

The South Wadesboro area around Cason's Old Field and Deep Creek has experienced a high volume of break-ins and thefts over the last few months. As the result, a concerned citizen from the area has invited Sheriff Tommy Allen and our local State Farm Home Insurance Agent, Montana Brigman, to speak with Wadesboro citizens about the measures they can take to protect themselves and their property.

You will also discover what you need to do right now to make it easier to both file a claim with your insurance company and to ensure that your stolen items will be replaced should your home be broken into in the future. You will also be given a chance to ask other questions that you might have relating to this topic.

Everyone is invited join this discussion at New Hope United Methodist Church on Highway 742 South at the intersection of Cason's Old Field Road on Tuesday, October 21 at 7 p.m. This will be an important information session.

Agriculture Cost Share Program Funding Available

The North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program is a state funded program administered to reduce non-point source pollution into our streams, lakes and rivers. This reduction is achieved by providing cost share assistance to agricultural landowners and operators who use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce pollutants such as sediment, animal waste, pesticides, nutrients, etc. leaving land and entering streams.

Some BMPs include waste storage structures, incinerators, composters, litter spreaders, and livestock pasture improvements such as seeding and fencing off streams and ponds to prevent access to livestock.

Cost share rates are 75% or average cost of BMP installation and 90% for those who qualify as a Beginning Farmer, Limited Resource Farmer, or EVAD member. Anson County has been allocated \$69,267 in funds for fiscal year 2015.

To apply, please contact Jake Barbee, Resource Conservationist, at 1758 Morven Road in Wadesboro. The telephone number is 704-694-3516 ext. 3.

More and More Private Companies Are Providing NC Drinking Water Services

Corporate, private ownership of rural and suburban water services is spreading

Recently Clean Water for North Carolina, a statewide environmental justice organization, released a new report giving a geographical snapshot of small, privately-owned drinking water systems which are common sources of household drinking water, typically drawing groundwater from one or more wells.

"Many North Carolinians don't realize that their neighbors pay for water service from a private, for-profit company such as Aqua North Carolina or Utilities, Inc.," Katie Hicks, co-author of the report, says. "These companies are quietly buying up aging drinking water systems, or making deals with developers to own and operate new systems. Both companies serve thousands of customers in rural areas, and in suburban areas outside cities like Raleigh, Charlotte, and Winston-Salem."

There is not a privately owned water system in Anson County.

Hicks adds, "Clean Water for NC is committed to safe, affordable tap water for all North Carolinians, yet we know that private companies often drive up rates, decreasing affordability, and have continued drinking water violations in some areas despite their promises to repair old infrastructure and improve service."

The 10-page report includes detailed maps of the drinking water systems owned by Aqua North Carolina and Utilities Inc., the two largest private water corporations operating in NC. Additional maps display the number of people served by each water system, data on water quality and reporting violations, and the demographics of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The authors of the report conclude:

- Many corporate-owned systems haven't consistently complied with water quality standards, despite charging high customer rates. Even for systems without recent violations, there are often water quality problems: small systems are not required to monitor as frequently as larger ones, so violations can slip through the cracks.
- Iron and manganese, common naturally-occurring groundwater contaminants, are not considered direct public health threats and do not have federally enforceable drinking water standards.
- Among the NC neighborhoods served by for-profit water utilities, low-income, minority, and rural communities are particularly vulnerable to steep rate hikes and poor service.

The geographic guide shows what a strong foothold for-profit utilities have gained in NC. In some counties, such as Cumberland County, minority residents and households that are below the poverty level are experiencing the worst water quality violations; they are also much more vulnerable to high private water rates and future rate increases. "NC residents should not be paying more than they can afford for water they can't even drink!" Hicks adds.

The report may also inform decision-makers who can create policies to address drinking water needs that encourage transparency and accountability to customers, not shareholders. The authors of the report note that there is still time for NC lawmakers, the NC Utilities Commission, and local public officials to capture the consumer and regulatory benefits of promoting consolidation of hundreds of independent systems under public ownership, as Alabama has done, and to facilitate publicly owned utilities' purchase of small systems within or near their existing service areas.

A full set of maps by county for each utility company is available on request; please contact katie@cwfn.org.

About Clean Water for North Carolina: Clean Water for NC works to promote clean, safe water and environments and empowered, just communities for all North Carolinians through community organizing, education, advocacy and technical assistance, with offices in Asheville and Durham.

Sen. Gene McLaurin to Serve on Education Task Force

N.C. Senator Gene McLaurin has been appointed by Best NC to serve on a statewide task force to develop a public education roadmap for our state. Best NC is a non-partisan, non-profit coalition of business leaders and education advocates committed to improving NC's public education system. Senator McLaurin will serve as Co-Chair of the Task Force on Early Childhood Education, and Member of the Task Force on Teacher Evaluation, Compensation, and Retention.

Responding to the news of his appointment, Senator McLaurin said "I am grateful for this opportunity to help shape the future of public education in NC from Pre-K to 12th grade. As a product of our public schools, I support public education. My wife, Donna and I sent all three of our children to public schools. One of the most important issues we face in NC is how we treat our teachers and how we encourage more young people to become teachers. NC teachers should be paid at least the National Average and deserve our respect for what I consider to be the most important job in our state. Our state constitution guarantees that every child shall have a sound basic education; our rural communities deserve no less than our bigger city schools."

Best NC will lead discussions over the next three months in preparation for the development of the NC Education 2020 Vision plan. Senator McLaurin will be joined by company executives who are advocating for a skilled workforce, teachers who will share their experiences and classroom insight, and other statewide leaders with one common goal in mind - that NC can once again be a beacon for the rest of the nation. The final plan is scheduled to be released in January 2015. For more info on Best NC, visit their website: best-nc.org.

BRLC's Chicken Dumpling Fundraiser is Saturday

Get your appetites' ready ... it's time for the 6th Annual Chicken Dumpling Fundraiser presented by the Burnsville Recreation & Learning Center! Everyone is invited to come and partake in the BEST chicken & dumplings, while enjoying the fun & fellowship of the event. There will be gospel music from 1 to 2:30 p.m., and Sheriff-Elect Landric Reid will be in attendance to meet attendees. All funds raised by the event will go toward supporting the BRLC and their many ongoing programs that benefit all of Anson County.

The event will take place at BRLC on Saturday, October 11, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. You can eat in or carry out. BRLC is located at 13349 Highway 742 North in Burnsville, across from the Burnsville Fire Department.

For more information call 704-826-8182.



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