

NEWS RELEASE: Nov. 14, 2011

**Water conference to address regional water issues  
Speakers, panels to explore securing water resources for a prosperous future**

Greene County officials encourage regional planners, developers and utility providers to attend the 4th annual regional water conference, "Securing Our Water Future," Nov. 17-18 at University Plaza Hotel, 333 John Q Hammons Parkway, Springfield. The conference is co-sponsored by Tri-State Water Resource Coalition, of which Greene County is a member, and Missouri State University Outreach.

Gail Melgren, Executive Director of Tri-State Water Resource Coalition said the focus of this year's conference is role of adequate water resources for a prosperous future.

"Water is unquestionably the most important substance in our lives, yet water is a resource which we have taken almost completely for granted," said Melgren. "For the last hundred years, clean drinking water has been abundant, safe, and so cheap we think nothing of wasting it. Those days are over. Water is a finite resource and we live in a growing region. Its limits must be recognized."

The conference is open to everyone interested in water supply and water quality issues. A variety of speakers and panel discussions will present over the course of the two-day event. Topics will include water planning at state, regional and local level, water law, water challenges for regional suppliers, and federal and state programs for funding water infrastructure.

Population and future water demand for the region will be discussed, as will Joint Municipal Water Utilities, and emerging heavy water uses like hydrofracking. A historic review of Missouri's climate will be presented, and the effects of the Joplin tornado on infrastructure will be explored, along with that community's efforts to rebuild better than ever.

"Water is essential to our growing communities, to farming, to families, to businesses, and to recreation that many of us enjoy," said Melgren. "Our goal with regional water planning efforts, including our annual conference coming up this week, is to foster careful, smart management of this precious resource."

Registration for the conference is \$95 for both days and \$65 for one day. Elected officials may attend at no charge, but are asked to RSVP so adequate food and seating can be arranged.

Register at <http://outreach.missouristate.edu/118556.htm> or call (417) 836-6660. For more information call Gail Melgren, Executive Director of Tri-State Water Coalition, at (417) 766-9499.

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