

# News

## Macomb County Board of Commissioners



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### **Board of Commissioners Calls for Regional Collaboration to Keep Drinking Water Safe**

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich. — After hearing an alarming status report on the dwindling funding for Macomb County's drinking water monitoring system, the Board of Commissioners is calling for the county's partners in the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, Detroit River Drinking Water Protection Network to join efforts to ensure that funding for the system continues.

During a special Finance Committee meeting held Monday, commissioners learned that funds for the state-of-the-art, real-time network — which provides early detection of source water contamination from chemical spills and other pollutants for nearly three million people — could be depleted as early as December 2011.

"We've developed a world class system to protect the public from potentially deadly sources of contamination, and we need to do all we can to make sure we keep providing this crucial service," said Finance Committee Chair Don Brown. "It's up to the communities who use the system to come together and figure out how to keep it going, and we need to act soon."

The system, which developed in 2006, has been funded through a combination of sources at the federal, state, local and private levels with a \$3.4 million investment to date. It is currently operating at "bare minimum" at a cost of \$210,000 per year, with no funds for equipment replacement, data analysis, or technical consultants, officials said. It is estimated that a fully operating system would cost between \$500,000 and \$1 million per-year to run. The drinking water from the St. Clair/Detroit corridor is distributed to most of Wayne County (including the City of Detroit), the City of Flint, portions of Washtenaw and Lapeer counties, and Oakland and Macomb counties.

Brown said he will work in conjunction with the Office of the County Executive to call a meeting with leaders from communities served by the network in order to explore a feasible source for future funding.

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