

Where does our water come from?

We at the Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority (CCWSA) from time to time get questions from our customers about a variety of water issues. It is our goal to answer these questions in a timely and helpful manner to clear up misinformation and/or unclear topics. Some of the answers we give would be helpful not just to the customer that asked the question, but also to the general public. Periodically we will have articles such as this one to address these topics.

To begin, one of our most asked question is **"Where does our water come from?"**.

The source of our water at CCWSA is the Etowah River, which flows from its source in Dahlonega through Dawson County into the North East portion of Cherokee.

Tributaries (smaller bodies of water such as creeks or streams) flow into the Etowah such as Amicalola Creek, Cochrans Creek, Yellow Creek and many more. After leaving Cherokee County the Etowah continues into Floyd County joining other river systems and continuing into Mobile Bay, AL. Our drought contingency reservoir, the Hollis Q. Lathem Reservoir, located on Yellow Creek supplements water withdrawals from the drinking water plant in times of drought.

The Etowah River Water Treatment plant, located in Ball Ground just along the Etowah River has been in operation since 1986. This plant has the capacity to treat up to 38 MGD (million gallons per day) but on average treats 17 MGD. We provide clean reliable drinking water to more than 180,000 people daily. Our water has been recognized in our district for having the "Best Tasting Tap Water" in 2015, 2016, and 2018. Our plant has been recognized for excellent operation since 2011. In 2014, 2017, and 2019 it was awarded the best operated and managed plant in the state in the 15-50 MGD category.

From our water plant we pump water to water storage tanks (water towers) all over Cherokee County, as well as into the distribution system. These tanks provide additional water to supplement during high demand periods. These high demand times happen when people are using water at the same time, which usually occurs in the morning (6-9 am) and the evenings (5-8 pm). The tanks refill during low demand periods which usually occurs around midnight. From the tanks the water flows to a meter directly outside your home typically close to the road. Once the water has gone through the meter you have purchased it.