

# Number of storage tanks in Mon watershed unknown

Study will look at aboveground facilities in area

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The Dominion Post

While the recently-passed water-safety law SB 373 deals with all kinds of potential water supply contaminant sources, the Elk River spill called particular attention to one type: Aboveground tanks.

Many, if not most, aboveground tanks were unregulated and not inspected, officials learned. SB 373 will take care of that through registration and mandated inspections of all tanks holding more than 1,320 gallons — excluding those already regulated.

Following the passage of SB 373, the Morgantown Utility Board (MUB) contracted with Downstream Strategies to update and expand its Source Water Protection Plan. That will include incorporating the Department of Environmental Protection's tank inventory with some local



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**Storage tanks at** Central Supply Co. in the Morgantown Industrial Park.

verification through “windshield surveys” and high-resolution aerial photos available online, Downstream’s Evan Hansen said.

At this point, Hansen and MUB General Manager Tim Ball said, they don’t really know how many aboveground tanks are in MUB’s supply watershed — about 1.6 million acres.

Some are obvious and appear in previous MUB re-

ports and plans. The Morgantown Industrial Park has several facilities with aboveground tanks, including the Northeast Natural Energy gas wells and the north and south Addivant chemical plants. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Addivant products include antioxidants, hydrochloric acid and polymer stabilizers.

*The Dominion Post* did its own windshield survey

and found other tanks near MUB’s water supply sources. It also found tanks in the Deckers Creek and Dunkard Creek watersheds — though those tanks don’t affect MUB’s intake; those creeks meet the Monongahela River below MUB’s intake.

Following the windshield survey, *The Dominion Post* contacted the State Emergency Response Commission, which maintains

chemical inventory Tier 2 reports. SERC spokesman Lawrence Messina said about 145 facilities in Monongalia County file Tier 2 reports and list aboveground storage tanks.

According to the EPA, Tier 2 reports are required by the federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986, which was created to help communities plan for emergencies involving hazardous substances. EPCRA requires hazardous chemical emergency planning by federal, state and local governments, Indian tribes, and industry. It also requires industries to report on the storage, use and releases of hazardous chemicals to federal, state and local governments.

Not all of Mon County’s aboveground tank Tier 2 reports will be for sites in the MUB watershed, but all will be inventoried based on SB 373. *The Dominion Post* has filed a Freedom of Information Act request for those reports, which will be the subject of a future story.