



# PREPARING A SOURCE PROTECTION PLAN UPDATE

## Guidance for Public Community and Non-Transient-Non Community Water Systems

With the adoption of the new Water Supply Rule on December 29, 2000, all public community and non-transient, non-community water systems must update their approved Source Protection Plans *every three years*. Prior to this Rule, the updates were required annually. Source Protection Plan (SPP) Updates are also required for all water systems applying for Phase II/V monitoring waivers and waiver renewals. This information sheet gives guidance on how to prepare a Source Protection Plan Update.

### Summary of Steps for Updating a Source Protection Plan

- ✓ Inspect the Source Protection Area and Update PSOC Maps and Inventory
- ✓ Weigh Risks from New PSOCs and Identify Risk Management Measures
- ✓ Update Landowner List
- ✓ Communicate with Relevant Landowners and Town/County/State Officials
- ✓ Make sure your Contingency Plan Information is Current
- ✓ Summarize Progress in Reducing Threats to your Source



#### ***Inspect the Source Protection Area and Update Your PSOC Maps and Inventory***

Visually inspect the Source Protection Area and review the potential sources of contamination (PSOCs) identified in your original Source Protection Plan or most recent SPP Update. Note any key changes. Is the local farmer still using the same pesticides and fertilizers on crop land? Check for any evidence of new land uses or activities that may threaten the water source. Has a new residence been constructed? If so, does it have a septic system? What fuel is used for heating the home? Discuss any important changes you have discovered. Modify your PSOC Inventory and PSOC map to reflect your observations.



#### ***Weigh the Risks from New PSOCs and Identify Risk Management Measures***

Determine the risk level posed by any new potential source of contamination you have found. Then outline the management measure you intend to use to reduce the risk. In many cases the management measure can be as simple as communicating with the landowner and asking for assistance in protecting the water supply. If you think of a new way to manage the risk from a previously identified PSOC, take the time to outline your ideas and plans in the update.



#### ***Update Your Landowner List***

Visit your town clerk's office to determine whether any land or land rights within your Source Protection Area have changed hands. Add any new landowners to your list and remove anyone that no longer owns property in your SPA.



***Communicate with Relevant Landowners and Town/County/State Officials***

Send out letters to regulatory agencies to remind them that you are concerned about land use activities in your SPA. Also, send letters to newly identified landowners who may not know about your water source. Although not required, it's a good idea to contact the other landowners within your SPA with a positive message about actions they can take to help protect your supply, and to thank them for any efforts they have made since your last letter.

***Make Sure Your Contingency Plan Information is Current***

Check the emergency contact information in your contingency plan and make sure all of the information is up-to-date. Make sure any new water system personnel have the information they need to make good decisions in an emergency situation.



***Summarize Progress in Reducing Threats to Your Source***

Look back over the last three years and think about what actions you have taken to make your source of water less vulnerable to contamination. Have you worked with a local farmer to reduce pesticide and fertilizer use in your SPA? Have you purchased development rights for land in your SPA? Have you posted signs at key locations to notify people when they enter your SPA? Have you responded swiftly and appropriately to an emergency situation? Use the SPP Update as an opportunity to boast about the progress you have made.

***Source Protection Plan Update Checklist***

Your SPP Update may be as simple as a detailed short letter or it may be an elaborate revision of your original SPP. The format you choose will depend on what you discovered in following the steps outlined above. However, regardless of the format, please be sure you have included the relevant items from the following checklist when you submit the SPP Update:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Text describing your PSOC inspection and any changes and additions you are making to the Source Protection Plan. If there are no changes, please state clearly that you have performed an SPA inspection and found no changes in land use, land ownership, risk levels, etc. Provide date of inspection.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Text describing the progress you have made in implementing risk management measures since your original SPP (or last update) was prepared.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Updated PSOC Inventory (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Updated PSOC Map (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Updated Management Plan (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Updated Landowner List (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Updated Contingency Plan information (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of letter sent to ongoing SPA landowners (optional)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of letter sent to new SPA landowners (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of letter to town/county/state officials

***Please send your Source Protection Plan Update to:***

**Water Regulation Section**

VT-DEC, Drinking Water & Groundwater Protection Division  
1 National Life Drive, Davis 4, Montpelier, VT 05620-3521