

## **Bobbie Walthall**

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**To:** Megan Gilliland  
**Subject:** KDHE News Release: Public Water Supply Achievement Awards Given to Systems that Exceed Federal Safe Drinking Water Act Requirements

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### **Public Water Supply Achievement Awards Given to Systems that Exceed Federal Safe Drinking Water Act Requirements**

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) will award four public water supply systems with the Fourth Annual Capacity Development Awards. The award program is designed to encourage public water systems to go beyond mere compliance with the Safe Water Drinking Act (SDWA). The program is intended to promote exceeding the standards set forth in the Act.

"We commend these four entities for going above and beyond the Safe Water Drinking Act to ensure that their consumers and the environment are protected," said John Mitchell, KDHE Acting Secretary.

The 2010 Capacity Development Achievement Awards will be presented to the following recipients:

- City of Lawrence – November 9, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Commission Meeting Room
- Sedgwick County RWD #3 – November 9, 6:30 p.m., District Office in Mulvane
- City of Towanda – November 10, 7 p.m., City Hall
- Douglas County RWD #5 – November 16, 7 p.m., District Office, 946 E 650 Rd., Lawrence

Up to five Capacity Development Awards per year may be given for systems serving populations of 500 or less. Up to five additional awards may be given for systems serving populations of between 501 and 3,300 residents. No more than one award each may be granted every year for systems serving between 3,301 and 10,000 people; and for 10,001 or more people. In addition, no more than one wholesale water district may receive an award each year.

The awards are made possible using EPA funds that are allocated to states, and are just one of the many activities that KDHE performs for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the SDWA. The majority of SDWA compliance activities performed by KDHE include monitoring public water supplies for health and safety, administering low interest loans to communities that enable them to upgrade and maintain their public water supply treatment systems and providing training and technical assistance to public water supply operators.

The federal SDWA was passed by Congress in 1974 and amended in 1996. The amendments required states to put strategies in place that help public water systems maintain technical, financial and managerial capacity. Originally, the SDWA focused primarily on treatment as the means of providing safe drinking water at the tap. The 1996 amendments greatly enhanced the existing law by recognizing source water protection, operator training, funding for water system improvements and public information as important activities for ensuring safe drinking water from source to tap.

The Kansas Capacity Development Program mission is to provide training, technical assistance, and financial planning assistance to help public water supply systems achieve and maintain the technical, financial and managerial capabilities needed to protect the health of the citizens they serve.

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*As the state's environmental protection and public health agency, KDHE promotes responsible choices to protect the health and environment for all Kansans.*

*Through education, direct services and the assessment of data and trends, coupled with policy development and enforcement, KDHE will improve health and quality of life. We prevent illness, injuries and foster a safe and sustainable environment for the people of Kansas.*

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