



At Your Service

PROVIDING
ELECTRIC, GAS, WATER AND
SANITARY SEWER SERVICES

June 2018

The Quality of Local Drinking Water Supplies

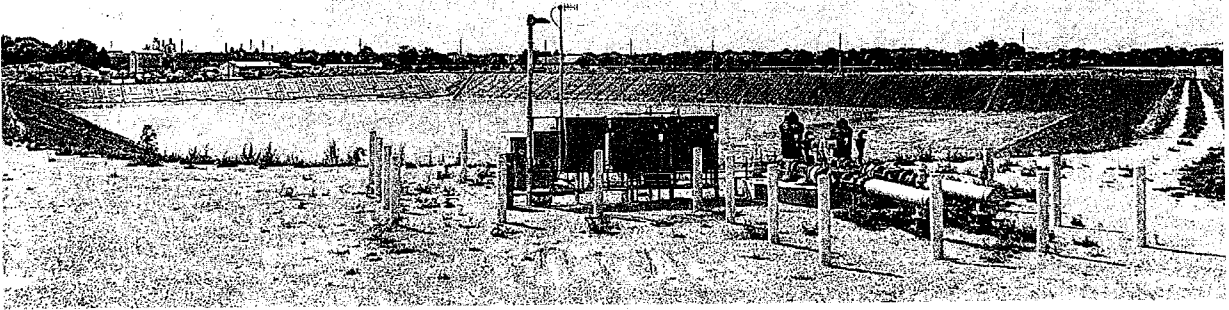
Each year, the City of Hastings is required to send a water quality report to all of its customers. The report, which was sent this year in May, accompanied the monthly billing statement. What is outlined by the report is how the water supplied by City of Hastings stacks up to standards required by the State of Nebraska and the Environmental Protection Agency. It continues to meet and surpass the quality standards that are required.

This month's *At Your Service* explains how the water testing program conducted by the Utilities Department works. Each month, several dozen samples are collected at sites representative of those served by the water system. Samples are collected at places where the public might access water within the community. Examples are schools and various businesses. With the exception of specific residential homes involved with testing for copper and lead in drinking water standards, samples are not taken from individual homes by the Utilities Department.

Once collected, the samples are shipped to water testing laboratories operated by the State of Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services. The samples are carefully scrutinized at those facilities. Some possible contaminants are screened for in parts per million concentrations. Others are screened for concentrations in the parts per billion range. The results from the samples taken throughout a particular calendar year are detailed in the aforementioned water quality report distributed to customers. The report is also available at www.cityofhastings.org/departments/utilities/water.

Ensuring that customers have an ample supply of water is a high priority for the City of Hastings. Ensuring that that same water is unquestionably safe to drink is an even higher priority. The single largest threat to local drinking water quality is the rising levels of nitrates found in samples. Nitrates are a by-product of nitrogen, most commonly found in fertilizers. To combat the rising nitrate levels, the City of Hastings began construction of the Aquifer Storage and Restoration Project in 2016. The system is designed to reduce the high level of nitrates making their way into the City wells.

The Utilities Department will continue its efforts of supplying safe, high quality, reasonably priced water supplies to its customers. Remember, water is a precious resource and should always be used wisely and conserved whenever possible.



Facts About the Hastings Aquifer Storage and Restoration Project

- The project is a cooperative effort between the City of Hastings, the Little Blue & Upper Big Blue Natural Resources Districts, the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission & The Environmental Trust Fund of Nebraska.
- The ASR Construction began in earnest in 2016 and will take several years to be completed as several studies are planned to optimize the process.
- The total project cost is estimated at \$46 million. To build a conventional water treatment plant, the cost estimate is approximately \$72.3 million.
- To date, approximately \$12 million has been expended.
- In 1997, the concentration of nitrates in the local drinking water was 4.7 parts per million. Today, the average nitrate level is between 8.0 and 9.0 parts per million and rising.
- Injection of low nitrate water into the aquifer is expected to begin spring of 2018.
- Additional treatment may be necessary to remove uranium.

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