

UPDATE

Meetings & Events

*Rural Water Rally
April 2-4, 2006
Hyatt Regency
Capitol Hill
Washington, DC*

*ORWA Annual Meeting
and Technical
Conference
April 17-19, 2006
Clarion Meridian Con-
ference Center
Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma*

*Capitol Water Day
April 19, 2006
State Capitol Building*

*ORWA Fall Management
Conference
August 22-24, 2006
Western Hills Lodge
Wagoner, Oklahoma*

*NRWA Annual
Conference
September 24-27, 2006
Hyatt Regency Reunion
Dallas, Texas*

SENATOR INHOFE INTRODUCES SMALL SYSTEM DRINKING WATER ACT OF

(Bipartisan Legislation Will Assist Water Systems Throughout the Country to comply With Federal Drinking Water Standards)

WASHINGTON, DC – Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.), Chairman of the Environment & Public Works Committee, today introduced the bipartisan Small System Drinking Water Act of 2005, a bill to assist water systems throughout the country in complying with federal drinking water standards, and require the Environmental Protection Agency to utilize all of its resources provided by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act amendments (SDWA).

“In Oklahoma we continue to have municipalities struggling with the arsenic rule,” Senator Inhofe said. “Furthermore, nearly 80 percent of our small systems, those serving less than 10,000 people, are not in compliance with the Disinfection Byproducts (DBP) Stage I rule.

In EPA’s most recent drinking water needs survey, Oklahoma identified \$4.5 billion in infrastructure needs over the next 20 years. This does not include costs imposed by Oklahoma communities to meet Federal clean water requirements. If we are going to impose complicated requirements on water systems, we need to provide them with assistance in implementing those requirements. We simply must ensure that towns across the country have safe and affordable drinking water, and

that the law is fair to small and rural communities.”

Highlights of The Small System Drinking Water Act of 2005:

- Reauthorizes the technical assistance program in the SDWA;
- Creates a pilot program to demonstrate new technologies and approaches for systems of all sizes to comply with the rules;
- Requires the EPA to convene a working group to examine the science behind the rules compared to new developments since their publication;
- Directs the EPA to convene a working group to identify barriers to the use of the following approaches – point of entry treatment, point of use treatment and package plants; and
- Prohibits the EPA from enforcing a Federal standard against a water system unless that water system has received the appropriate amount of money to pay the Federal share of the upgrade.

Co-sponsors of the legislation are; Senators

ORWA ANNUAL MEETING AND TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

The 36th Annual Meeting and Technical Conference of the Oklahoma Rural Water Association will be held April 17-19, 2006 at the Clarion Meridian Convention Center, 737 South Meridian in Oklahoma City. Plan now to attend for training and fellowship. Invited speakers include Governor Brad Henry and Congressman Ernest Istook. Don’t forget to enter your water in the 2nd Annual Water Taste Contest. More information and conference registration forms are attached with this newsletter. We look forward to seeing you at the 36th ORWA Annual Conference.





For emergency calls after office hours, nights, weekends and holidays, contact Gene Whaley at 405/794-0841



NRWA ANNOUNCES NEW LOAN PROGRAM

The National Rural Water Association has established a revolving loan program to provide financing for water and wastewater projects, replacement of equipment, or small capital projects that are not part of regular operation and maintenance. Loan amounts may not exceed \$100,000.00 or 75% of the total project cost whichever is less. The repayment period for loans is a maximum of 10 years, but cannot exceed the useful life of the facility or item that is financed. Five year, interest only, pre-development loans are also available. Loans will be made at 70% of the poverty interest rate as established by RUS, with a minimum

rate of 3%. Eligible entities: rural water districts, municipalities, counties, non-profit rural water systems, special purpose districts and Native American Tribes.

Applications, information and forms can be acquired via the internet at www.nrwa.org/revolvingloan. Information can be emailed, if available electronically, to nrwalf@nrwa.org. Applications and documents can also be sent by mail to: Rural Water Revolving Loan Fund, 2915 S. 13th Street, Duncan, Oklahoma 73533. Phone 1-800-332-8715.

Funds are limited. Contact NRWA for more information and an application today.

RURAL WATER RALLY

Rural Water Rally will be held April 2-4, 2006 at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill, 400 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. A briefing on issues will be held Monday morning at the Hyatt Regency. Monday afternoon and Tuesday are reserved for visits with Congressmen and Senators. Attend the Rally and help secure the future of rural water for everyone. Make room reservations directly with the Hyatt Regency at (202) 737-1234, fax (202) 942-1576. Please pre-register for the Rally before March 3, 2006. Contact the National Rural Water Association by fax at (580) 255-4476. For credit card registration call 800-332-8715 or by mail, Rural Water Rally, P.O. Box 1847, Duncan, OK 73534.

LEGISLATION

More than 2,100 bills have been filed for the next legislative session. Many of these bills potentially affect the operations and financing of small water systems. The enclosed Legislative Review provides a brief description of selected bills that are of interest to water and wastewater systems. To read bills go to the ORWA web site www.okruralwater.org for a link to the state legislature home page, or go to www.lsb.state.ok.us.

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE

Just a little reminder that scholarship applications for the Oklahoma Rural Water Enrichment Foundation are due March 1, 2006. Call us at 1-800-375-6792 or go to www.okruralwater.org to get your scholarship application.

IN MEMORY OF MAX NICHOLAS

Former ORWA Board Member Max Nicholas died December 19, 2005 at the age of 88. Max joined the Farmers Home Administration in 1950 as a county supervisor in Nowata County. He worked in the FmHA state office from 1965 until his retirement in 1976. Max served on the ORWA Board of Directors from 1980 to 2001 and was Chairman of Pushmataha County Rural Water District No. 3 for many years. He is survived by his wife Vivian, a brother and sister, three daughters, two step-children, five grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. We will always remember Max and appreciate his friendship, dedication and many contributions to rural water development and growth in Oklahoma.

