RANSOM, IL:

SYSTEM SALE PROVIDES SOLUTION TO DRINKING WATER QUALITY CRISIS

For several years, the Village of Ransom faced a drinking water quality crisis. The two groundwater wells supplying water to the system showed high levels of radium, leading the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue a consent decree, and forcing the Village government to provide bottled water to residents.

Given the small size of the system – just 170 customer connections – the Village had no dedicated water system staff and little ability to raise the capital needed to build proper treatment facilities to remove radium from the drinking water.

Selling the system to Illinois American Water offered a solution. The company invested $2 million to install 10 miles of water main and connect Ransom to its nearby Streator service area. As a result, within the first year of Illinois American ownership, Ransom residents and businesses gained access to safe drinking water in compliance with EPA requirements, satisfying the consent decree and allowing the Village to end its distribution of bottled water.

Despite the initial investments required, Ransom residents saw costs decrease following the acquisition of the system. Thanks to the operational efficiencies gained by connecting to Illinois American's larger service area, customer bills declined by approximately 15%, from $53 to $45 per month for an average user. In addition, as part of the company's Streator operation, the Village now has a staff of water professionals to care for its system now and into the future.

Sources

1. Illinois American Water, "VILLAGE OF RANSOM WATER SYSTEM ACQUISITION" March 2019
2. BusinessWire, "Illinois American Water Acquires Village of Ransom Water System" 26 April 2016 (link)
3. BusinessWire, "Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Approves Village of Ransom's Drinking Water" 3 April 2017 (link)
4. The Times, "Ransom approves water system sale" 15 August 2015