

SOWC Thumbnail History and Current Status

SOWC was formed in 1969 by foreword looking individuals with the idea of providing potable water to needy homes in Carter County. These individuals such as Herman Day, Albert Cullum, Dorothy Lacey, Ollie Testerman, Arvel Jones, Thomas Ayres, Melvin Sampley, Milo Watkins, Eldon Jones, Andy Arnold, George Washburn, Warren Jones, and John Hissom worked days, nights and weekends trying to get enough people together with a like mind to contribute \$50.00 per meter to secure a FHA loan of \$1,000,000.00 to build the SOWC system. This list is a smattering of individuals that had a direct and active hand in the formation and building of the SOWC Water System. Many people worked long hours to get a reliable source of drinking water for the rural area. There was a minimum of 1,100 contributions or meters needed to get that Farmers Home Administration loan approved. To secure enough people and receive the FHA money it was decided to expand the system into Love County. With this expansion and the subsequent contributions, SOWC was able to proceed with plans and become a reality.

In 1971 the first water from Arbuckle Lake ran into the SOWC water plant north of Gene Autry. This was the sole source and continues to be primary source of water for the SOWC System. SOWC is allocated 1,000,000 gallons per day to use from the Arbuckle Lake.

From these humble beginnings only one director from that time (Albert Cullum) is living today. He recalls having himself and his children help SOWC employees find all the meter sets near his home in the evening and night hours during the first months of full operation of the SOWC system. The early days were extremely hard, just buying a shovel instead of a replacement handle caused controversy in the board meetings.

SOWC has grown from 1,100 members or meters to 4,500 members. SOWC covers a broad area measured from tip to tip encompasses 600 square miles. There are currently 15 water storage Standpipes (3 were in original plans), 18 booster stations (2 were in original plans), to propel the water and maintain pressure, 2 water plants (1 originally) located at the Ardmore Air Park and Lake Murray, and 7 wells (none in original plans) with one additional well under completion at this time.

There are 15 total employees counting all full time and part time. We have one employees still at SOWC from the companies inception. Claudette Brown in bookkeeping.

SOWC also receives water form the City of Ardmore system under an agreement. SOWC recieves this water at 5 locations scattered around the city.

Of course the backbone of our system is its employees. SOWC is proud to have fifteen employees that work long hours, sometimes in unpleasant circumstances, to make sure that the members have quality water.

The system has come a long way since 1969. Many miles of pipeline have been laid and maintained, additional sources of water have been found and new technology has been implemented to make the system run more efficiently.

There are many improvements that need to be made especially with the rapid growth spurt that is occurring. Your Board of Directors are constantly working to implement these needed improvements. One of the main obstacles , as always, is money. It takes a lot of funds to implement these projects then maintain them. The board is continually looking at ways to fund these projects and implement them as soon as feasible.

Some of the recent accomplishments include two new water production plants, at a cost of over \$2,500,000.00, drilling new wells for alternative sources of water, installing and maintaining fifteen water standpipes, and eighteen water booster stations to keep the volume and pressure of water at

adequate levels.

Other improvements are currently being worked on. These include securing additional sources of water, installing new and larger water lines, and increasing our water storage capacity. These will be implemented as soon as funding is available.

Thank you for your patience when things happen beyond our control that interrupt your water supply. We are proud of our response time to these issues as they arise.

Please feel free to contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Glen C Jones

President, Board of Directors

Managers Notes

The Board of Directors of SOWC, Glen Jones, Don Jackson, Louis Hope, George Brown, Bill Page, Scott Flanagan, and Troy Duke, serve as directors on a volunteer basis without any type of compensation. These individuals are only thought of when a problem arises and never appreciated when things are running smooth. They give of their time and expertise to the job which most often is thankless and generally unnoticed by the majority of customers on the SOWC system. They must continually balance the capitol cost of expansion with the daily cost to the customer.

Charlie Abbe General Manager