

Fayette County Groundwater Conservation District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Fayette County Groundwater Conservation District
Date: February 24, 2005
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Groundwater District Awards Bid for Aquifer Study

The Fayette County Groundwater Conservation District, at its board meeting on February 21, 2005, awarded a contract for a study of the aquifers within the District to the Round Rock hydrology firm of The Thornhill Group, Inc.

The objectives of the aquifer study include evaluation of the hydrogeologic properties of each aquifer, the determination of the groundwater availability in each aquifer, identification of principal recharge areas and estimated recharge amounts, definition of drought conditions and maximum aquifer drawdown levels, the determination of optimum well spacing requirements for each aquifer, and the recommendation of monitoring well locations and monitoring methodologies.

In Fayette County, the aquifers are "stacked", and are generally all dipping downward, toward the coast. Several of our aquifers receive little or no recharge within Fayette County. All of our aquifers are shared by other counties as well. Developing an updated evaluation of the aquifer systems within Fayette County is a key step in managing the groundwater resources. The only comprehensive study of Fayette County area groundwater was done in 1967, and based on data from the 1950s and early 1960s. More recently, the Texas Water Development Board has provided groundwater availability models for some of the aquifers in the county. However, these models are based on a very small number of wells - often only 1 to 3 wells - in Fayette County. Therefore, the District has concerns about the accuracy or reliability of the data currently being used in the planning processes.

Why is this important? The State of Texas uses this data to determine future water supply and demand estimates for the entire state, through regional water planning groups. Generally speaking, the regional planning group to which Fayette County belongs currently shows this area to have a water surplus, with some localized exceptions. The District's concern is that the State will require that groundwater districts with a surplus allow the sale of that surplus to urban areas in need of more water. The District must determine, as quickly as possible, how accurate the projections are for Fayette County.

According to Paul Kohlleppe, District president, "Thanks to the many good people of Fayette County who registered their wells, we now have much more current and accurate information which can be used in this study and will ultimately help us protect our water for the people of Fayette County." Over 3,500 wells have been registered with the District to date. Kohlleppe points out that many districts require well registration, but in no case has registration ever led to metering of those wells. He said, "This district has no intention or plans to ever require meters on wells in the county. Only new, very high volume wells may be asked to install a meter at some point."

If you would like more information on the District's aquifer study, or well registration, please contact the District office at (979) 968-3135.

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SOURCE: FAYETTE COUNTY GCD