

BALLINGER WATER WORKS
Ballinger
Runnels County
Texas

HAER TX-128
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

BALLINGER WATER WORKS

HAER No. TX-128

- Location:** Ballinger, Runnels County, Texas
- Date of Construction:** ca. 1893
- Original Use:** Municipal water supply
- Current Owner, Use:** City of Ballinger, Texas; used in operation of city swimming pool
- Significance:** The Ballinger Water Works was one of the earliest systems constructed in the area that remains intact today.
- Description:** The water works consisted of a masonry dam on Elm Creek, a treatment plant, and distribution system. The treatment plant was constructed near the bank of Elm Creek. A large masonry pump house was built of cut limestone blocks at this location, and it remains sound today. Adjoining the pump house is an aerator and small basin for adding chemicals. This treatment may have been necessary due to the high iron content of water from Elm Creek. Flocculation and sedimentation were accomplished in larger basins also of masonry construction. These basins have been in use until recent years as storage for re-circulated water from the city pool located nearby.
- History:** As early as 1890, there was agitation in Ballinger for the construction of a municipal water system. By 1893, at least part of this system was finished with, among other things, a steel standpipe.
- The original Ballinger Water Works secured its water from a reservoir on Elm Creek about ¼ mile from the center of the distribution system. Water was pumped from the reservoir, through a purification system, directly into the mains and a steel standpipe for gravity distribution. The now abandoned pumping plant building is understood to have been built about 1904-1905 and to have had alterations in 1914 and 1929. The present supply comes from both the original reservoir and one built about 1947. At this time, a new purification and pumping system were installed.

Sources:

Baker, M.N., ed. *The Manual of American Water-Works*. New York: Engineering News Publishing Company, 1890.

The McGraw Water Works Directory 1915. New York: McGraw Publishing Company, Inc., 1915.

Poe, Charlsie. *Runnels Is My County*. San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1970.

Historians: Steve Rae and T. Lindsay Baker, October 8 and 22, 1971

Project

Information: The Ballinger Water Works was inventoried for the Historic American Engineering Record as part of the Southwest Water Resources Project, a joint project with the Texas Tech Water Resources Center. The survey was subsequently published as *Water for the Southwest: Historical Survey and Guide to Historic Sites* by the American Society of Civil Engineers in September 1973.