

The Flow

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Regionalization

In an agreement announced September 13, 2023, Lebanon Water Works Company and Springfield Water and Sewer Commission will begin a partnership of joint operations and management of the water and wastewater systems to improve efficiencies which will benefit the customers in Springfield, Lebanon, and Washington County.

This is not a merger, it's simply an opportunity for both utilities to work together and share technology, manpower, and equipment resources which will lead to potential cost savings that benefit our customers. Each board of the respective utilities will continue to operate independently and autonomously.

The management of water systems is becoming increasingly more challenging in many ways. New environmental regulations have complicated the way utilities must operate in order to stay viable. Achieving compliance with these ever-evolving regulations requires water utilities to adapt to address the complex interconnected challenges and protect public health. By working collaboratively, both utilities will be prepared to meet the infrastructure and regulatory challenges ahead. This partnership will allow the technical, managerial and staff expertise of both entities to become more resilient.

In February 2023, the Kentucky State legislature adopted, and the Governor signed Senate Bill 263, that establishes incentives to encourage water system regionalization and partnerships that will enhance the effectiveness, reliability, and resiliency of public water and wastewater Utilities. There will be grant funding opportunities and this partnership agreement positions both utilities to receive funding from the Kentucky legislature.

Each utility shall pay an allocated share of costs for labor, equipment, material, and other expenses for services provided and approved by each Board.

This agreement shall be for a term of five (5) years beginning in September 2023 and expiring on August 31, 2028. Each utility may terminate the agreement prior to the expiration date with a 12 month notice to the other utility.

(cont'd)

Using the talents of existing personnel, equipment, and other resources, the utilities will partner and share the following services under the direction of a shared General Manager. Daren Thompson, has been named the General Manager of the partnership:

- a coordinated information technology system including billing, accounting, mapping, and SCADA systems that can be integrated for use by each of the utilities, leading to improved efficiencies and improved customer service.
- coordinated and shared supervision of construction, operations, and maintenance of the water and wastewater system.
- Coordinated engineering and supervision of contractors and construction inspection services for capital projects and extension agreements.
- Development of a joint management reporting system that will track activities for the month, year-to-date and annually.
- Development key performance metrics to hold management and staff accountable for achieving annual performance targets and goals.
- Use of common system of accounting and operating records that will be kept in accordance with requirements of the governmental agencies financing each utility.
- Coordinate supervision and maintenance of all services required for meter reading, billing and collection of monthly water and sewer bills.
- Sharing of tools, equipment, and material inventory necessary to maintain the systems.
- Joint procurement of materials and supplies for standardization and to achieve quantity discounts.
- Joint pursuit of local, state, and federal grant funding to replace aging infrastructure.

Imagine a Day Without Water – October 19, 2023



October 19 is a day focused on increasing public awareness of the importance of drinking water, and encouraging policymakers to invest in drinking water resources and infrastructure. While many Americans can easily envision dry regions like the arid west running out of water, Kentuckians have also faced and overcome many hurdles to supply clean drinking water during flooding, tornadoes, droughts, and other emergencies in the past several years.

'A Day Without Water' gives an opportunity to remind consumers about the incredible value of drinking water provided to them reliably every day, and the importance of maintaining and investing in drinking water infrastructure.