

Public Drinking Water Support and Planning

Water Supply Division

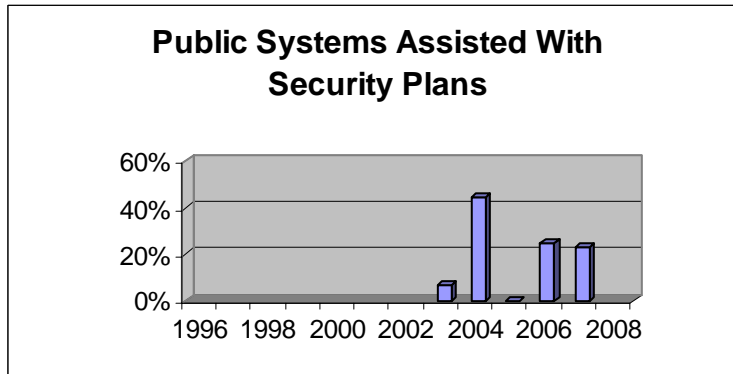
November 2005

Results

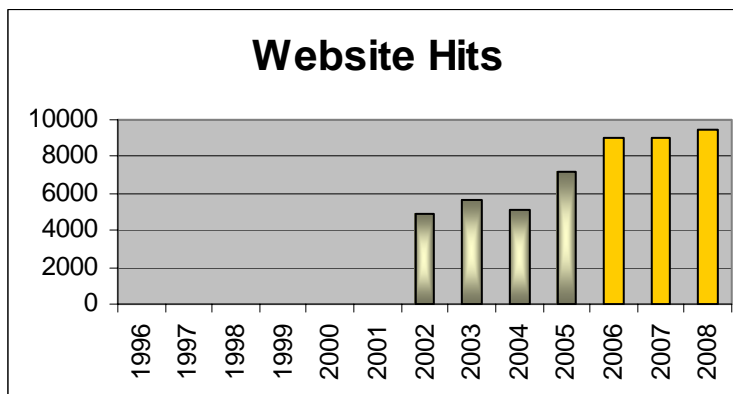
Increased support, outreach and planning services to public water systems and the Division.

Key Indicators

Percent of public water systems assisted with security plan development.



Number of web site visits.



(Drop in total hits from 2003 to 2004 were the result of a more refined format for counting web hits)

Story Behind Baseline Performance

With the Water Supply Division's reorganization in February 2003, the Division recognized the need to more actively plan for implementation of federal and state regulations. With decreasing resources to provide assistance to water systems, the section's goal is to develop better ways to do business internally and externally. Innovative outreach and planning activities will be developed to provide better customer service and increase public health protection. Outreach through the newsletter and website will be a basis for increased communication with the public and our regulated community. The *Waterline*, our newsletter, started in October 2000 and will continue to be expanded and improved to meet the growing need for communicating important federal, state, and local issues relating to drinking water and groundwater topics.

Strategies

Security and Emergency Planning and Assistance

2006

Using the federal funding from Department of Defense and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States Act 2002 and subsequent appropriation, the Water Supply Division will continue to employ a position to provide direct assist to Public Water Systems in the preparation of Vulnerability Assessments and Emergency Response Plans. This position will work with other positions in the Division and state government to help the Water Supply Division better prepare and respond to break-ins and threats to water systems. This work was started in 2003. In the fall of 2004 the position became vacant. We have started to work on this project again in late 2005.

2007

The direct assistance to public water systems outlined for 2005 will continue.

Outreach and Education

2006

The Water Supply Division's website, www.vermontdrinkingwater.org, is a living form of outreach that we keep updated with permit applications, downloadable reporting documents, etc. There is a committee designated to keeping the site on the fore-front of water issues and products and is meeting on a regular basis through out 2005 to keep the site moving forward through the year and to improve its friendliness.

2006

Integrate a variety of SDWIS State add-on tools to the website to provide improved customer service to public water systems, their customers, and other people interested in groundwater and drinking water.

2007

Initiate a State-wide outreach campaign to local municipalities with public community water supplies to provide them with information to better enable them to comply with state and federal rules/regulations, educate them of financial assistance funds and supply them with literature and resources that will allow them to remain at the forefront of efficiency and service.

Regulations, Compliance Assistance and Enforcement

2006

If appropriate, start another revision to the Water Supply Rule in order to address federal rules and guidance requirements.

Program Management- 2005, 2006

2006

Complete the migration to SDWIS State started in 2003. This will include required trainings by EPA and their contractor. Attend the ASDWA-EPA Data Management Conference to develop and share new ideas for data management.

Continue working with and developing SDWIS State Add-ons for the enhancement of our SDWIS State database.

In order to continue to represent a rural state perspective on regional and national drinking water issues we will continue to be active in the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission's (NEIWPC) Groundwater Managers' and Drinking Water Administrators' Workgroups, along with the Association for State Drinking Water Administrators and the Ground Water Protection Council. We will continue to review and develop comments on proposed rules and guidance developed by EPA.

2006 & 2007

Division strategic planning – The Water Supply Division's Management Team will continue to dedicate time to focus on strategic planning. Given the potential tight budget issues of the upcoming years, this will be particularly important in order to maintain a strong, vibrant, and effective safe drinking water program.

Performance Measures (calendar year)

| Performance Measures | | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of web site hits | P | | | | | | | | 6000 | 8000 | 9000 | 9000 | 9500 |
| | A | | | | | | 4899 | 5757 | 5116 | 7149 | | | |
| Number of file reviews conducted | P | | | | | | | | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 |
| | A | | | | | | | | 16 | 25 | | | |
| Number of security and emergency plan onsite visits | P | | | | | | | 45 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 70 | 70 |
| | A | | | | | | | 95 | 177 | 0 | | | |

Proposed Accomplishments

Security and Emergency Planning – Assist public water systems to complete security vulnerability assessments and emergency response plans will be an ongoing emphasis for the Division. The Security and Emergency Planning Specialist has outlined a strategy that includes the smaller drinking water supply systems conducting vulnerability assessments and developing emergency response plans.

Between October 1, 2004 and March 31, 2005, the Division Security and Emergency Planning Specialist position was vacant. Nonetheless, all but two systems met the federal deadline for certification of the Emergency Response Plan completion. This work was not funded by the Performance Partnership Grant, but an EPA security grant to the State. Using pre-existing resources we are assisting systems with security issues, coordination with the State Homeland Security Unit at the Department of Public Safety, and coordinating response when a system may have compromised water quality due to threats or break-ins. The security position has been filled with a temporary position and more focused work will start in 2006.

Website – Currently the Division’s website is being updated on a daily basis as necessary. Most of the Division’s catalog of electronic documents are available for download from the website. The website will continue to evolve and expand over time providing pertinent information to the public at large, as well as system operators. The committee charged with the responsibility to keep the website current and forward is hammering out ways to best utilize the new site to get information to the public. There is work being done by the committee to make the website more intuitive to navigate, which should be on line in 2006.

The Division is working aggressively at updating our forms, fact sheets, permit applications, and other public documents. This updating will reflect a standardized format for all Water Supply Division documents and to incorporate changes in our structure, functions, and regulations.

Newsletter – The *Waterline* will continue to be produced three times per year. To improve distribution of the newsletter, inventory of the distribution list will be revised so the document gets to the proper audience.

Between October 1, 2004 and September 1, 2005, the Division has published 3 *Waterline* newsletter editions. We continue to receive very positive feedback on the articles and layout of the newsletter. The newsletter is funded through the DWSRF Grant Local Assistance Set-aside.

Highlights

Security - As reported in the grant for the water protection security work, our work in assisting system has been going extremely well. Vermont public water systems were 100% compliant with EPA’s deadlines for submittal of security vulnerability assessments. Only two systems did not meet the federal deadline to certify completion of their Emergency Response Plan. Our security assistance position is currently vacant, but we are recruiting for a half-time position. We previously employed a full-time position, but due to the recent limitations in EPA funding a full-time position is not sustainable. We are continuing to network with the Health Department on improving coordination and capacity to respond to threats to water systems. We have spoken on public water system security issues at a Health Department Epidemiology Staff Training and have been invited to talk at a future Public Health Nurses Training.