

Chapter 10

UTILITIES

Utilities consist of those services provided by public and private organizations for consumption by the public at large. The provision, location, and efficiency of utilities are strong determining factors for the quality of life and development for the entire County. Utilities include services such as municipal sewer and water systems whereas privately operated utilities might include canal systems, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications. Individual wells and septic systems are typically owned and maintained by the landowner and are under the jurisdiction of the state.

WATER AND SEWER

- The City of Jerome provides water and sewer services to its citizens as well as to some of the areas within the area of city impact by the Interstate 84 and U.S. Route 93 interchange. The city has also extended water services along Highway 25 east of the city as well as providing water service to portions of the impact area west of the city limits up to the frontage road.
- The city of Hazelton provides sewer and water services to its citizens and also provides services outside the city limits to Valley School.
- The city of Eden provides sewer and water to its citizens, there are no services provided outside the city limits.
- The County does not provide any sewer or water services. Residents of the unincorporated County rely on private wells and septic systems.

Private Well Systems

Prior to drilling a well, the well owner or well driller must first obtain a drilling permit from Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR). Domestic wells do not require other approvals by IDWR before a drilling permit can be approved. Commercial/industrial wells, multi-family, or municipal wells require approved water rights before approvals are issued.

Private Septic Systems

The South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) is the permitting agency for septic systems. A minimum of one acre is typically required for an individual structure that will utilize a well and septic system. Permit applications are evaluated based on soil properties, depths to groundwater and bedrock, proximity to canals, and surface water.



Jerome Water and Sewer District

Jerome County has established a Sewer and Water District that has never been activated to provide sewer and water hookups within the County. Currently, the City of Jerome has sewer lines and water lines that reach outside of the city limits. These sewer and water lines from the City of Jerome are not part of the established Sewer and Water District. Jerome County should re-evaluate the Sewer and Water District to determine if a new district should be activated to include all existing sewer lines and water lines from the City of Jerome. The district was formed to ensure that future development in critical areas would be serviced through a municipal system rather than through individual wells and septic systems. The Sewer and Water District map is located in Appendix B: 10-1.

Jerome County Ground Water Districts

It is IDWR's duty to direct and control the distribution of water from all natural water sources within Idaho. Idaho Code § 42-602. Water districts, through watermasters and under the supervision of IDWR, are responsible for the distribution of water among appropriators. Idaho Code § 42-602. IDWR creates water districts pursuant to Idaho Code § 42-604, and once created, water districts are instrumentalities of the State for the purposes of distributing water among appropriators. As a result, water districts are considered an extension of IDWR.

A water district is the only water-delivery entity specifically authorized and required to administer the delivery of Idaho water from a public water source or water system. The water district delivers and administers water from the public source to individuals who hold valid water rights or to entities that hold valid water rights.

Numerous water-delivery entities are subject to the administration and delivery of water by a water district watermaster. Listed below are common entities that deliver, convey, or provide water to consumers after it has been delivered by a water district watermaster.

- Irrigation districts
- Irrigation companies
- Homeowner associations
- Lateral water user organizations
- Municipalities
- Canal companies



These entities distribute water to patrons or customers through a common conveyance system or systems after the water is diverted from the public water source.

<https://idwr.idaho.gov/water-rights/water-districts/> Excerpt from December 7, 2017, correspondence from Meghan Carter Deputy Attorney General, <https://idwr.idaho.gov/files/districts/20171207-WD-Insurance-Letter.pdf>

The Idaho Department of Water Resources Administrative Areas Basin Map is attached in Appendix B: 10-2.

Canal Systems

Jerome County has three irrigation water delivery entities that provide surface irrigation

water primarily to shareholders for crop irrigation. They are A & B Irrigation District, American Falls Reservoir District #2, and the North Side Canal Company (NSCC). Surface water is utilized on many large and small farms and is crucial to the sustainability of agriculture. Refer to Appendix B: 10-3: Irrigation Delivery Entities Map.

ENERGY AND POWER

Electric Power

Electrical service for Jerome County is provided by Idaho Power distributed through the Midpoint Substation. Some of the power that is produced within Jerome County is generated by water from Milner, Shoshone Falls, and Twin Falls Dams. There are private electrical generating systems that are not owned by Idaho Power that produce electrical power by the way of canal systems within Jerome County.



National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC)

The County is located in the Western geographic region designated by the United States Department of Energy. Under the Energy Policy Act of 2005 the Department of Energy has the authority to create these regions in an effort to speed the creation of more transmission capacity. Jerome County has authorization to regulate, to some degree, the siting of these transmission lines.

Natural Gas

Intermountain Gas Company operates gas fuel distribution lines in more densely populated portions of the County primarily around the City of Jerome. Although limited, there is natural gas service east of U.S. Route 93.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy is energy that is collected from renewable resources, which are naturally replenished on a human timescale--such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves, and geothermal heat. Renewable energy often provides energy in four important areas: electricity generation, air and water heating/cooling, transportation, and rural (off-grid) energy services. Currently renewable energy sources such as geothermal and solar are privately owned for individual use throughout the County. Additionally, hydropower is generated at facilities throughout the County, including Idaho Power Company's hydropower plants on the Snake River and the North Side Canal Company's in-canal small hydropower plants.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications services such as phone, cable, broadband, and fiber optics are provided by various private entities. These lines generally coincide with major electrical transmission lines. The majority of telecommunications facilities are located on various buttes that are located within Jerome County that are managed by private entities and Idaho Department of Lands.