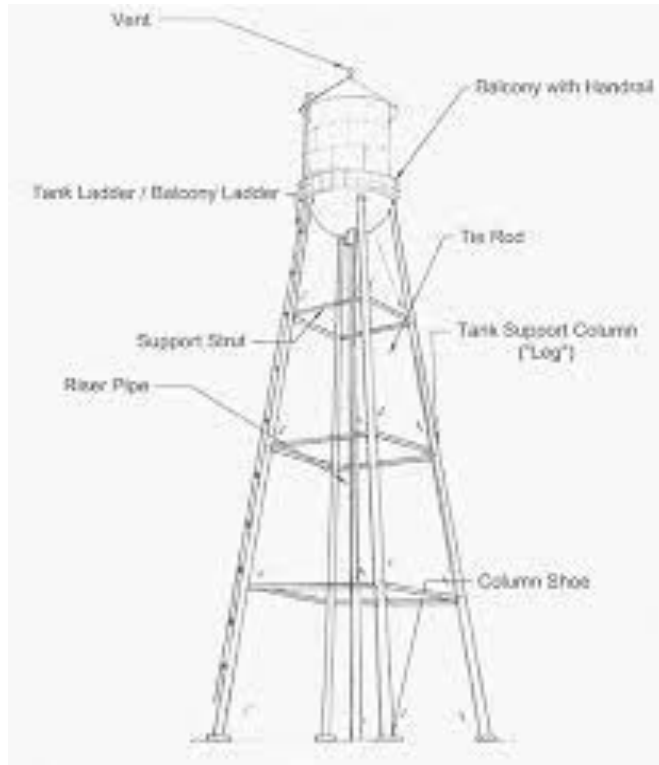


City of Hedrick, Iowa
Historic Water Tower
1913/1914 - 2025



Community Events Involving the Water Tower

July 1919—The first meeting of the Arendt-Bowlin-Stubbs Post Number 83 of the American Legion was held on the green grass under the Hedrick water tower.

1924— The general science class visited the water tower and wells to learn about the water works system.

You can view the Architectural/ Historical Intensive Survey and Evaluation June 2022 at the Hedrick Public Library or City Hall. You can also view or print the Architectural/Historic Intensive Survey and Evaluation June 2022 on the city's website www.hedrickiowa.com.

You can also research some of the events mentioned in the archives of the Hedrick Journal. These can be found at www.hedrick.lib.ia.us



Water Tower History

The City of Hedrick, Iowa created and installed a water works system between 1913—1914. At the time the water mains did not reach the entire town, so those on the outskirts of town would have to wait for additional main lines to be installed. They did extend the mains to the High School around 1915. The original water plant was going to cost around \$15,000 at the time.

During a council meeting on September 16, 1913 the bid for the contract to build the water works system was awarded to The Des Moines Bridge and Iron Company for \$14,191.00 was accepted. The funds for this were to be raised by bonding the town. There would be additional costs and the bonds were approved for \$16,000.00.

The water tower underwent many repairs during its operation. And issues with the wells were not uncommon. A new well was put in in 1940 replacing the Spring Street well. The following year a softener was put in place. By 1942 Hedrick was experiencing a water shortage and began looking at building a deeper well approximately 2000 feet. By this time the town was running on the Spring Street well and two others, still unable to keep up with demand. Shortly after reopening the Spring Street well for usage to keep up with demand, the tests taken determined the well to be bacterially unsatisfactory and possibly contaminated by sewage. These are all reasons a deeper well was being considered at the time. The issue of bonding for a deeper well to exceed the cost of \$20,000 dollars was put up for special election on June 23, 1942. 164 votes were cast at this elect: 89 in favor and 75 against. At the time though 60% was needed in favor, which would have been 99 votes. So this measure was not passed and no bonds were to be issued.

In August of 1947 another special election was held for

Issuing bonds in the amount \$27,500 for new well to be dug. This time there were 292 votes cast with 210 being in favor of the bonds for the new well.

On September 10, 1947 a state of emergency was declared pertaining to the city water supply in Hedrick and council accepted a proposal from Layn Western Well Co. to dig a new well. In the mean time the City made arrangements to have water brought in, approximately 18,000 gallons every other day by train. The City of Ottumwa supplied the water.

In April 1948 another leak was discovered and it was found that the frost case needed to be replaced. As this was being repaired it was found that almost every section of the riser pipe was split and the cause of the leak. It would cost approximately \$1100 to repair.

In January 1958 it was discovered that the water tower was leaking and the bottom of the tower would need to be replaced. It was unknown at the time how long this would be, so the town did make attempts to seal the bottom of the tank and slow or stop the leak until the work could be done. It appears to have taken 10 years for these repairs to finally take place and the bowl was repaired in July of 1968. This would not be the only problem with the bowl of the tank, as another split was repaired in 1972.

By July 1973 there was a notice for another special election to be held on July 13, 1973 to issue bonds for water main and tank repair not to exceed \$18,000. The town was already struggling to keep the water fund in the positive. These bonds were passed with a 67 in favor and 15 against vote. Work began in December 1973 and carried into May of 1974.

In October 1976 council accepted a bid from Herb Bonin of Water Tower Paint and Repair Co. for \$6,990 for a new roof on the tower.

In 1977 Hedrick would experience another water shortage when the casing of the well dug in 1948 deteriorated and blocked the flow of water. Once again water had to be hauled in from Ottumwa. This time by tanker trucks. Drilling would begin on the new well in October 1977, but problems were still delaying the use of this well in December of 1977. They fought broken pumps and a leak that drained the water tower amongst others. During this time Loren Johnson trucking, which was hauling water to Hedrick, had to worry about inclement weather. The last load of water was hauled into Hedrick on December 11, 1977. A total of 41,288 miles was traveled and 1,588 loads of water or 12,040,750 gallons were hauled to Hedrick from Ottumwa during this time.

There would continue to be minor repairs and repainting done to the tower for the years to come.

In 2020 it was determined the repairs needed to be done to the tower, but in talking to experts it was found that the cost of the repairs would be in the 100s of thousands of dollars and that realistically the existing tower did not meet the water demand of the town and fire flow needs. At the time the City was renting space from Wapello Rural Water in their tank located south of town. This was not a guaranteed solution as they may need the space at some point. The city council decided it would be more beneficial and a better use of funds to build a tower that would meet the needs of the town. The city was granted a CDBG grant for \$500,000 to help with this project, the remaining cost would be covered by a SRF Loan to be paid with the water revenues. Work began in 2024 and was completed in 2025 on the new tower. The original tower was dismantled and the site cleared.

The information within was found in original City of Hedrick council minutes and Hedrick Journal Archives.