

# The Intelligencer

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## Water hookup soaks district

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Public water comes at a price — and a fairly steep one at that.

New Hope-Solebury School District officials learned Friday that it's going to cost them about \$83,000 once the district's three borough schools begin getting water from the Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority.

A fourth school, the lower elementary, is in Solebury, where there is no public water.

"It's quite a shock. It will be quite a shock to our school board," said David Hansel, the district's director of operations, when he was informed by letter of the expense.

This is the first time in the district's history that it will be using public water. In the past, well water supplied the high school, middle school and the upper elementary school.

In 2004, the BCWSA broke ground on installing public water and sewer lines in the small town. The project has inched forward, as flooding and other problems have slowed the pace of installation.

Initially, the district believed it only needed one equivalent dwelling unit, or EDU, as it's referred to in the public utility industry. An EDU measures water use. One EDU is equal to 250 gallons a day, explained Patrick Cleary, a BCWSA spokesman.

But the three schools actually use, on average, about 3,500 gallons of water each day, which means they need 14 EDUs, said Cleary.

Each EDU costs \$7,200. The district will also have to pay about \$4,000 for a meter.

Cleary said the water and sewer authority will give the school district three EDUs for free, as is customary for public institutions. That leaves the district paying for 11, or \$79,200.

Cleary believes the district will be one of the authority's biggest customers in the small riverside borough.

Although the school district could challenge the requirement to connect to the public water system in court, Hansel said it was advised against it.

"We were told we wouldn't win that," he said.

Furthermore, the school's two licensed food-service programs are regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, which requires a connection if one is available.

"We fully intend to do that," Hansel said. "We will be connected by September."

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