Why a New Elevated Water Tower Is Needed for Blair and the NRD

Water towers are a critical part of how safe, reliable drinking water is delivered to homes, farms, and businesses. The proposed elevated water tower near Blair is needed to ensure that both the City of Blair and the surrounding rural water customers continue to receive adequate water pressure, sufficient supply during peak demand, and reliable service during emergencies.

1. Meeting Today's Water Demand—and Tomorrow's Growth

Water use in Blair and the surrounding rural areas has increased significantly in recent years. This is due to community growth, new rural connections, and higher water use during summer months, especially from lawn irrigation systems. During peak times, the existing water system is operating near its limits. A new elevated water tower provides additional storage so water can be pumped and stored during low-use periods and then supplied during high-use times without overloading pumps or pipelines.

2. Consistent Water Pressure for Homes and Farms

An elevated water tower uses gravity to maintain steady water pressure. Without enough elevated storage, pressure can drop during high demand, causing low water flow, especially in higher-elevation areas. The proposed tower would sit at an elevation similar to the existing tower south of Blair, allowing both towers to work together to keep water pressure stable across the city and rural service areas.

3. Improved Fire Protection

Firefighting requires large volumes of water delivered quickly and at sufficient pressure. The existing system does not have enough elevated storage to reliably meet fire flow needs in all areas, particularly as the system continues to grow. The new water tower provides a dedicated reserve of water that can be immediately available during a fire, improving public safety for residents in Blair, Fort Calhoun, and nearby rural areas.

4. Greater Reliability During Power Outages or Equipment Maintenance

Water towers store water above ground, which means service can continue even if pumps temporarily shut down due to power outages, mechanical issues, or maintenance. This added redundancy makes the system more resilient and reduces the risk of service interruptions during extreme weather or emergency situations.

5. Supporting Rural Water Service Expansion

The NRD has received many requests for new rural water connections north and east of Blair. Without additional elevated storage, expanding rural service would strain the existing system and

reduce reliability for current users. The new tower makes it possible to serve new customers while protecting service levels for those already connected.

6. A More Efficient, Cost-Effective System

By allowing pumps to operate during off-peak hours and reducing stress on existing facilities, the water tower helps extend the life of pumps and pipelines. This reduces long-term maintenance costs and helps avoid more expensive emergency repairs in the future.

In Summary

The proposed elevated water tower is not just about growth—it is about **protecting water service today and ensuring reliability for decades to come**. It provides stable pressure, emergency storage, improved fire protection, and the capacity needed to serve both city and rural residents safely and efficiently.