

Water Partnerships and Consolidation

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Division of Drinking Water (DDW)

- 7,500 Public Water Systems (PWS)
- 3,000 Community Water Systems (CWS)
- **77%** of the CWS serve **less than 1,000** connections
- DDW regulates all types of water systems, publically owned, privately owned non-profit, & investor owned

Compare with Other Utilities

In California there are approximately:

- 7,500 Public Water Systems
- 900 Wastewater Treatment Plants
- 75 Electricity Providers¹

¹http://www.energy.ca.gov/almanac/electricity_data/utilities.html#service

CA Drinking Water Violations

System Size	% of Systems	% of Violations ²
Very small (pop. 25-500)	61%	80%
Small (pop. 501-3,300)	16%	12%
Medium (pop 3,301-10,000)	8%	5%
Large (pop 10,001-100,000)	12%	2%
Very Large (>100,000)	3%	0%

²Violations based on CA Human Right to Water data for communities and schools-8/2017

Preventing Violations—Inspections

- Every 3-years for community systems and schools
- Every 5-years for non-community systems
- Inspection letters addressing issues before they are critical
- Inform water systems of upcoming regulatory changes
- Recommend consolidation
- Support PWSs contacting Division of Financial Assistance (DFA) for capital intensive projects

Preventing Violations—Outreach

- DDW technical support, particularly to small water systems
- DDW trainings
- Technical assistance referrals (RCAC, SHE, CRWA, etc.)
- Inform PWS about Division of Financial Assistance for capital intensive projects
- Consolidation trainings and outreach

MCL or Monitoring Violations

- MCL or monitoring violations result in citations or compliance orders (CHSC Section 116650 or 116655)
- Citations may require:
 - Corrective actions by a specified date
 - Administrative penalties

If Fines and Citations Fail...

- Attorney General to Collect Fines
- Receivership
- Mandatory Consolidation (in some instances)

- The water system undergoes public notification to customers of drinking water violations while solutions are trying to be established.

Technical Capacity Warning Signs

- Monitoring not being performed regularly
- Infrastructure that is starting to fail
- Operators with poor knowledge of potential hazards
- Poor recordkeeping
- High water loss rates/lack of meters
- Poor communication between owners and operators

Managerial Capacity Warning Signs

- Leaders not knowledgeable about drinking water regulations
- Leaders unable to accurately assess water systems needs
- No emergency response procedures
- Unable to fill board positions
- Aging volunteer board members no succession plan
- Rely entirely on hired water treatment operators to communicate with regulators

Financial Capacity Warning Signs

- Lack of asset management plans
- Rates that cover only operations
- Unable or unwilling to raise rates
- Inadequate staff to apply for funding
- **Small rate base – period!**

A large, cylindrical wooden water tower with a conical roof, situated in a forest. A yellow rope is wrapped around the tower and extends to a tree on the right. A white pipe runs vertically down the side of the tower. The scene is surrounded by tall evergreen trees and some flowering plants in the foreground.

Rope is tied to the tree holding up the tank





Critical TMF Related Issues

- Compliance Orders Under CHSC Section 116655
 - Can direct that **appropriate preventive action be taken in the case of a threatened violation.**
 - Can issue follow-up citations with fines
 - May also issue rescindable fines if corrections made by a certain date
- Permit Amendment

Requirements for Mandatory Consolidation¹

(SB-88/552)

- Viable PWS nearby
- Consult with other agencies (CPUC, LAFCo, Counties, etc.)
- Attempt voluntary consolidation
- Hold public meetings
- Must be a disadvantaged community in an unincorporated area, mobile home park, or served by a mutual water company
- Water system must consistently fail to provide an adequate supply of safe drinking water
- Most effective and cost-effective means to supply water

¹CHSC Section 116681 and 116682

Additional Limitations of SB-88

- Public Schools in Non-Disadvantaged Communities
- Water systems with technical, managerial, financial capacity issues with “run to failure” mentality

Pratt Mutual Water Company (aka Matheny Tract)

- 300 service connections
- 1,200 people
- Two miles south of the City of Tulare
- Two wells - Arsenic above the MCL
- Economically disadvantaged area

City of Tulare

- 70,000 people
- Source of Supply – Groundwater
- Meets drinking water standards

Pratt Timeline

- Arsenic Compliance Order - Feb 2010
- Planning project – Analyze alternatives – Oct 2010
- Drill new wells, arsenic treatment, consolidation
- Selected alternative – Consolidation with City of Tulare
- Construction project – August 2013 - 2015
- New distribution system, water meters and consolidation with the City of Tulare
- Negotiation, Lawsuit, SB-88, meetings, etc.
- Project completion May 2016

Pratt MWC

Obstacles to Consolidation

- Source Capacity
- Jurisdiction
- City filed for Declaratory Relief
- Mediation
- Resolution = SB 88
- Voluntary letter issued August 2015
- Order issued March 2016 (**pipeline was already constructed**)
- Consolidation achieved May 2016

Lessons Learned

- Voluntary consolidation is highly preferred
- The easy consolidations are likely already complete
- SB88 process is a large workload
- Getting the message to residents is difficult
- DDW (or LPA) will need to bring the systems together
- Reaffirmed that consolidation is the best alternative

Safe Drinking Water Partnership Plan

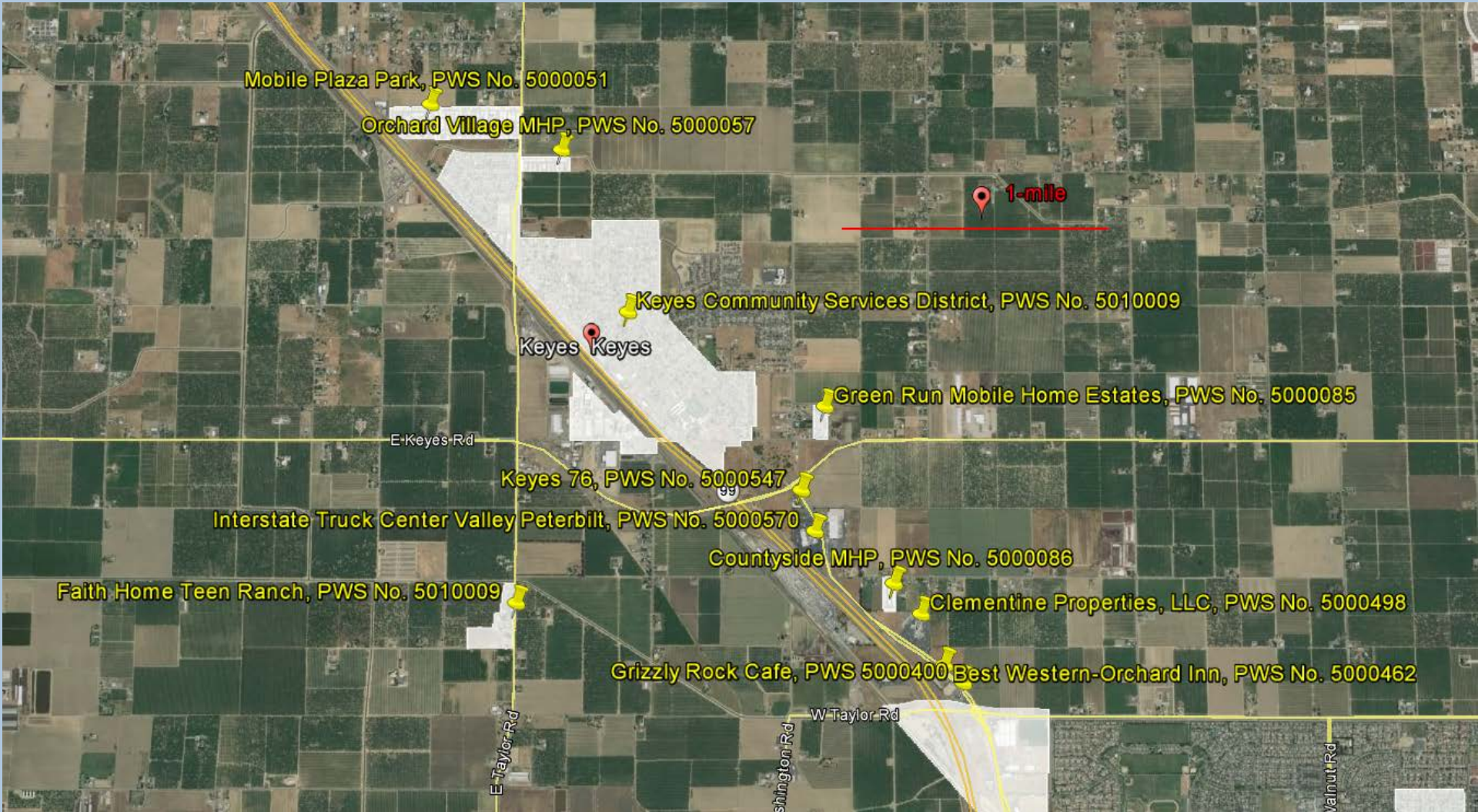
County wide plan that includes:

- All water systems locations
- Out of compliance water systems
- Water systems with inadequate TMF
- Clusters of water systems that could regionalize, consolidate or create water partnerships
- Groundwater areas with known contamination
- Areas that are served by individual wells
- Ranks partnership opportunities/priorities in each county
- Input from counties, cities, LAFCo water systems, etc.

Current Consolidation Efforts

- DDW sent out correspondence to approximately 250 small public water systems (PWS) recommending consolidation in September through November 2017
- Maps of adjacent water systems in areas of PWS clusters
- Recommending RCAC consolidation training
- Informal public meetings in some areas
- One additional 6-month letter for mandatory consolidation
 - Yosemite High School/Hillview Water Company due to arsenic

City of Keyes Area—Stanislaus County



11 PWS in 3 mile length

Town of Mendocino—Mendocino County



15 PWS in 1.5 mile stretch

Blue Lake Area-Lake County Community Coffee Chat November 10th



6 PWS in 0.3 miles

Emerging Challenges

- Anticipating that up to 90 new applicants will be requesting domestic water supply permits in 2018 in Monterey County for cannabis production
- Other counties may follow
- Many water systems may be in rural areas with nitrate contamination