

## **Watauga Water Treatment Plant**

From the early 1900s until the early 1960s, the springs at Unicoi provided the residents of Johnson City with a reliable supply of public drinking water. However, there was a hydraulic limitation to how much water could be produced from the Unicoi Springs. The increasing water demand of the growing city began to force City leaders to look at options to supply the needs of Johnson City residents, businesses, and industries. During the late 1960s, the City of Johnson City initiated the design and construction of a new water treatment plant to tap into a new water source for its growing population. In 1968, construction of the Watauga Water Treatment Plant was completed and the plant was put into service. The plant, located off Dalewood Drive in Johnson City, was initially constructed with a capacity of 8 million gallons per day (MGD). The raw water source for the plant is the Watauga River. The river at this location is a trophy trout stream, with generally excellent water quality. The facility uses coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, chlorination, and fluoridation to produce potable drinking water for the public.

To meet increasing water demand, the Watauga Water Treatment Plant has gone through two expansions since its original construction. It was upgraded to a 16 MGD plant in 1981. The most recent expansion, which took place from 1996-2003, upgraded the facility to a 24 MGD plant complete with improved water treatment technologies, a new raw water intake, a new high service pumping facility, and a fully automated Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System. The combined capacity of both the Watauga Water Treatment Plant and the Unicoi Springs Water Treatment Plant gives the City a total capacity of 28 MGD to meet the water needs of the community.

The City of Johnson City takes pride in the fact that the Watauga Water Treatment Plant has consistently produced safe drinking water that meets or exceeds the stringent federal and state regulations associated with producing drinking water for the public. It is the goal of the Johnson City Water and Sewer Services Department to utilize proper operational procedures of treatment, storage, and distribution of drinking water to provide a safe, reliable, and sustainable source of water for the citizens we serve.