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Water plan blasted

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A contingent of Union County residents, many of them from western parts of the county, blasted county commissioners Monday for a water allocation plan they say unfairly favors new development.

The policy, inked by county staff, distributes Union County's strained water capacity among new and existing projects, favoring those that already have a water permit or top priority in the county's sewer plans.

"Consultants spent of their time trying to appease developers and squeeze more water out of a system that's already overburdened," said Paul Westlake, of Waxhaw.

Westlake said he thinks locals "have been misled" about the county's water supply by county officials, adding the policy looks like a "really rough draft."

Union County is divvying up its 20 million gallons of water per day. Commissioners didn't vote on the plan Monday.

Many who spoke said the board should turn from new development and focus on current residents, some of whom are chafing under one-day-a-week irrigation restrictions.

"It is morally wrong to give the water to people who don't even live here yet," said Werner Thomisser, of Weddington. "You have to give water to the people who live here first."

The county gets 90 percent of its water, or 18 million gallons per day, from the Catawba River treatment plant, with an additional 2 million gallons flowing from Anson County.

The county is contracted to use 4 million gallons from Anson County, but Union County infrastructure isn't up to the task yet, although expansion is impending, according to County Manager Al Greene.

Board of Commissioners Chairman Allan Baucom said he hopes to eventually pump 6 million gallons per day out of Anson, although the water allocation policy must address current capacity issues.

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