



Olathe Wins Best Tasting Water Contest

KRWA is proud to announce the city of Olathe as the winner of the 2010 "Best Tasting Water in Kansas Contest". The contest was held in conjunction with KRWA's 43rd Annual Conference and Exhibition held March 30 - April 1, 2010 at the Century II Convention Center in Wichita. A trophy was presented to Olathe superintendents and Mayor Michael Copeland during their regular council meeting on May 18.

This year, nineteen water systems participated in the tasting contest. These included both municipal systems and rural water districts. KRWA assembled a panel of judges representing a broad cross-section of individuals from the public drinking water field. They included officials from city and rural water systems (operators, managers and clerks/bookkeepers), elected officials, regulatory officials and sales staff. Each participating system submitted a one-gallon sample of their water in a glass container. The actual contest is a "blind tasting" with the all samples numbered so the judges do not know who submitted which water samples. All samples are screened first to confirm that adequate chlorine residuals are present. This year, all nineteen submitted samples contained chlorine. This is done to ensure all samples meet state and federal requirements with regard to minimum residuals. It also ensures no system has an advantage over another system by submitting a sample that does not have a residual. Samples are then judged primarily on taste, but also take into account color, clarity and odor. The actual determination on which sample "tastes" best is arrived at subjectively by repeated narrowing of the candidate samples.

Olathe has a state-of-the-art treatment facility. KDHE considers Olathe's system as groundwater under the direct influence of surface water as raw water is obtained from eight (8)



KRWA presented the "Best Tasting Water in Kansas" Award to the city of Olathe during a council meeting on Tuesday, May 18. Shown above following the presentation are KRWA consultant Jeff Lamfers; Sherri Irving, Assistant Water Production Superintendent; Lester Estelle, Water Production Superintendent; and, Michael Copeland, Mayor.

vertical wells and four (4) collector wells. A fifth collector well is currently in the design stage. Olathe's Water Plant 2 is currently rated to produce 36 million gallons of water per day. During 2008 and 2009, the plant produced 4.35 billion and 4.23 billion gallons of water, respectively. Olathe employs lime softening and uses both chlorine gas and sodium hypochlorite to disinfect. Ammonia is also added resulting in finished water with a combined residual to control disinfection byproduct formation. The plant has seven membrane microfiltration racks and six conventional dual media filters. The city has 2.0 million gallons of storage at Water Plant 2 and a total of 15.0 million gallons of additional storage at three different locations throughout the city.

As winner of the KRWA contest, Olathe will now go on to represent Kansas in the "Great American Water Taste Test" to be held at National Rural Water's Rally in Washington, D.C. Due to scheduling issues, Olathe will be entered in the 2011 national contest. KRWA again congratulates Olathe for winning the 2010 Kansas contest and extends best wishes for winning the national contest in 2011.

