North Dakota were submitted for a statewide competition, which took place during the 2018 Water EXPO. Water utilities submit water samples straight from the tap. The water is judged for clarity, color, taste, and smell. Conference attendees narrowed the entries down to three systems – the city of Mayville, NRWD, and South Central Regional Water District. The panel of judges determined NRWD as having the most appealing water. This panel included Geoff Slick of AE2S, Troy Vossler of Bartlett & West, Jessica Lee of Sen. Hoeven's office, and Joel Heitkamp, host of "News & Views."

The competition is part of a "Quality on Tap!" campaign to emphasize the high quality, standards, and taste of rural water. Winners of the state contest will compete in a national contest on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. The event is part of the NRWA Rural Water Rally, an annual legislative event for the 50 state affiliates of the National Rural Water Association.

The NRWD was formed when North Valley Water District (NVWD) and Langdon Rural Water District (LRWD) consolidated Jan. 1, 2014.

NVWD was one of the original systems in the 1970s, located at the north end of the Red River Valley, covering Pembina County and southeastern Cavalier County. In 1975-76, NVWD was constructed and began as a nonprofit, member-owned corporation, known as North Valley Water Association, Inc. On Jan. 1, 2000, the name changed to NVWD and was reorganized as a political subdivision. The original system consisted of 747 users, with the city of St. Thomas as the only bulk user and the city of Mountain as a supplemental user. The water source is the Icelandic Aquifer west of Cavalier.

LRWD was constructed in 1988 and

reorganized to a water district several years after NVWD. LRWD never had a water source but purchased all of its water from the city of Langdon, city of Cando, and NVWD. The system was built in four phases and served 980 users and six bulk users (city of Edmore, Nekoma, and four large hog businesses).

The two systems (NVWD and LRWD) worked together and discussed the idea of consolidating for several years. In 2011, Alvin Carlson, LRWD manager, retired and Gordon Johnson was contracted as a part-time general manager. The intent was to provide a trial period in which a decision would be made whether the two systems would consolidate. In December 2012, the two systems' boards voted unanimously to proceed with the consolidation process. In July 2013, votes were casted in favor (239 to 34) of the consolidation. In September 2013, the state engineer was petitioned and approval was granted in November to form a new district called the Northeast Regional Water District.

Since the consolidation on Jan. 1, 2014, NRWD has had a number of aggressive improvements totaling \$35 million. The most recent improvement is the Devils Lake Water Supply Project (DLWSP), which cost \$24 million.

This project enabled NRWD to have a second good-quality water source for the Langdon rural branch, western North Valley branch, and the cities of Langdon and Cando. Phase II of the DLWSP is scheduled to be bid this spring and will bring more than 200 new users. The estimated cost of Phase II is \$8 million. Upon the completion of seven years of major improvements, NRWD will have 2,600 users (including cities) and 17 bulk users and about 420 million gallons of annual sales volume. The two water sources, the Icelandic Aquifer and the city of Devils Lake (Spiritwood Aquifer), both have iron-manganese filtration water plants and are comparable and compatible water chemistries.



Gordon Johnson receiving the water trophy during the 2018 Water EXPO.

Third in the Nation

By Lisa Schatz

SEWUD was chosen in February 2017 to represent North Dakota at a national drinking water competition. The national competition is held in conjunction with the National Rural Water Association (NRWA) Rural Water Rally held on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. In February 2018, SEWUD was recognized and awarded with the bronze medal. Water samples are submitted from 50 NRWA state affiliates and compete each year to be recognized as having the highest quality rural water. Please join us in congratulating SEWUD.

SEWUD is located in Mantador, N.D., and serves more than 3,000 residential users and 39 cities (bulk or individual hookups). Prior to Southeast Water Users, Inc., the rural water system was called Richland Rural Water Users, Inc. (RRWU). In the spring of 1978, construction began on phase I of the RRWU project and water flowed through pipes by November 1978, serving 550 customers. Soon after, phase I was completed, and phases II and III began. Upon completion of these phases, quality water was delivered to 120 members in Hankinson and Fairmont, 330 rural members in Richland and Sargent counties, along with the cities of Milnor and Rutland, and a water treatment plant was built four miles south of Mantador. In 1994, RRWU members voted to change the name of the system to SEWUD.

Nearby, Dickey Rural Water Users Association

(DRWUA) began construction of its own and completed two phases of construction by 1996. Upon completion, the system provided 488 rural hookups in Dickey, Lamoure, and Logan counties, along with 11 bulk users. A contract was developed with SEWUD to manage the DRWUA.

Ransom Sargent Water Users, Inc. (RSWU), headquartered in Lisbon, began construction in the late 1990s to provide service to Marion, Fingal, and Cogswell. Upon completion of several construction phases to provide water to members, SEWUD entered into an agreement with the city of Lisbon to expand its water treatment plant to accommodate additional users. RSWU entered into a management contract with SEWUD.

In 2006, the three became one and consolidated into SEWUD with three divisions. Expanding and improving service has been an ongoing process. SEWUD has continually made upgrades and expanded reservoir capacity.

Most recently, \$20.5 million was secured for a system-wide expansion project. More than 500 individuals and the city of Walcott are slated to receive rural water and the construction of a reservoir north of Colfax. The system-wide expansion project was bid in the spring and construction began in June 2017.

Please join us in congratulating the SEWUD.



Steve Hansen of Southeast Water Users District

8 fun facts about SEWUD:



SEWUD System is
43 Years Old



Residential Gallons Sold:
194,666,615



Commercial Gallons Sold:
22,961,748



Bulk Gallons Sold:
243,985,818



Water Source:
Ground Water



System Investment:
\$75.5 Million



Miles of Pipe:
3,075



Gallon Storage Capacity:
4,162,000