

WELL

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wells will be affected, but they would like more assurance — or at least more information — than they've received so far.

"That's a lot of water if both wells are operating at full capacity," Wilkie said.

While Wilkie received the application notice by mail, Liz Reich, who lives on Crestview Drive in the Shrine Acres subdivision did not. She learned of the new well when Eleanor Wilkie distributed copies to neighbors and friends.

"It's (the water supply) something you don't think about," she said, until it becomes obvious how many other homes draw off the aquifer. She is grateful to the Wilkies for alerting her about the well, and plans to submit a comment.

Ballaron said the new well, which is about 1,500 feet from an existing one, was tested months ago, but that the company was not required to notify nearby property owners.

Pack said the company has monitored a few private wells and its existing well, and found a 20- to 30-foot drop in the water level while the Gephart well was running at full capacity.

"There's always going to be impacts," Pack said, but he felt the tests showed nothing serious.

State regulations require a

VOICE YOUR OPINION

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission is accepting comments on an application by United Water to use a new well that will draw up to 432,000 gallons per day from the ground. Comments and inquiries can be sent to: Ms. Paula B. Ballaron, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, 1721 N. Front St., Harrisburg, PA 17102-2391. You may also call 717-238-0425, ext. 222 or send a fax to 717-238-2436. A public hearing on the request will be held next year.

water utility to correct problems caused by its wells. That could mean deepening an existing private well or drilling an entirely new one at no charge.

Ballaron said the application is under review both by her commission and the state Department of Environmental Protection. The commission meets quarterly to act on applications, and she said this one is not on the agenda for the December meeting, but she expects it to be scheduled for March.

Pack said the company would like to have the well operating by next summer.



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Never too soon to think spring

Denise Lindner, Nancy Mayer, Ann Stine and Jean Purcell have fun planting their spring bulbs in planters at a recent meeting of the Back Mountain Bloomers. Besides caring for their own yards, the group landscaped the latest Wyoming Valley Habitat house.



Kiwanis Halloween parade today

The Dallas Kiwanis are planning their annual Halloween parade set for Oct. 31, 2004. The parade will start from the Dallas District Annex Building located above the Dallas Little League field on Lake Street at noon and will end at the Star Building behind CVS. Prizes and refreshments will be given then. All Back Mountain children are invited to attend. From left, first row, are parade committee members, Joe Swartz, treasurer and co-chairman; Jim Tupper, chairman; Tex Wilson. Second row, Lloyd Ryman, president; and Ted Shone.

Election Day soup and cookie sale

The United Methodist Women of the Orange Church will be holding a Welsh Cookie and homemade soup sale on Election Day, Nov. 2. Advance orders for the cookies at \$3 a dozen and a choice of chicken noodle or vegetable beef soup for \$3.50 a quart are recommended. Orders may be placed by calling 333-4480, 333-4286, or 333-4493. Pick up will be at the Franklin Township Fire Hall on Orange Road during regular polling hours. A light lunch will be available at the Fire Hall between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and a bake sale will also be held.

Recycling site open for yard waste

DALLAS TWP. — The recycling site for yard waste in the rear of the township building is for residents only. Acceptable items include leaves, grass, twigs and yard waste. No stumps, logs or kitchen trash will be accepted. Violators will be prosecuted. Recycling hours are from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays; 8 a.m. to sunset Wednesdays; and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays. The site is closed Sundays.

Game Commission offers advice on avoiding bear conflicts

With fall here, many Pennsylvanians are spending increasing amounts of time outdoors. This also is when black bears become more active, setting the stage for an increase in bear sightings and possibly encounters.

Mark Terner, Pennsylvania Game Commission black bear biologist, noted that bears are now consuming massive quantities of food to prepare for the upcoming denning season, which begins in mid- to late-November. This is when some bears may inadvertently end up in more populated areas as they search for food.

Terner offered suggestions on how to reduce the likelihood that your property will attract bears and how to best react when a bear is encountered.

Terner stressed there are no known records of a Pennsylvania black bear killing a human, and there have been fewer than 15 reported injuries resulting from black bear encounters during the past 25 years in the state. However, recent deaths caused by black bears in New York (2002), New Mexico (2001) and Tennessee (2000) have given the Game Commission reason to be concerned. Pennsylvania's bear population currently is estimated at 15,000 animals. Cases of habituated bears becoming increasingly bold because some Pennsylvanians are failing to keep food away from bears are equally troubling.

"Pennsylvanians need to understand that when bears become habituated to their homes or communities, it can

lead to conflicts and possibly serious injury," Terner said. "Feeding wildlife, whether the activity is intended for birds or deer, can draw bears into an area. Once bears become habituated to an area where they find food, they will continue to return, which is when the bear can become a real problem for homeowners and neighbors."

Terner listed five suggestions that could prevent attracting bears to a property:

Play it smart. Do not feed wildlife. Food placed outside for wildlife, such as corn for squirrels, may attract bears. Reconsider putting squash, pumpkins, corn stalks or other Halloween or holiday decorations outside that also may attract bears. Even bird feeders can become "bear magnets."

Keep it clean. Don't put out garbage until pick-up day; don't throw table scraps out back for animals to eat; don't add fruit or vegetable wastes to your compost pile; and clean your barbecue grill regularly. If you feed pets outdoors, consider placing food dishes inside overnight. Encourage your neighbors to do the same.

Keep your distance. If a bear shows up in your backyard, stay calm. From a safe distance, shout at it like you would to chase an unwanted dog. If the bear won't leave, call the nearest Game Commission regional office or local police department for assistance.

Eliminate temptation. Bears that visit your area are often drawn there. Neighbors need to work together to reduce an area's appeal to bears. Promptly report road-killed deer to ensure their quick removal. Ask area businesses to keep dumpsters closed and bear-proofed (chained or locked shut).

Check please! If your dog is barking, or cat is clawing at the door to get in, try to determine what has alarmed your pet. But do it cautiously, using outside lights to full advantage and from a safe position, such as a porch or an upstairs window. All unrecognizable outside noises and disturbances should be checked, but don't do it on foot with a flashlight. Black bears blend in too well with nighttime surroundings providing the chance for a close encounter.

Pennsylvania's bear population has been increasing for years, and currently is estimated to be near 15,000. Last year, hunters harvested 3,000 bears, and a record high of 443 bears were reported killed on highways.

Terner noted that although bears are no strangers to Pennsylvanians, bears are misunderstood by many.

"Bears should not be feared, nor should they be dismissed as harmless; they simply need to be respected," Terner said. He also advised:

Intelligent and curious, black bears are heavy and have short, powerful legs. Adults usually weigh from 200 to 600 pounds, with rare individuals weighing up to 800 pounds.

Bears may be on the move at anytime, but they're usually most active at night or during evening and morning hours.

More information on black bears is available on the Game Commission's website (www.pgc.state.pa.us) by clicking on "Wildlife," and then selecting "Black Bear in Pennsylvania."

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