

Ways to Learn about our Drinking Water Sources in PA

Compiled by PA Watershed Specialists 1/21/21

Resources to check out:

1.) [from DEP:] “The amount of information that is available to the public directly is somewhat limited, for security reasons. Source water information is particularly limited, so that sources cannot be tampered with.

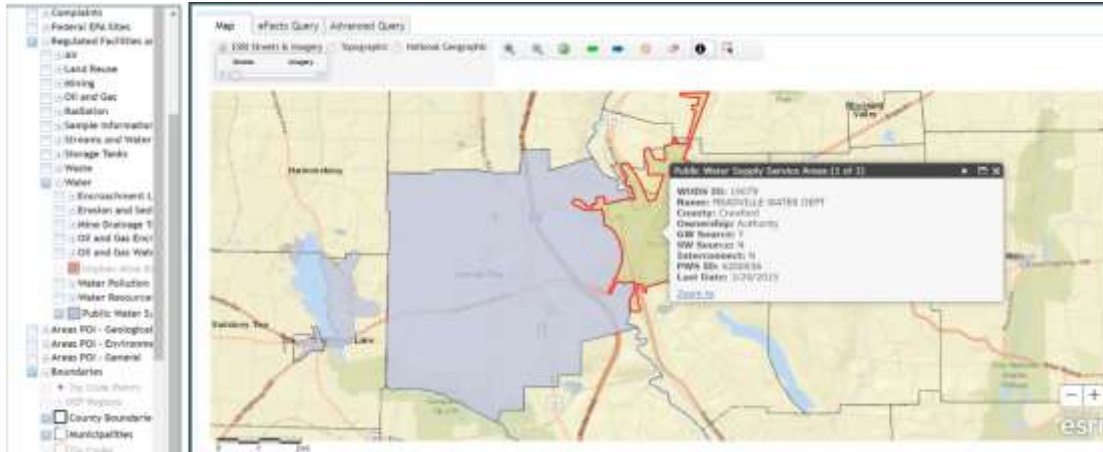
The first resource is the Drinking Water Reporting System website. This is the public access version of our PADWIS program, where we track all of our public water system information. If the student knows- from their parent- what system they purchase water from, they can look up information about that water supply. They would enter the system name, select inventory information. Then they can choose the 'Source Information' screen to view limited source information. They will get the id number, source name, status (permanent, abandoned), and type of source (surface water, groundwater, purchased). They won't be told where that source is- but from the name of the source they can likely determine if it is a well versus a spring, what specific surface source (like a river or creek or reservoir), and where water is purchased from if it is a consecutive system (consecutives purchase finished water from another system- so they don't have their own sources and treatment).

<http://www.drinkingwater.state.pa.us/dwrs/HTM/SelectionCriteria.html>

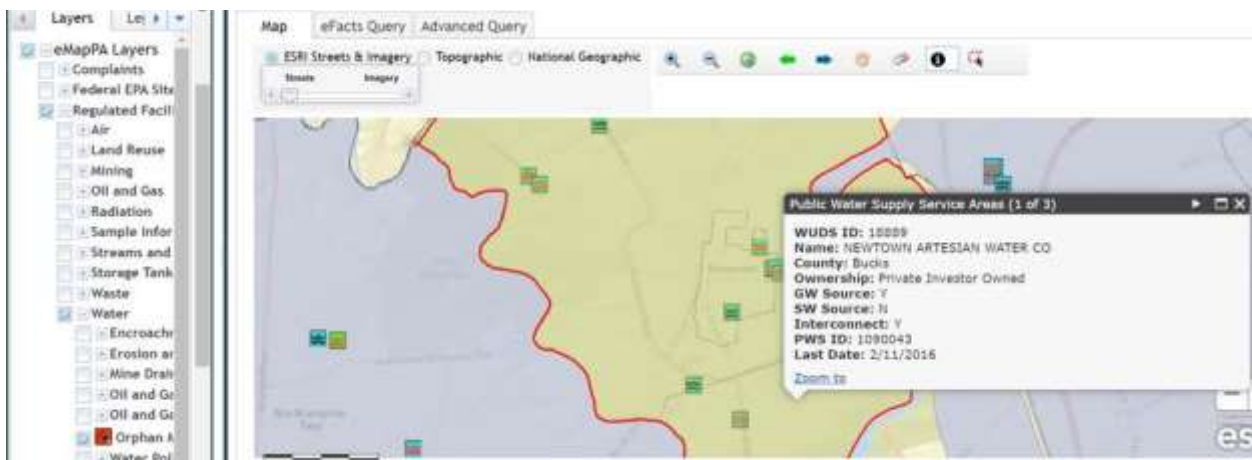
2.) [from DEP:] Knowing directly where their specific water comes from within the water system is trickier- that wouldn't be something we would track. We often have an idea, as we discuss that during inspections- so we would know if it is in an area that is served via gravity feed from tank, or if it is pumped out of a tank, directly from the plant, etc. If the student wants that level of detail, they'd have to talk to the water system itself. I think that most water systems are pretty good about talking to students, even giving tours if it is safe to do so.

The other resource is the public access eMapPA. You can zoom in on an area of the map, select regulated facilities, then water, and then Public Water Supply Service Area. This would let the students determine if they are served by a PWS, if they are unsure. Below I copied a view of Meadville, and its consecutive Vernon Township. This shows you, approximately, the area that is served by them. To get the detail, click on the 'i' in the black circle to identify an area.”

<https://www.depgis.state.pa.us/emappa/>



3.) In eMapPA <http://www.depgis.state.pa.us/emappa/> there is a layer called 'Public Water' at the bottom of the 'Water' list under 'Regulated Facilities.' It displays service area, name of company, source of the water (groundwater or surface). Screenshot for reference:



4.) Identify the water provider through a water bill or municipal website. Water utility companies or a municipality/authority are required to complete water quality reports each year for public notice (see American Water Report attached). Reports will be on the company or municipal website, identifying water sources and water quality results.

Students could call up their local water company or authority. Regional planning commissions would know as well.

5.) List from the CDC of the fluoridation status of water authorities in PA, have to know who the authority is to get information.

https://nccd.cdc.gov/DOH_MWF/Default/CountyList.aspx