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# Sanitary district is moving too fast

The Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District wants to sell water to Cronus Chemical, if Cronus builds a new fertilizer plant in Douglas County.

The sale of water by the district is a new and serious consideration with long-term implications for the Champaign-Urbana community.

On behalf of the Prairie Rivers Network, it's our opinion that district trustees are not giving due consideration to the long-term consequences.

The district's newly drafted policy reads as if it has been hastily drawn to facilitate a quick sale.

We invite board trustees Diana Lenik, Jerry Lyke and Jennifer Putman to use the invitation from Cronus as an opportunity to develop a policy for the future, rather than feel compelled to act quickly, according to a timeline set by Cronus.

We need a policy that helps protect our water supply and promotes the health of local, cherished streams like the Salt Fork. Comments given at the district's May 8 public meeting (attended by 80 concerned citizens) demonstrated overwhelming interest in protecting these streams and in planning for the future.

It appears that the district has put the proverbial cart before the horse. Staff is negotiating contract terms with Cronus before we know what the environmental impact will be and before a final water policy is in place. A sound water use policy should establish a formal procedure regarding how water sale proposals will be evaluated by staff and the board and vetted to the public.

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