

# Happy New Year Everyone!



by Florence Braunius,  
NYRWA President

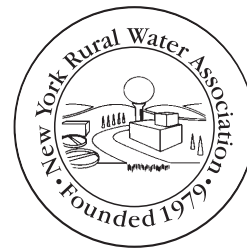
I am sure you are well into the New Year when you received this issue, but for me it is January 2, 2008. It is one of those cold, clear, picturesque mornings, with new snow, and all the makings of a beautiful Adirondack photo. Fortunately, I live in a community where the beauty is not only physical, but in the people of the community. 2007 was a difficult year for many of us. We lost good friends, and some of us had to deal with drought throughout the summer, staffing issues due to retirement, and on and on.

In our community, we have our municipal water system that serves the village residents, but the residents of the Town, except for five or six homes, are all served by private water supplies. Road salt contamination wrecks havoc on any well on the downhill slope from the roadways, and this past summer, the drought conditions affected many homeowners. Working in municipal water, I was curious as to what was available for a person with private supplies in the event they face water shortages to the extent we did this summer. After searching, I found that the HOME grant program was available, but our county had set a limit of \$25,000 per home, and the home must be brought up to code within that dollar amount. A new well would consume that money quickly. I found that USDA does offer a grant program to income eligible seniors, but that too was out of reach for many, either due to not meeting the income limits or age limits. USDA does offer a low interest loan that people can access, but who would know where to look? I also learned of the Foundation for Affordable Drinking Water, which offers loans up to \$8000 and a grant program for eligible homeowners. And that was it, bottom line, "there's not much out there" for the working lower and middle class.

In my community there was one family that was in truly dire straits. After doing this research for assistance, I found the only way this family was going to get water was for our community to put out an appeal to the local organizations that can help people in times of need. My first phone call was to Hawk Drillers in Ballston Spa to find out what we could expect for the cost of a new well. Janice told me to call back in a few days. She was familiar with our area and was willing to work with me. To make a long story short, when I called Janice in a few days, she told me she had everything donated by

their suppliers, and Hawk Drillers, would donate labor. I found a backhoe operator to dig the trench and our Town Supervisor donated the fuel to run the drill rig. This family went from carrying water from a tank supplied by the fire department, to a drilled well giving them potable running water.

Hawk Drillers wanted to show their appreciation for the business they have received from folks in Hamilton County and I thank them for their generosity. I appreciate the local help, because we all know, making a living here is not easy. And I learned just how fortunate we are when we have a municipal system that is there for us every time we turn the faucet. Thanks to all of you who make that happen! 💧



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