

# Press Release

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## **EMW Gas Association selects engineering firm to draft a regional water system plan.**

EMW Gas Association's (EMW) Board of Directors recently selected Wilson & Company of Albuquerque to prepare a Preliminary Engineering Report for EMW to develop a regional water system in the Estancia Valley. Law and Resource Planning Associates, P.C., with expertise in water law, will also provide project assistance.

Conceptually, EMW intends to provide water service from the southern part of Torrance County, along State Highway 41, north to Moriarty, and then west toward the Edgewood area in southern Santa Fe County. The regional water system may eventually provide service heading west from Estancia along State Highway 55 to include the mountain villages of Punta de Agua, Manzano, Torreon, and Tajique.

Municipalities within the region already have their own wells and water systems, but may choose to purchase wholesale water in the future to meet additional needs. In rural, unincorporated areas, EMW will provide water on a retail basis to residents and businesses. EMW will work with subdivision developers to provide water to new developments, rather than each landowner drilling their own well.

In the early 1960s, a group of local business people saw a need for natural gas service in their communities and aided by local, state, and federal support, worked to make it happen. Thus, in 1964, three communities, Estancia, Moriarty, and Willard formed a non-profit inter-municipal association, EMW Gas Association, governed by a Board of Directors with representatives appointed by these communities. Currently EMW serves over 5000 residential, commercial, irrigation, and industrial customers through 600 miles of natural gas main lines in Torrance County and southern Santa Fe County. EMW proposes to expand its' utility services to include an appropriately phased retail and wholesale regional water delivery system.

The EMW Board feels that just as there was a need for a regional natural gas utility in the 1960s, there is a need in 2007 for a locally owned non-profit regional water utility to serve the continued growth and long-term vitality of the Estancia Basin region in a responsible, conservation-minded way. As large cities outside the Basin grow, they are interested in importing Estancia Basin water. A non-profit regional water utility that incorporates regional water plan components and constructs the necessary regional water delivery infrastructure will ensure a local market for water rights or contract water shipments and local citizens will receive reasonably priced, clean, safe water for their homes and businesses. This new EMW water division, coupled with EMW's natural gas division, will enhance the economic development of the Estancia Valley.