

August 2019

For USDA

To Whom it May Concern:

**Feasibility and Detrimental Effects with the Town of Edgewood Condemning and Purchasing The Epcor Water System**

The Epcor Water System is one of two water systems serving the area in and around the Town of Edgewood, Northern Torrance County and Southern Santa Fe County. It is by far the largest water utility and its existence has been the crucial reason these political subdivisions have been able to grow and prosper. Working with the private utility and its flexible policies has made development possible, both inside and outside of the boundaries of the Town of Edgewood.

The fate of the development of southern Santa Fe County properties, northern Torrance County properties and the entire region could be doomed if the Town of Edgewood suddenly controlled who would have access to this water resource. For most of the area, especially east and south of the town boundaries, where some of the most feasible development opportunities lie, there is no other viable source of water.

The Town of Edgewood has not even thought out what their policy would be for supplying these areas, and if they choose to limit supplying areas outside the town limits, then growth in the region would come to a screeching halt and that would destroy the area's future.

Only 40 miles north of Edgewood in the area called Eldorado in northern Santa Fe County, a water district was formed and it condemned the private water system serving that area. It is a disaster. Tap-on fees soared from \$400 to \$12,500 and \$14,000, and the entire area (population around 6,000) has lost its ability to supply reasonably priced housing to its population. Water bills are 3 times as high in areas outside the District boundary where their policies arbitrarily choose to venture, which has shut down most development and destroyed affordable housing.

This will undoubtedly also be the fate of our region. The area in and around Edgewood, NM will cease to grow without an affordable water source. Shallow individual wells are failing in the region due to the effect of agriculture use (95% of our usable water is used by farms many of which are willing to cut their allocations in half to serve community growth.) A private water system such as Epcor which is available to all counties and towns is the key to sustainable growth.

The economic impact of the Town's takeover is discussed in my letter previously sent to our Mayor and Council which I have attached as Exhibit "A" for your information.

Thank you,

Raymond H. Seagers, Real Estate Broker,

Development Consultant, Owner of ReMax Western Heritage, Edgewood, NM