

## WORCESTER WATER DISTRICT #2

Statement  
May 12, 2017

For 130 years, the Worcester Water Company and its successor, Worcester Water District #2, has supplied the hamlet of Worcester with clean, safe water for drinking and innumerable other uses. Until 1986, the water source was Caryl's Lake, a large dammed pond on a 500-foot hill to the northwest. The Town took over the Company's responsibility by forming the Water District in 1962.

The New York State Health Department has long been wary of single-source surface water supplies such as Caryl's Lake, which it sees as being vulnerable to surface contamination. So in 1986 the District drilled two new wells to serve its 440 users by withdrawing from the aquifer below the valley, with the lake as a emergency back-up. The wells were located near the end of Park Street beyond the railroad tracks, within 90 feet of Decatur Creek, another surface water body. At the time, this distance was within State guidelines.

In 2014, due to changes in EPA regulations, the State notified the Water District that the 90-foot distance had become unacceptable, and that it posed a risk of infiltration by surface water. In January of 2015, after a year-long testing process, the State determined that the wells were "*Ground Water Under the Direct Influence of Surface Water.*" The new minimum standard distance is 200 feet, which necessitated the relocation of the wells to comply to new guidelines. There was an 18-month deadline for compliance.

At all times from 1986 to date, all State required testing has been done by an independent certified testing facility. All testing has met or exceeded state standards for drinking water. No boil-water orders have resulted from underlying water or surface contamination.

As a result of State mandates, in 2015, the Water District purchased approximately nine acres of a former corn field to the west of the present wells. A hired engineer drew up plans to drill new wells at this location. The Town also applied for a grant of \$147,000 in dedicated Federal funding, to be administered by the State, in order to reduce ratepayer expense.

The plans and the grant have both received approval. The District requested bids for drilling and construction of new wells. At this writing, the contractor has been ready to drill since November 2016, and the Water District is poised to complete the project, but they still await the receipt of grant funds. Once the funding is received, the drilling will commence. Once testing is complete, the new wells will be placed in service. During this entire process patrons will notice no change in water delivery or quality.

The Town Board, which for practical purposes acts as the Water District, and the District Superintendent, have been fully engaged in this project for more than two years. All State requirements for water testing have been met and meet or exceed all testing standards.

For further information, water testing results, or to assist in expediting the completion of this project, interested persons may contact the New York State Department of Health at 607-432-3911.