

The Master Well Owner Network

*Educating Rural Homeowners
One Well at a Time*

Stephanie Clemens, Penn State Master Well Owner Network

WHY?

- Large target audience

- Calls & emails from the public continue to increase

- No statewide water well construction standards in PA

- High risk for uninformed homeowners



Background on MWON

~ MWON was created in early 2004

~ Between April 2004 and March 2005 eight training workshops were held

~ 243 volunteers were trained in 55 PA counties

~ Project partners included PGWA, PA DEP, US EPA, and PRWA



MWON Accomplishments

- ~ 243 residents trained in 55 of 67 PA Counties
- ~ Three new publications created on the proper management of private water systems
- ~ 16 displays distributed around the state for use by volunteers during their outreach
- ~ Surveys sent to MWON volunteer contacts

Workshop Evaluation Results

Circle the word below that best describes your opinion of the MWON training.

Poor Fair Good Very Good Excellent

- ~ 99% of all workshop attendees felt that the overall workshop was good, very good, or excellent
- ~ 1% did not answer the question
- ~ No evaluations indicated a fair or poor response

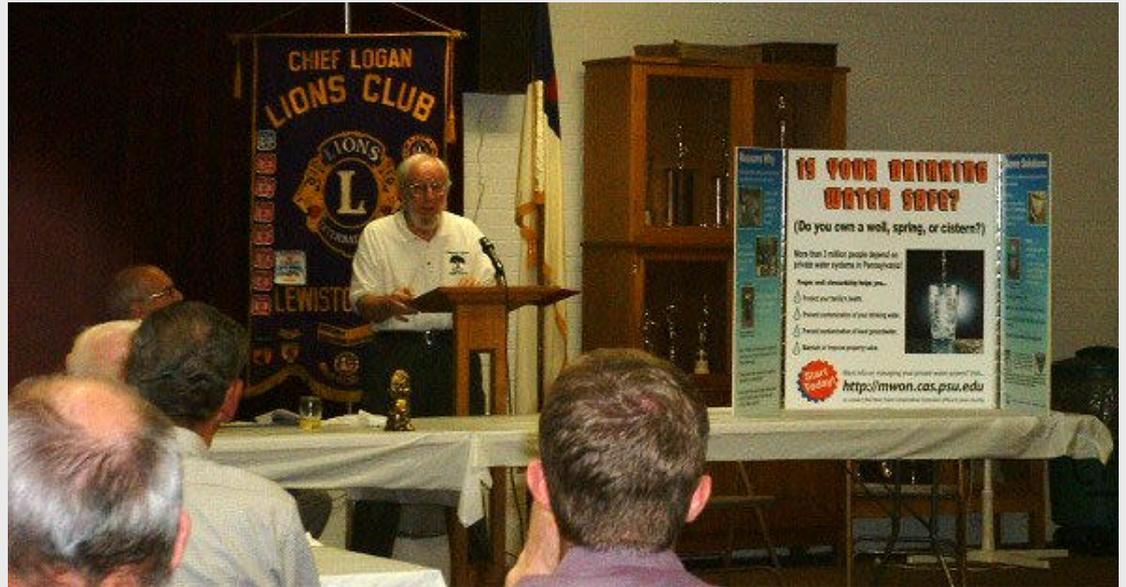
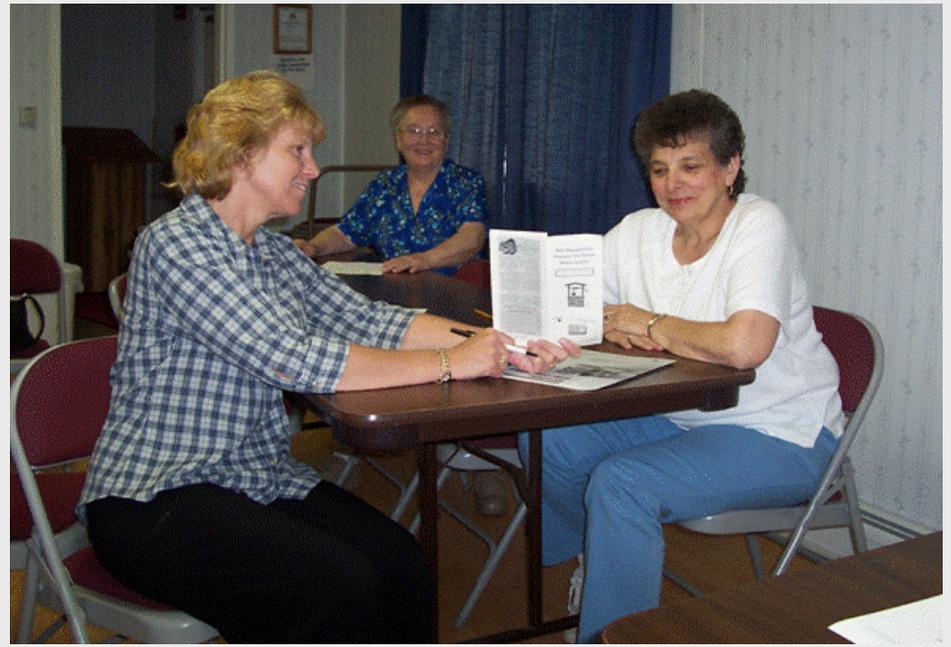
What are Master Well Owners Asked to Do?

- ~ Spread the knowledge to at least 100 people within two years of time
 - Using MWON resources
- ~ Get contact information for 20% of those people
 - To help evaluate the program
- ~ Follow their own advice

Volunteer Accomplishments

(As of January 2006)

- ~ Volunteers have educated over 7,600 private water system owners by individual consultation.
- ~ Volunteers have educated over 29,000 PA residents through various media sources.
- ~ Several volunteers have already exceeded the goal of educating 100 people within two years.



Public Survey Results

How beneficial did you find your interaction with the Master Well Owner to be?

- 61% very helpful
- 39% somewhat helpful
- - not helpful

How much did you learn about the proper management of your private water supply through your interaction with the Master Well Owner?

- 33% Learned a great deal
- 50% Learned some new ideas
- 9% Learned one new idea
- 8% Learned nothing new or did not answer

Please circle any of the following actions that you took on your water supply after interacting with the Master Well Owner.

- 4% Developed new source of water
- **33% Had my water tested**
- 9% Inspected my water supply
- 9% Installed a sanitary well cap

Only 3 out of 64 surveys indicated not doing an activity after talking to a Master Well Owner!

- 15% Shock chlorinated my well or spring
- 7% Stopped applying fertilizers, herbicides
- 9% Organized my water supply info. in one place
- 7% Identified potential sources of pollution
- **41% Sought additional information about testing or treatment**
- 9% Installed water treatment equipment
- **20% Started conserving water at home**

Lessons Learned

- ~ Need to be flexible with volunteer programs
- ~ Need to have constant interaction with volunteers
- ~ Volunteers will only become better educators if we provide them with continuous education



Future Plans

- ~ MWON has expanded into the Delmarva Peninsula
- ~ Funding being sought to provide current volunteers with continuing education
- ~ MWON Private Well Research Study

NGWA Award in Ground Water Protection



Acknowledgements

Funding for MWON was provided in part by the USDA CSREES Program, the Pennsylvania Water Research Center, the Mid-Atlantic Water Quality Program, the Pennsylvania Ground Water Association, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Special thanks to all of our project partners!