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## *Rural Water Treatment Facilities Provide Clean Water to Residents in Al Anbar*

By Norris Jones  
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**FALLUJAH, Iraq** – Families in a number of rural communities in Iraq's Al Anbar Province are enjoying filtered drinking water for the first time ever.

Master Sgt. Kevin Mayer, Gulf Region Central district, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is overseeing the construction of 22 water treatment facilities along the Euphrates River Valley near Fallujah. Four have been completed and Mayer inspected the 200 cubic meter per hour facility at Shuhada Aug. 21 which now is producing enough water for over 10,000 residents in that area.

Mayer met with the operator, Omar, and the individual who donated the land for the site, Mohammad. Both expressed their community's thanks.

"We hosted a Grand Opening and area families brought food for a feast to celebrate. Our only choice before the facility was to take raw water from the canal, posing serious health risks for our families. This will safeguard our children and grandchildren. Our residents sincerely appreciate the investment made here," Omar said.

"I'm proud to have been able to give up a piece of my land for this project and happy the way it turned out," Mohammad said. "This is an important improvement for everyone living here – we all benefit."



The Shuhada Water Treatment Plant, located in a rural area west of Fallujah, became fully operational in August 2007 and is producing enough drinking water to support the 10,000 residents in that area. (USACE Army photo)

Mayer complimented Mohammad on his unselfish decision to donate the land to help his community. "Stepping up and doing this clearly defines what kind of person you are," he said.

Mayer is helping construct rural water treatment facilities in communities ranging in size from 2,500 to 10,000 residents. "This was the kind of work I was hoping to be involved with, improving the lives of Iraqi families," he added. Mayer is a member of the North Dakota National Guard's 34th Infantry Division and began his one-year deployment in April.

In his civilian career, he has served a public works supervisor for 16 years in Casselton, North Dakota, a town of 2,200

residents. He is in charge of the city's water and sewer system, road work, park repairs, and trash/garbage pickup. "There's something very satisfying in helping others."

Mayer appreciates the unwavering support from his family and the entire city of Cassleton. "My wife Fran and my two daughters, Brittany and Brooke, are proud of what I am doing to help rebuild Iraq."



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**Editor's Note:** Norris Jones is a Public Affairs Specialist with the Gulf Region Central district, Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact the public affairs office at 540-665-1233, by email [CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil](mailto:CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil), or visit [www.grd.usace.army.mil](http://www.grd.usace.army.mil).