



S E A Consultants Inc.
Science/Engineering/Architecture

February 5, 1996

Kenneth E. Reeves
Cambridge Mayor's Office
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139 3201

RECEIVED
MAYOR'S OFFICE
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
96 FEB -7 AM 10:31

Re: ***MUNICIPAL NEWS!***

Upcoming Regulatory Changes Affect Water Supply Areas and Contaminated Site Cleanup

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is currently revising the regulations governing Potentially Productive Aquifers (PPAs), which are areas considered potential future sources of public drinking water supplies. Although the proposed revisions could affect groundwater cleanup at public and private sites throughout the Commonwealth, the greatest impact is likely to be felt in western Massachusetts, where large areas are currently considered PPAs.

The proposed revisions will modify the existing Mass GIS maps detailing the locations of PPAs, based on finely focused population density and land use and development. DEP has produced draft GIS maps based on flyovers in 1985 and 1990 that reflect the proposed revisions to PPAs, and planned to send them to local planning commissions by the end of January 1996. Municipalities are being asked to review them and provide comments to DEP within 60 days of receipt of the maps. Issues to comment on include areas which have been zoned but not yet developed, and local groundwater classifications such as aquifer protection areas.

Some Water Supply Areas No Longer Subject to Drinking Water Standards

Under current regulations, groundwater designated as being within a PPA is subject to drinking water quality standards. As a result of the proposed revisions, some PPAs could be re-designated, and the groundwater in these areas would no longer be subject to drinking water quality standards. Instead, groundwater could be subject to other, potentially less stringent, groundwater standards.

Currently Exempt Municipalities May Face More Stringent Regulations

Current regulations include an automatic exemption from drinking water standards for 27 communities in their entirety in which the population density exceeds 4,400 people/square mile. This exemption is being replaced by an exemption for specific areas which are "heavily urbanized" and meet finely focused population density criteria. As a result, some areas within these municipalities which were previously exempted will be required to meet more stringent standards.

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Deadline Extension May Be Available for Sites Affected by Revisions

If you are facing a deadline for assessment and cleanup of a disposal site that may be affected by the PPA revisions, you may be able to qualify for an extension if the site meets the following criteria:

1. The site must be currently located over a Potentially Productive Aquifer.
2. The site must be within a developed area considered to be "highly urbanized" (call your regional planning or DEP office for guidance).
3. The site must **NOT** be an Interim Wellhead Protection or Zone II Area, an area served by private drinking water wells, or further than 500 feet from a public water distribution line.

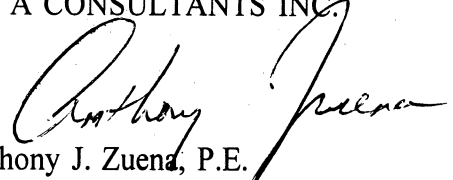
You must request an extension prior to the existing deadline. The extended deadline will be 90 days after the effective date of the final regulations, which are expected to be promulgated in the Spring.

For all Massachusetts municipalities, this is a rare opportunity to ensure specific areas are properly designated. It is in your best interest to review the draft Mass GIS maps carefully, since the designation could affect local water supplies and groundwater cleanup costs.

If you need any assistance on this issue, please call me directly at (617) 498-4602.

Very truly yours,

SEA CONSULTANTS INC.


Anthony J. Zuena, P.E.

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Consent Communication #2

5-91

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Communication was received from Anthony J. Zuena, P.E., SEA Consultants, Inc., transmitting municipal news regarding upcoming regulatory changes affecting water supply areas and contaminated site cleanup.

In City Council February 26, 1996

REFERRED To City Manager