



DWMAPS: EPA'S ONLINE MAPPING TOOL

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In February, the EPA released its online mapping tool known as DWMAPS. This acronym stands for the **Drinking Water Mapping Application to Protect Source Waters**. The purpose of DWMAPS is to provide the public, water utilities, and government agencies with information to help safeguard sources of drinking water. DWMAPS can be accessed at the following URL: <https://www.epa.gov/sourcewaterprotection/dwmaps>. The current version of DWMAPS is for public use and does not display the locations of public water system intakes and wells. A later, secure version will allow state drinking water program managers and water utilities to integrate their own state and local data.

What can you do with DWMAPS? First, I found the online mapping tool to be very useful in identifying federally-regulated potential sources of contamination. These include facilities with a permit to discharge such as municipal wastewater systems, industrial users, concentrated animal feeding operations, etc. Other federally-regulated potential sources of contamination that are mapped on DWMAPS include: (1) generators, treatment, storage, and disposal facilities of hazardous waste (RCRA); (2) hazardous waste sites (CERCLA); and (3) TRIS and TSCA inventory sites where certain toxic chemicals are being used, manufactured, treated, transported, or released into the environment. DWMAPS also displays information on pipelines and transportation routes (roads and railroads). Unfortunately, the amount of information on non-point sources of contamination is limited in DWMAPS to the amount of manure and fertilizer loading per county.

Second, the DWMAPS application is useful in displaying hydrography and watershed information. Users can click on a location and determine what watershed they are in, what the boundaries of the watershed are, etc. DWMAPS also shows where impaired waters are, which of these have Total Maximum Daily Limits (TMDLs), assessed waters data (use descriptions, etc.), and 100- and 500-year flood hazard areas. Data on land use is also accessible on DWMAPS. Users can further determine the quality of surface waters in their area through a link to EPA's *How's My Waterway* website.

Third, the public version users of DWMAPS allows users to identify the public water suppliers within a county and then get

more information on the system such as the source type, system facilities, treatment plants, and violation history. As of the writing of this article, more information on the secure, utility version is not available. However, I believe that this version will allow systems to view their sources on DWMAPS.

I encourage all systems to look at DWMAPS. Zoom into your area. Turn the various layers on the right on and off. Click on the potential sources of contamination and click on show detailed information on these potential sources. Also make sure to check on the accuracy of your utility's information. Let me know what you think of this mapping application. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 1-888-NYRURAL, ext. 17 or winkley@nyruralwater.org. 💧💧💧