

F I N A L R E P O R T

WATER USE SUBCOMMITTEE

January, 1982

During the 1981 Session of the General Assembly three concurrent resolutions, Senate Concurrent Resolution 22, Senate Concurrent Resolution 25, and House Concurrent Resolution 22, were introduced requesting the Legislative Council to establish a study on the present and future problems regarding water use and supply. The Legislative Council authorized the Water Use Subcommittee of the Senate and House Standing Committees on Agriculture and the Senate and House Standing Committees on Natural Resources to hold three meetings and appointed the following members:

Senator Forrest Schwengels, Co-chairperson
Representative Victor Stueland, Co-chairperson
Senator James Gallagher
Senator Bill Hutchins
Senator Alvin Miller
Senator Ray Taylor
Senator Dale Tieden
Senator Richard Vande Hoef
Representative Dale Cochran
Representative Lisle Cook
Representative Hurley Hall
Representative Wendell Pellett
Representative Doug Smalley
Representative William Sullivan

At the first meeting on September 2, 1981 the Subcommittee received testimony from the Department of Soil Conservation, Iowa Natural Resources Council, Iowa Geological Survey, Department of Environmental Quality, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Health regarding the roles of those agencies in regulating water use and supply and the problems the agencies perceived. The Subcommittee also received testimony from representatives from the Iowa League of Municipalities, Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Cattlemen's Association, Iowa Pork Producers, Iowa Poultry Producers and Iowa Manufacturers Association regarding their problems with water use and supply and the water regulatory agencies. The Subcommittee directed the water regulatory agencies to prepare two proposals for the next meeting, one on the establishment of a continuing data base and the other for the identification of wells.

At the second meeting on October 20, 1981 the Subcommittee again received testimony from several sources. A civil engineer whose

firm works primarily in sanitary engineering, a superintendent of a municipal water system, representatives of the Iowa Water Well Association, a representative of the Iowa Rural Water Association, and a professor of civil engineering at Iowa State University spoke to the Subcommittee on their problems with water use and supply and with water regulatory agencies. The proposals on well identification and a continuing data base requested at the previous meeting were received by the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee also received a report from the Legislative Environmental Advisory Group on groundwater contamination.

At the third meeting on November 30, 1981 the Subcommittee received reports from a representative from the Governor's Office and the Legislative Environmental Advisory Group on the proposed diversion of the water from the Missouri River for a coal slurry pipeline and the cost to Iowa of future diversions. The Subcommittee also met with members of the Environmental Quality Council to discuss the Department of Environmental Quality's drinking water supply and water pollution programs. Some residents from the Glidden area addressed the Subcommittee to express their concern regarding the expansion of well-supplied irrigation in their area.

After deliberating upon the presentations made, the Subcommittee took the following actions:

1. Recommended that through an effective driller licensing program all well development information generated should be submitted to the state including information on drilling samples, results of pumping tests and data on water quality.
2. Requested that legislation be drafted and submitted to the standing committees which would authorize the Iowa Natural Resources Council to assess damages against the owner or operator of a withdrawal that interferes with the beneficial use of a pre-existing well in favor of the owner of the pre-existing well.
3. Recommended that legislation be drafted to eliminate the requirement of approval by the Department of Environmental Quality of plans by certified engineers for water treatment and wastewater plants. The legislation is to provide for review of the plans by the Department at the request of the city.
4. Requested that the Iowa Natural Resources Council submit a draft to clarify the language regarding termination of a water withdrawal permit that is not put to a beneficial use.
5. Recommended that county assessors be authorized to inquire if wells exist on the property.
6. Recommended that service clubs and other organizations join in a campaign to stress the potential for groundwater contamination from abandoned wells.

7. Requested that the Department of Environmental Quality and the Iowa Natural Resources Council develop a draft bill with the Legislative Service Bureau regarding abandoned wells and sinkholes.

8. Recommended that a position be established in the Iowa Natural Resources Council to serve as a central reporting system for water regulation.

Bills are being drafted to incorporate the legislative requests and recommendations of the Subcommittee and will be submitted to the standing committees.