

# North Central Rural Water Consortium II

Central Plains Water District – North Prairie Rural Water District  
2718 Gateway Ave., Suite 201, Bismarck, ND 58503-0585

## IMPORTANT

If you are interested in receiving NCRWC water and have not completed your paperwork or sent in your sign-up fees (\$75 and \$525), please contact our office immediately.

Failure to do so could result in much higher sign-up fees and/or the inability to receive water at a later date.

877-410-0760

## I Paid My \$75 Two Years Ago, So When Do I Get Water?

The telephone rings and the caller says, “I paid my \$75 two years ago, so when do I get water?” Because this question comes up often, it may be time to review the rural water system development process.

Rural water delivery systems are multi-million dollar projects that don’t happen overnight. Most rural water systems in North Dakota took a minimum of 5-7 years from the initial discussion phase to delivery of the first gallon of water. Some areas are still waiting after 20+ years for the delivery of the first gallon of water!

Let’s look at what is included in the various stages of a project: feasibility study, funding availability, design and environmental review, bid letting, construction, and delivery of water.

Feasibility Study – Most systems charge an initial non-refundable feasibility study fee – for the North Central Rural Water Consortium II this is a \$75 charge. Public meetings were most likely held in your area to determine community and individual user interest in receiving water from the sys-

tem. Someone may have come door to door to talk about the benefits of the system and to get you to “sign up” and pay that initial \$75 feasibility study fee. A period of time was established to determine interest and then it may have been extended to allow more people to make up their mind about participating.

Once the area had been canvassed and a concentration of potential users (based on the sign-ups), an engineering feasibility study was developed. This study looked at topography, natural features of the area that can affect line routing, concentration of users, existing source of supply that may serve the area or location of a new source, adequacy of existing storage, size of existing transmission lines that might be used to serve the area, number of users per mile of pipeline or the number of miles of pipe per user needed to serve remote location users.

Each phase of a rural water system must pay for itself. Customers already receiving service are not expected to have to pay more to connect

new users or to subsidize new users. If the feasibility study determines more users are needed to keep rates affordable a re-canvass of the area may be done to increase the number of users along the identified routes or the project has to be scaled back and some interested remote users may need to be dropped from service by the system.

While the project engineers are completing the feasibility study, the rural water system board is working with funding agencies to identify potential sources of funds; as well as working with city leaders to schedule city special elections to approve the change in water supply (a North Dakota state statute requirement), and legal counsel for agreements and contracts for water purchase, etc. The initial \$75 non-refundable fee is used to pay for all of this feasibility study work.

Funding availability – To keep rates affordable the rural water system board tries to get grants to reduce the monthly service costs to the users. There are a limited number of grant pro-

## Calendar of Events

Office Closed  
President’s Day Feb. 15

NCRWC II  
Board Meeting  
Minot, ND Feb. 16

NCRWC II  
Board Meeting  
Harvey, ND March 9

Office Closed  
Good Friday April 2

NCRWC II  
Board Meeting  
Minot, ND April 13

NCRWC II  
Board Meeting  
Harvey, ND May 11

Office Closed  
Memorial Day May 31



Email is an efficient way to keep in touch. Please send your email address to [lschatz@ndrw.org](mailto:lschatz@ndrw.org)

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To submit your meter reading online, please go to <http://www.ncrwc.com> and click on Meter Submission on the left-hand side of the page.

Contact our office at 877-410-0760 or email [lschatz@ndrw.org](mailto:lschatz@ndrw.org) for more information on how you can have your water bill payment made directly from your checking or savings account.

grams available to fund water systems and each program has specific requirements that need to be met. With 31 local and tribal regional water systems in North Dakota, there is fierce competition for grant funding each year. Most of the grant funds come from federal program sources that require annual congressional appropriation, which can also mean national attention.

Most funding agencies will not fund a project on speculation of users connecting at a future time. It is at this point in a system's development that users are asked to sign users agreements and pay a user fee – for the Consortium this fee is currently \$525 per connection, or a total of \$600 dollars if the feasibility fee was not paid earlier. These funds are included as the system's local contribution to the construction of this phase of the project.

The maximum amount of grant funds for any portion of the Consortium's system has been 75% grant and the remainder is long term loans – payable for a period of 20 to 40 years.

Thus far, the Consortium has been extremely fortunate in obtaining grant funding—mostly due to the perseverance and support of our congressional delegation in Washington, DC; and in particular, Sen. Dorgan and his staff. The Consortium has also benefited as a recipient of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding (stimulus funding).

Once funding has been secured and the system has a signed agreement, the funding agencies review and approve the preliminary engineering report and the project engineers are directed to begin final design of the project.

Design Phase – You might ask why the system wasn't designed in the feasibility study phase. As mentioned earlier, each funding agency has certain requirements including environmental regulations, so while preliminary routes may have been identified early on, the ability to actually deliver water takes more work. Environmental factors, cultural and archeological resources need to be identified and considered; elevations, topography and the natural features of waterways, hydrology and water pressures, adequacy of supply and storage, size of existing lines from that supply and storage are all factors that need to be addressed. Easements and rights-of-way approval must be secured at this time as well.

Construction - Once the design is complete, the project can go to bid. The funding agencies have bid procedures that must be adhered to regarding public notification, contractor's performance bonds, and review. After a contract has been awarded, we are at the mercy of our northern plains climate which often affects construction. Weather and on-site conditions (such as wetlands, springs, and underground boulders) as well

**For Service or Billing Questions**  
877-410-0760  
**Water Quality Issues**  
701-547-3751

***The North Central Rural Water Consortium II does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, marital status, or disability in employment or the provision of services.***

as the contractor's schedule can affect the progress of construction.

Once the line is constructed, it needs to be pressure tested, inspected, and disinfected to prepare it for potable water. The curb stop needs to be installed and the customer is notified so they can have their own contractor tap into the new distribution system for the service line. This needs to be scheduled as this line also needs to be inspected.

As you have just learned, there are many factors that go into the planning, financing and development of a rural water system. It takes time, money, endurance and patience in order to give you, the customer, a reliable and safe supply of water at your fingertips.

The NCRWC II board of directors appreciates your cooperation and patience and asks for your continued understanding. Please be assured, the projects are proceeding as quickly as possible.

# Project Updates

## **Projects in Construction-**

**REAP Zone:** Service Area: Southern Benson and Northern Wells Counties - Cost \$5.1 Million

This project supplies drinking water to the Community of Esmond and 225 rural users. All pipes have been filled, pressure tested and have passed bacteriological testing. The community of Esmond and some rural residents completed connection to the system. Rural Development closed the loan portion of the project in December and we are expected to make the 1<sup>st</sup> loan payment December 2010. This project is being funded with a 45% grant and 55% loan through the USDA Rural Development Program.

**Benson County Phase II:** Service Area: Southern Benson, Pierce, and Northern Eddy Counties - Cost \$2.8 Million

This project that includes rural areas from New Rockford to Minnewaukan and portions of western Benson County was bid in July for \$1.9 million dollars. The contractor began construction and completed over 26 miles of pipeline prior to freeze up. Approximately 10 of those miles have been filled; pressure tested and have passed bacteriological testing. This project is being funded with a 65% grant from the ND MR&I and ND State Water Commission and 35% loan through the USDA Rural Development Program.

**Radar Hill:** Service Area: Southern Ward County - Cost \$3.0 Million

This project is centered on the Radar Base south of Minot, primarily serving the area between Highways 83 and 52, however; it does extend a bit further westward and includes Rice Lake. This project was bid in August for \$2.36 million dollars. The contractor began construction and completed 5 miles of pipeline prior to freeze up. The majority of the pipes installed have been filled; pressure tested and have passed bacteriological testing. This project is being funded with a 100% ARRA stimulus loan through the USDA Rural Development Program.

## **Projects to be Bid Soon**

*All of the following projects were delayed to take advantage of the stimulus funding. The Corps of Engineers completed the grant agreement and USDA rolled the next three projects into one loan.*

**Benedict Project:** Service Area: Southern Ward and Northern McLean Counties - Cost \$2.6 Million

This project which stretches from Hwy 83 to Ruso and from north of Hwy 23 to south of Max is in the process of design and State MR&I grant funding has been approved. We expect it to be bid this winter with construction beginning later this spring and continuing into 2011. This project is being funded with a 70% grant from the ND MR&I program and 30% loan through the USDA Rural Development Program.

**Anamoose Project:** Service Area: Southern McHenry and Western Pierce Counties -

Cost \$7.7 Million

This project is also in the design process and is expected to be bid this winter with construction beginning later this spring and continuing into 2011. This project extends from east of Benedict to Anamoose—including the City of Anamoose. This project is being funded with a 70% grant from the ND MR&I program and 30% loan through the USDA Rural Development Program.

**Mountrail Phase 1:** Service Area: Southwestern Ward County and Northwestern McLean County - Cost \$7.1 Million

This project extends from Rice Lake to Makoti and south to Lake Sakakawea including the community of Ryder and is expected to be bid this winter with construction beginning later this spring and continuing into 2011. It is being funded with a 75% ARRA stimulus grant through the Corp of Engineers Omaha District and a 25% loan through the USDA Rural Development Program.

**Wells, Stutsman & Pierce Project Part A:** Service Area: Eastern Wells County. - Cost \$650,000

This project is being funded with a 75% ARRA stimulus grant through the Corp of Engineers Omaha District and is expected to be bid this spring with construction beginning later this summer and completion this fall. This project area is east of Hwy 52 and north of Hwy 200. The local share application has been made to USDA and is

expected to be completed in the near future.

**Wells, Stutsman & Pierce Project Part B:** Service Area: Wells, Northern Stutsman and Southern Pierce Counties. - Cost \$4.1 Million

This project is being funded with a 75% grant through the Corp of Engineers Omaha District and is expected to be bid this spring with construction beginning later this summer. This project area is west of Hwy 52 and north of Hwy 200. The local share application has been made to USDA and is expected to be completed in the near future.

## **Projects in the Funding Application Process**

*The following projects were not funded by the federal agencies as expected this last year. The NCRWC is traveling to Washington, DC in early February to visit with our Congressional delegation to urge inclusion of the projects in the 2011 budget.*

## **Deering/Rural Granville:**

Service Area: Eastern Ward and Western McHenry Counties. - Cost \$3.3 Million

This project extends from Granville to the area surrounding and including Deering.

**Berthold/Carpio:** Service Area: Western Ward County Cost \$3.3 Million

This project extends from Des Lacs to Carpio. The water supply will be from the NAWs pipeline which is completing construction of the segment from Berthold to Kenmare.

