STAMBAUGH TOWNSHIP—After two and a half years, the Stambaugh Township Wellhead Protection committee's water preservation plan is nearly complete.

The program was presented to the public preceding the regular monthly meeting held Monday, July 9.

On hand to educate the public on the wellhead protection plan were Stambaugh Township Trustee and wellhead team member Kevin Isaacson, GEI Consultant's engineers Craig Richardson and Rob Anderson, and Michigan Department of Environmental Qualities Resource Management Division's Chuck Thomas.

__PUBLIC__

The Michigan Wellhead Protection Program assisted Stambaugh Township in protecting the areas surrounding the ground water wells and to prevent contamination in these areas.

The township's wellhead committee, with guidance from GEI., has gone through the steps to ensure its three water systems will remain protected for future generations.

Stambaugh Township water systems include the East Hill System, the Indian Lake System and the Hagerman Lake System.

It maintains 48 miles of water line and pumps nearly 60 million gallons of water per year to 900 water customers.

East Hill's wellhead field consists of 140 acres, two wells and one elevated water storage tank.

The Indian Lake System is 540 acres, holds three wells and one underground pressurized storage tank.

At Hagerman Lake, the wellhead area is 310 acres and has two wells, along with one underground storage tank.

The wellhead fields include an area where water will be drawn from and used within a 10-year period.

The ground water is stored in an aquifer, in a usable and sustainable form, with some water protected by a layer of clay, slowing down infiltration of possible contaminants.

According to Thomas, Stambaugh Township's aquifers are only minimally protected, with the Hagerman Lake site the most vulnerable, with no layer of clay.

First steps in the plan included identifying any past contamination sources, which included abandoned or uncompleted wells left uncapped, which pose a serious risk of groundwater contamination when surface runoff water does not get naturally filtered.

Informing the public of wellhead areas was also an important step in the process, as many are unaware of the potential contamination caused by regular residential use, such as animal waste, pesticides, home-heating fuel, lawn fertilizers, septic systems and a variety of other sources.

The Wellhead Protection Program not only focuses on promoting awareness of the plan, but also restricting or limiting possible harmful acts within the area and the implementation of an emergency procedure if the water supply becomes contaminated.

"This will help us work through and correct the problem in a safe and quick manner," Isaacson told the public.

The group hopes to make the public aware of these areas and to work to prevent polluting the

townships water systems, as contamination clean ups are costly and sometimes impossible.
Signs have been placed throughout the township to let people know that they are entering a protected area and maps of the entire system are available at the Township Hall.
The township received a 50/50 grant from the Michigan DEQ and the federal government's Source Water Protection Revolving Loan Fund.
The plan will be active after the August township meeting when an ordinance update and incorporation into the master plan is complete.
A public hearing regarding the Wellhead ordinance will be held at 6:30 p.m., preceding the next regular meeting set for Wednesday, Aug. 1 at 7.