

Japanese small water supply facility and depopulation

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The population decline in Japan is expected to change the function of its local small water supplies. Those water supplies would no longer be able to independently maintain their public function such as services that have formerly taken for granted. The population is decreasing in 40 prefectures among all 47 in 2018. Only seven prefectures are increasing populations. In the depopulated area, shortage of human resources and lack of financial sources are a situation without waiting, and without the aid of the national government, the future will be challenging to maintain the small village any longer. The youth was leaving their hometown, and the old residents take care of its local small water supply's utilities. What kind of immediate action can be taken becomes a bottleneck. The progress of depopulation is inevitable, and many of the problems that are occurring in rural areas are the area where community power is gone.

Not more than 100 population served by piped water is not governed by Water Law. National Water Law does not have a broader application range for small water supplies. It is difficult to extend an application range, that considered in a limited way. Rural residents who live in the region unrul by Water Law, they operate and maintain drinking water by themselves to live.

The Waterworks Law was newly revised to show measures to compensate for the limitations of the water supply projects and strengthen them. Usually, the ordinance still plays a role to compensate for deficiencies in the law. Regarding the management of small-scale water supply, the management situation for each area is also different, so detailed arrangements are in place according to the ordinance. It is very common to enact a local law supplementary against an opaque legal system on the national level. For example, there is no law so-called Groundwater Law, and many local municipalities make an original ordinance supplementary to manage local groundwater resources as the common property. Enacting an ordinance can be said to be the law to complement loopholes of Water Law.

In this research, we conducted interviews and literature surveys on the small scale water supply present problem and situation, and also, we explore the new future image of Japan's small scale water supply project after the revision law enforcement exploratory. As a result, the current small water supply facility situation is not enough to make complementary or alternative solutions to support rural water supply issues. We still need to discuss how to promote the new revision concept in practice.

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