

Best Tasting Water in Alabama

WHO HAS THE BEST TASTING WATER IN THE STATE OF ALABAMA?

By George Marodis, Source Water Specialist

Does your utility produce the Best Tasting Water in Alabama? Well, if you did not enter the Alabama Rural Water Association's Water Taste Test Competition held on Tuesday March 18, 2015 then we will never know how it would compare against the competition. However, for those utilities that entered the competition one sample of water was chosen

as "The Best Tasting Water in Alabama".

A utility is only eligible to enter the Taste Test competition if they meet ADEM approval having no violations of bacteriological, chemical or monitoring violations. A panel of judges scrutinized the water samples based on Taste, Clarity and Odor.



The judges carefully inspect some water samples from L to R Steve Wear, National Rural Water Association, Lori Williams, US Representative Martha Roby's Office, and Joe Anderson, United States Department of Agriculture

Over the years, several utilities in Alabama score consistently high in the Taste Test Competition. That is remarkable considering that every year a new panel of judges is selected for the competition. After the preliminary judging, the water system competitors were reduced to the following six finalists:

Calhoun County Water & Fire Protection Authority
City of Fairhope Public Utilities
Riverside Water Department
Thomasville Water Works & Sewer Board
Town of Lowndesboro Water Works
West Etowah County Water Authority

The winner of the Alabama Rural Water Association's 2015 Water Taste Test is the **West Etowah County Water Authority**.

Along with "Bragging Rights" the winner will receive one round trip ticket to Washington, D.C. to

compete in the National Water Drinking Water Taste Test in February 2016. The West Etowah County Water Authority currently serves 2,300 households. West Etowah produces water from one well and one spring which produces from the Tuscumbia Lime. In addition West Etowah's well appears to be producing from the Tuscumbia Limestone aquifer. The utility has seven water storage tanks with a combined storage capacity of 910,000 gallons of water. The Authority has 175 miles of main line pipe. Having the best tasting drinking water in Alabama is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the **West Etowah County Water Authority** Management and Staff.

The **West Etowah County Water Authority** is governed by the following Board Members:

Roger Kimbril- Chairman, Steve Jennings- Vice Chairman, Roger Smith- Board Member



From L to R Kathy Horne, Executive Director, ARWA, Jim Mayo, Operator, West Etowah, Roger Kimbril, Chairman, West Etowah, Richard Smith, Board Member, West Etowah, Barry (Bo) Davenport, Field Maintenance, West Etowah, Sally Hathcock, Office Manager, West Etowah

The West Etowah Water Authority office is staffed by the following:

- **Kenny Smith- Superintendent**
- **Jim Mayo- Operator**
- **Sally Hathcock- Office Manager**
- **Barbie Cleveland- Office Staff**
- **Donna Purkey- Office Staff**
- **Stacy Thompson- Office Staff**
- **Barry (BO) Davenport- Field Maintenance**
- **Ethan Ashley- Field Maintenance**
- **Bobby Huff- Field Maintenance**

Congratulations to the *West Etowah County Water Authority!*

The runner up in the “Taste Test” competition was the *Fairhope Water Department* located in Baldwin County. Fairhope’s Water Department is the largest supplier of water in Baldwin County, with nearly 16,324 hookups, serving an estimated 40,000 people. The City operates five water towers with 6.6 million gallons of storage and pumps an average of 4.6 mil-



Kathy Horne, Executive Director, ARWA Dan McCrory, Superintendent, City of Fairhope, Curtis Cooper, Chief Water Operator, Joe Webber, Assistant Water Operator, City of Fairhope

lion gallons of water a day from ten wells, all drawing from a vast underground aquifer. The Department also maintains 65 lift stations and one waste water treatment facility.