

Clean Drinking Water Fee Helps Fund On-Site Assistance to Public Water Supply Systems

The Clean Drinking Water Fee – that \$0.03 per thousand gallons of water sold at retail and paid by water systems in exchange for no longer needing to pay sales tax on any purchases, has been providing the funding that helps public water systems also have help. About ten percent of the fee goes towards a contract that is operated by Kansas Rural Water Association and is administered by the Kansas Water Office to provide technical assistance to public water systems.

The contract is not narrowly defined. As such KRWA can provide technical assistance to public water system personnel on the operation, maintenance, finance, management, regulatory requirements, water quality, public health concerns or other critical issues. The contract also places an emphasis on helping water systems reduce unaccounted for water loss. As such, KRWA spends a lot of time conducting water loss surveys.

The contract also provides help with the development of water conservation plans, and regional public water supply

activities as identified by the Kansas Water Office or public water suppliers.

Recently, KRWA provided a summary report of the activities covered under the contract in state fiscal year 2019 which is the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. The assistance involved issues from water treatment to water loss surveys, to reviewing water rates, meter testing, chlorinator repair and many policy issues. The report was provided to the Kansas Water Authority in booklet format. It is also posted online at <https://krwa.net/TECHNICAL-ASSISTANCE/Assistance-via-KWO-Contract>. The report is interactive, meaning, it can be sorted by planning area or system.

In state fiscal year 2019, assistance was provided to 167 cities and 130 rural water districts, public wholesale districts and other public water systems.

KRWA staff conducted 161 water loss surveys, locating more than 285 million gallons of unaccounted for

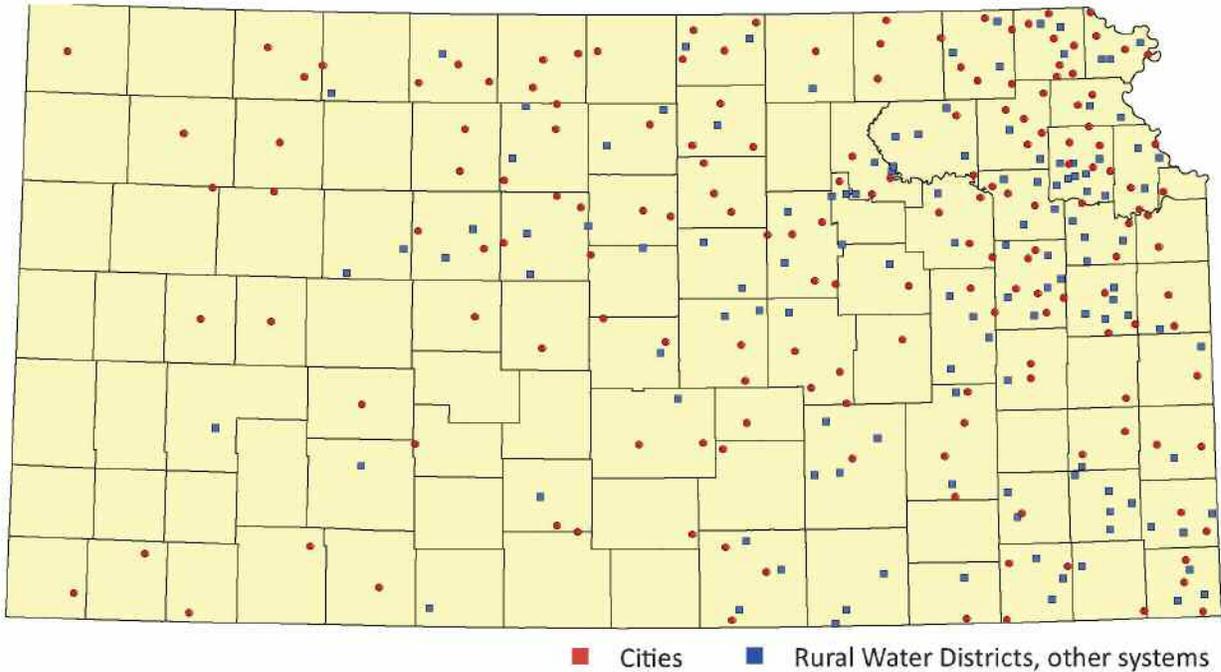


water on an annual basis. The cost of production or purchase of that water on an annual basis would be \$827,000. KRWA reduces the quantity by at least 50 percent on “emergency leaks”.

Old habits die hard. Too often when a water system decides it has a “water loss problem” the first thing many people suggest doing is to start looking for leaks. As has been written many times in articles in *The Lifeline*, when conducting water loss surveys we need to start by ruling out other contributors such as metering and reporting, recordkeeping and then last, it’s time to check for leaks if necessary. In one case this summer, time spent looking for a leak in corn that was seven feet tall was to no avail as a failed check valve was allowing water to flow back into a clearwell. It’s no picnic to spend time on hot summer days in a cornfield and often being unsure of where the pipeline is actually installed. Looking for leaks can be overwhelming, especially when there is only one operator or worker. KRWA has the equipment needed to help identify problem areas and help pinpoint where

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Locations of the 167 cities and 130 rural water, public wholesale districts or other systems that received assistance through Contract 43642 in FY19.



the leaks are. The equipment includes sonic listening devices, ultra-sonic meters, data loggers and a leak correlator. KRWA staff have decades of experience in using the equipment efficiently.

This article is a snapshot of the assistance provided. It is one of many contracts that KRWA operates to provide assistance to water and wastewater systems. KRWA appreciate the partnership that the Association has had with the Kansas Water Office since 1992 in helping water systems. I encourage readers to check out the KRWA website for more information about the help provided to systems through this contract.

2020 Annual Conference & Exhibition

You want to attend a conference where there are too many sessions to try to attend? How about a conference where coffee and rolls, cookies, lemon bars and other hospitality food are available in unlimited quantity? How about a conference that has the largest attendance of water and wastewater industry operators, board members and industry representatives in Mid-America? Well, then plan to attend the 53rd Annual Conference & Exhibition sponsored by Kansas Rural Water Association. The dates are March 24 – 26, 2020 at the Century II Convention

Center in Wichita. With 58 training sessions, 365 exhibit booths, special guest speakers being confirmed, great entertainment and down home hospitality, the KRWA conference is known across the nation as one of the best in America. I hope you will make the investment of time to attend.

Elmer Ronnebaum is KRWA General Manager; he has been employed by KRWA since 1983. He served seven years on the KRWA board of directors prior to that. He also helped develop a large



RWD and served for fourteen years on a water district board of directors.

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