

River town will protect its life blood

NEW MIAMI — This historic steel town in central Butler County recently took important steps to supply pure, clean drinking water for generations to come.

On May 15th, the New Miami Village Council passed a drinking water protection ordinance that empowers the village to prevent ground water contamination through zoning, vigilance and hazardous material containment rules. The ordinance is based on model legislation developed by the Hamilton to New Baltimore Ground Water Consortium for communities in Butler County.

New Miami borders Four Mile Creek and the Great Miami River, just northeast of Hamilton. The village depends on three riverside wells to pump an average of 220,000 gallons daily to 3,200 customers. About 700 of those customers live north of village limits in St. Clair Township, which encompasses most of New Miami's drinking water protection area.

Drinking water supplies cross many political boundaries in Butler County, creating the need for intergovernmental collaboration. This prompted OKI Regional Council of Governments to seek a federal grant from Ohio EPA and U.S. EPA, under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. That grant funded creation of the *Drinking Water Protection Plan for the Village of New Miami*, which Ohio EPA endorsed. The plan and ordinance help protect ground water pumped by seven public water systems to more than 300,000 people in Butler and Hamilton counties.

Project partners who make the joint drinking water protection effort possible are:

- § Village of New Miami
- § OKI Regional Council of Governments
- § Hamilton to New Baltimore Ground Water Consortium
- § Miami Conservancy District
- § Butler County Storm Water District
- § Butler Soil and Water Conservation District
- § Miami University's Center for Public Management and Regional Affairs
- § Three Valley Conservation Trust
- § Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District
- § Dr. Michael C. Miller of the University of Cincinnati

Butler County Storm Water District is finding ways to link storm water management with drinking water protection. The Ground Water Consortium and Miami Conservancy District keep track of monitoring wells that give New Miami an early warning of approaching pollutants. The Village of New Miami is one of 12 local political jurisdictions included in the Butler County Storm Water District.

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