

TCE plume: THANK YOU, public comments and commissioners

We would like to thank those who participated in the February 12, 2015 meeting of the County Commissioners. Twenty two of the 110 people who attended the meeting presented public comments. All of these were in support of the specific plan to remove the uncertainty about future access to safe drinking water in the affected area. Supportive comments included those from DEQ, Health Department, realtors, property owners and MAWSA (Mancelona Area Water and Sewer Authority). The recommendation was to appropriate the \$250,000 in matching funds to secure about a million dollars from DEQ to install phase one of the TCE plume-related improvements in the Mancelona Area Water system. The critical Resolution was adopted by a 7 to 2 vote. This was a major turning point toward resolving this problem.

The benefits of this action to Antrim County citizens, beside assurance of safe drinking water in the future, include the removal of some of the negative stigma for buyers and sellers of property. This benefit is expected to result in an increase in property values and tax revenue for Antrim County, and an incentive for current and future job creators in this area.

The next steps include finalizing a contract between Antrim County and MAWSA, obtaining construction bids for the initial projects, and then for MAWSA to schedule the construction. Some commissioners expressed a desire to determine if other stakeholder units of government (townships and villages) might be interested in financially supporting a portion of the \$250,000, but the intent of the Resolution was not to delay the development of a contract while making that determination.

ACUTE, Antrim County United Through Ecology, an informal ad hoc group of stakeholder organizations utilizing a community engagement process
Gary Knapp, Dean Branson, and Steve Grill