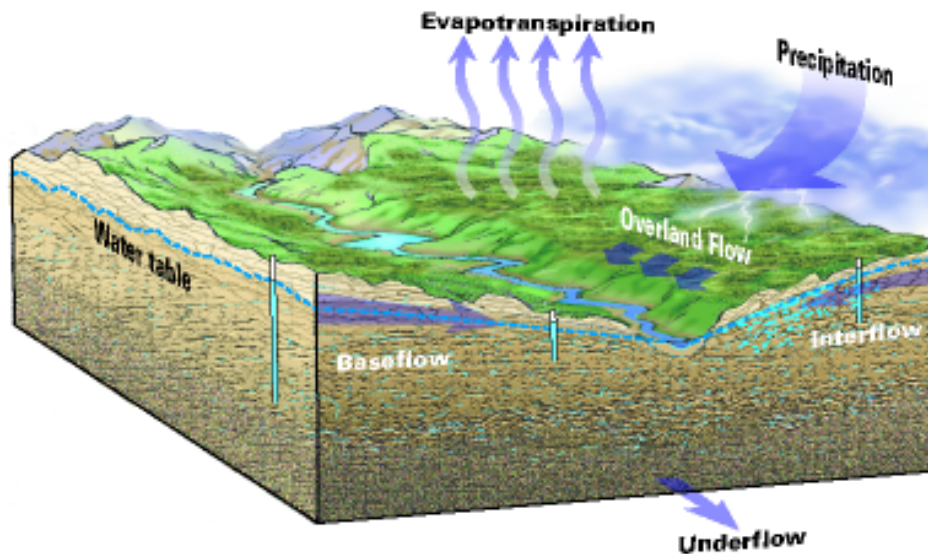


A Minnesota
**Ground
Water**
Directory



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

State Agencies with Ground-Water Responsibilities (by Common Acronym)

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

One West Water Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55107
(651) 296-3767
toll-free/TTY (800) 627-3529
www.bwsr.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Waters Division
500 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155
(651) 296-4800
toll-free/TTY (800) 657-3929
www.dnr.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Public Safety, State Duty Officer (DPS)

(651) 649-5451
toll-free (800) 422-0798
www.dps.state.mn.us

Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB)

Water Resources Committee
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155
(651) 297-1257
toll-free/TTY (800) 627-3529
www.mnplan.state.mn.us/eqb/water

Minnesota Land Management Information Center (LMIC)

658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155
(651) 297-4986
toll-free/TTY (800) 627-3529
www.lmic.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)

90 West Plato Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55107
(651) 297-2200
toll-free/TTY (800) 627-3529
www.mda.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

Environmental Health Division
121 East Seventh Place
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
(651) 215-0700
TTY (651) 215-0707
www.health.state.mn.us

Minnesota Geological Survey (MGS)

2642 University Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55114
(612) 627-4780
www.geo.umn.edu/mgs/

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)

520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155
(651) 296-6300
toll-free/TTY (800) 657-3864
www.pca.state.mn.us

Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA)

520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155
(651) 215-0232
www.moea.state.mn.us

See inside back cover for office locations in Greater Minnesota.

Cover illustration courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey.

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MINNESOTA Ground Water

Ground water is one of Minnesota's most precious resources. Like clouds, rain, lakes and streams, ground water is a part of the hydrologic cycle that sustains life by circulating water above, below and through all living things.

We are familiar with rain, streams and lakes because we see them regularly. But when water from these sources moves downward through soil, sediments or openings in rock, it enters a subsurface realm that is hidden from our view. If it travels deep enough, it becomes part of our valuable ground-water system.

Most ground water is always on the move, slowly flowing through openings in subsurface materials like the small pores between sand grains or cracks in rock.

Normally, Minnesota ground water flows into (and replenishes) streams, lakes or wetlands. Only a very small percentage of ground water exits as discrete natural springs. Ground water also plays a major role in sustaining our lakes and streams, especially in times of sparse precipitation.

What are you drinking?

More than 70 percent of Minnesotans use ground water for their drinking water and household water supply. In Minnesota, ground water is more geographically available and naturally more pure than lakes or streams. Ground water also is tapped for irrigation and for industrial and commercial purposes.

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Think locally!

Although this directory focuses on services available from state agencies, start locally for information on ground water. Your county water-plan coordinator or environmental office may have information on local ground-water issues. Consult your local telephone directory or county Web page for knowledgeable local contacts.

By installing a well down to an appropriate depth, we can usually pump ground water into the well and through water supply pipelines to meet these needs. Even where no lakes or streams exist, adequate ground-water supplies often are available for our use and benefit.

Minnesotans' health, quality of life and economic stability rely upon a clean dependable supply of ground water for our cities and rural communities. But since ground water is normally out of sight, it is easy to forget how valuable and vulnerable a resource it is.

Is our ground water safe?

Ground water can be harmed or depleted if it is not carefully monitored, managed and protected. In Minnesota, we have worked long and hard to clean up ground-water contamination caused by human activities. Despite these efforts, elevated concentrations of contaminants such as nitrate from widespread land-use activities are still common in Minnesota ground water.

Cleaning up ground water is difficult and expensive. Experience shows that it is less expensive to protect ground water from contamination than to remove contaminants after the fact. Similarly, it makes good sense to protect our supply of ground water from overuse to avoid serious shortages. To ensure an adequate supply for the future, we need to assess

and manage the amount of ground water used in areas where ground-water withdrawals might exceed the rate of replenishment. The state is already experiencing ground-water shortages in some local areas, evidenced by wells running dry.

For all of these reasons, it is important to protect our supply of good-quality ground water now and into the future.

Who protects Minnesota's ground water?

The management and protection of Minnesota's ground water is a challenging, complex task. Because of the wide range of environmental and health-based laws that apply to ground water, the wide array of expertise needed to protect and manage it, and other practical considerations, a variety of local, state and federal organizations are charged with specific ground-water-related responsibilities.

Some responsibilities are unique to one agency or organization. Some necessarily are shared. This directory outlines the ground-water-related responsibilities and services of state organizations and lists contact information. The focus of this directory is on Minnesota state agencies. General information about local and federal organizations also is included, however, and users are encouraged to check for assistance first with local organizations in most counties.

Quick Guide to Ground Water: Who Does What?

BWSR - Board of Water and Soil Resources
DNR - Department of Natural Resources
DPS - Department of Public Safety
EQB - Environmental Quality Board
LMIC - Land Management Information Center

MDA - Minnesota Department of Agriculture
MDH - Minnesota Department of Health
MGS - Minnesota Geological Survey
MPCA - Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
OEA - Office of Environmental Assistance

Check for assistance first with local organizations in most counties.

Key Agencies listed in **bold type** have lead or primary responsibility on the topic or issue.
 Agencies listed in regular type may get involved or have information.

Ground-Water Service or Issue	Organization
Data Collection and Analysis	
Ground-Water Levels, Water Use (Quantity) and Sustainable Use	DNR , MGS, EQB, OEA
Quality of Ground Water	MPCA , MDA , MDH
Geology, Ground-Water Mapping, Modeling	DNR , MGS
Statewide Ground-Water Data Sets	LMIC, MPCA, MGS, DNR, MDH
Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Data	LMIC , DNR, MGS
Note: The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) works closely with state agencies in the above work areas.	
Well Installation, Sealing and Permits	
Installing Wells	MDH , DNR, MDA
Unused (Abandoned) Wells	MDH , DNR, BWSR, MGS
Well Disclosure during a Property Transaction	MDH
Identifying Well Owners	MDH , MGS
Drinking Water Protection and Testing	
Testing and Inspecting Public Water Supplies	MDH
Testing Private (Household) Wells	MDH
Protecting Public Water Supplies	MDH , DNR, MGS, MPCA
Health Effects of Contaminants in Drinking Water	MDH
Ground-Water Contamination and Cleanup	
Spills or Emergencies -- Report to the State Duty Officer	DPS (651) 649-5451, Toll-free (800) 422-0798
Agricultural Chemicals	MDA
Nonagricultural Chemicals	MPCA
Ground-Water Policy and Priorities	
Coordinating Ground-water Policy and Priorities among Agencies	EQB
Ground-Water Education	
Educational Programs or Materials	DNR, MPCA, MDA, MDH, BWSR, MGS, OEA

Ground-Water: Who Does What? Listed by Topic

This section provides details about which state agencies offer services to address specific ground-water issues. However, it is only a summary. Use the contacts or Web addresses in this directory to find out more. And always check your local organizations first in most counties.

Data Collection and Analysis

Ground-Water Levels, Water Use (Quantity) and Sustainable Use

Water Levels and Water Use

- The **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** (DNR) tracks ground-water use and ground-water levels. It also analyzes related trends, such as how climate and water use affect the quantity of available ground water. In some cases, the DNR oversees aquifer tests to determine whether pumping a new or existing well affects water levels in nearby wells.
DNR: (651) 296-4800
- The **Minnesota Geological Survey** (MGS) maintains the County Well Index database which has water-level data from more than 300,000 wells statewide and the ability to select data by aquifer, location, and other parameters. **MGS: (612) 627-4780**

Sustainable Use

- The **Metropolitan Council** (Met Council) is responsible for planning for the regional water supply for the seven-county metropolitan region. As a part of this responsibility, the Council periodically updates data and information on water supply and demand and prepares water use projections for the metropolitan area. **Met Council: (651) 602-1066**
- The **Office of Environmental Assistance** (OEA) works with sustainable development issues. **OEA: (651) 215-0193, toll-free (800) 657-3843**
- The **Environmental Quality Board** (EQB) has developed a planning guide for local comprehensive planning and sustainable development that shows how water issues should fit into the bigger picture of land use and other local government issues. **EQB: (651) 296-2603**

Quality of Ground Water

You can often find out about the quality of ground water in your area from your **county water-plan coordinator**.

- The **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency** (MPCA) and the **Minnesota Department of Agriculture** (MDA) sample wells on a statewide or regional basis. The MDA samples for chemicals originating from pesticides and commercial fertilizers. The MPCA samples for nonagricultural chemicals, such as various solvents and metals. The MPCA also is responsible for sampling related to feedlots, manure storage facilities and agricultural industry sewage and treatment lagoons. **MDA: (651) 297-3994, MPCA: (651) 296-8580 or (651) 296-8582.**

Geology, Ground-Water Mapping and Modeling

- Working with county staff, the **Minnesota Geological Survey** (MGS) and the **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** (DNR) study underground conditions in selected county and multi-county areas. The study results include maps and information on ground-water depth and flow direction, and areas that are sensitive to contamination. For more information, contact your county water-plan coordinator or **MGS: (612) 627-4780, DNR: (651) 296-4800**
- One example of how these maps and information are used is the Metropolitan Area Ground-water Model (Metro Model). The Metro Model is used as a water-use prediction and management tool by the **Metropolitan Council** (Met Council). The Metro Model is now maintained by the Met Council. **Met Council: (651) 602-1066**

Statewide Ground-Water Data Sets

Several agencies have collected ground-water data from extensive areas around Minnesota. Some data sets that include fairly representative coverage of the entire state are listed below.

- The **Land Management Information Center** (LMIC) stores and provides access to ground water data from several state agencies. **LMIC: (651) 297-4986**
- The **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency** (MPCA) has extensive ground-water quality data from a 1992 - 1996 statewide monitoring project that included 954 wells. **MPCA: (651) 297-5219**
- The **Minnesota Geological Survey** (MGS) County Well Index database includes information for more than 300,000 wells statewide. **MGS: (612) 627-4789**
- The **Minnesota Department of Health** (MDH) has water-quality information for approximately 16,000 public water supply wells. **MDH: (651) 215-0806**
- The **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** (DNR) has ground-water level information for approximately 1,500 observation wells. **DNR: (651) 296-4800**

Well Installation, Sealing and Permits

Installing Wells

The **Minnesota Department of Health** (MDH) administers standards for well construction, and it licenses well-drilling contractors. When installing a new well, use a licensed well contractor and notify the MDH. Some city and county health departments oversee well installation for MDH. For information, check with your county or city health department, or **MDH: (651) 215-0811**.

If you are installing a well, be aware of the following requirements and restrictions:

- If the new well will pump large amounts of water (more than 10,000 gallons a day or more than one million gallons a year), you will need a water-use permit from the **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** (DNR). **DNR: (651) 296-4800**

- If the new well will be used for a dairy, or food processing or chemigation (irrigation with pesticides or fertilizers), you will need approval from the **Minnesota Department of Agriculture** (MDA). **MDA: (651) 297-2200**
- In some areas, the **Minnesota Department of Health** (MDH) designates Special Well Construction Areas where installation of new wells is restricted or requires special well construction due to ground-water contamination. **MDH: (651) 215-0811**
- The **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's** (MPCA) Closed Landfill Program requires land-management plans that may restrict new well installation within the landfill's permitted boundaries. **MPCA: (651) 297-1780**

Unused (Abandoned) Wells

If you have an unused well, you must either return the well to service, permanently seal the well using a licensed contractor, or obtain a maintenance permit. For information, call your city or county health department, or the **Minnesota Department of Health** (MDH). **MDH: (651) 215-0811**

- In some areas of Minnesota, cost-share programs for sealing unused wells may be available. Check with your **county water-plan coordinator** or the **Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources** (BWSR). **BWSR: (651) 296-3767**.
- The County Well Index database at the **Minnesota Geological Survey** (MGS) is often used to check for records of unused wells before property transfers are made. **MGS: (612) 627-4780**
- The **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** (DNR) coordinates sealing unused wells on state-owned lands. **DNR: (651) 296-0427**

Well Disclosure during a Property Transaction

When you sell property, you're required to report to the buyer and the **Minnesota Department of Health** (MDH) the location of all wells and information on whether the wells are in use, not in use, or sealed. A well disclosure certificate must be filed with the County Recorder when recording the deed. **MDH: (651) 215-0811**

Identifying Well Owners

- If you need to find the owner of a well, first look to see if the well is labeled with a unique well number (a six-digit number) to help identify the well. Then, contact the **Minnesota Department of Health** (MDH). **MDH: (651) 215-0811**
- The **Minnesota Geological Survey** (MGS) may also be helpful in finding well ownership information. **MGS: (612) 627-4780**
- If the well is labeled with a DNR observation well number, contact the **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** (DNR). **DNR: (651) 296-4800**.

Drinking Water Protection and Testing

Testing and Inspecting Public Water Supplies

The [Minnesota Department of Health](#) (MDH) checks public water supplies regularly to ensure their safety. Water sampling results are compared to applicable water-quality standards to protect the public. For more information, contact your local water utility or [MDH: \(651\) 215-0770](#).

Testing Private (Household) Wells

Private well owners should test their wells for bacteria and nitrate when it is installed and at least once a year for bacteria and at least once every two years for nitrate, using a certified laboratory. Contact your local health department for information on certified laboratories in your area.

- The [Minnesota Department of Health](#) (MDH) or your local health department can help you in deciding whether tests for other chemicals are needed. Contact your city or county health department, or [MDH: \(651\) 215-0811](#)
- Information also is available from the [Minnesota Department of Agriculture's](#) (MDA) Nitrate Water Testing Program. [MDA: \(651\) 297-3491](#)

Protecting Public Water Supplies

Wellhead Protection Areas

- The [Minnesota Department of Health](#) (MDH) works with public water suppliers to develop and implement wellhead-protection plans to prevent contamination of water supplies. The term 'source-water protection,' which includes surface-water source protection, also is used for this activity. [MDH: \(651\) 215-0800](#)
- The [Minnesota Geological Survey](#) (MGS) provides geologic mapping to delineate wellhead protection areas. [MGS: \(651\) 627-4780](#)

Emergency and Contingency Planning for Public Water Supplies

Public water suppliers are required to have contingency plans for water shortages or other emergencies that may affect a water supply.

- The [Metropolitan Council](#) reviews conservation and emergency plans in the metropolitan area. [Met Council: \(651\) 602-1066](#)
- Contact the [Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#) (DNR) regarding contingency plans needed for approval of ground-water appropriation permits for large water users. [DNR: \(651\) 296-4800](#)

Health Effects of Contaminants in Drinking Water

If testing shows that your drinking water contains nitrates or other contaminants, consult your [local health department](#) or the [Minnesota Department of Health](#) (MDH) about the test results. The MDH evaluates the health effects of contaminants in drinking water and sets levels at which water is safe to drink. [MDH: \(651\) 215-0800](#)

- **Health Risk Limits for Drinking Water**, [MDH: \(651\) 215-0880](#)
- **Safety of Public Water Supplies**, [MDH: \(651\) 215-0770](#)
- **Private Wells**, [MDH: \(651\) 215-0811](#)
- **Drinking Water Treatment Devices**: Your local health department and the [Minnesota Department of Health](#) (MDH) can provide advice on when water-treatment devices are needed and the type of device needed for a particular contamination problem. [MDH: \(651\) 215-0811](#)
- **Bottled-water Testing**: The [Minnesota Department of Agriculture](#) (MDA) requires periodic testing of water at bottling plants to ensure the water's quality. [MDA: \(651\) 297-2200](#)

Contamination and Cleanup

Reporting Spills

All spills of hazardous substances, both agricultural and nonagricultural, must be reported to the [State Duty Officer](#) at the [Minnesota Department of Public Safety](#) (DPS). [State Duty Officer: \(651\) 649-5451, or toll-free \(800\) 422-0798](#)

Agricultural

- The [Minnesota Department of Agriculture](#) (MDA) oversees the cleanup of contamination resulting from pesticide and commercial fertilizer spills, leaks or accidents. [MDA: \(651\) 297-7286](#)
- The [Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#) (MPCA) is responsible for feedlots and manure-storage facilities. [MPCA: \(651\) 296-8440](#)

Nonagricultural

The [Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#) (MPCA) oversees the investigation and cleanup of contamination originating from nonagricultural sources, such as chemical spills, leaks and waste disposal, including hazardous waste.

- **Spills**: cleanup of spills. [MPCA: \(651\) 297-8610](#)
- **Tank Leaks**: Remediation of leaks from storage tanks. [MPCA: \(651\) 297-8577](#)
- **Voluntary Petroleum Investigation and Cleanup** (VPIC): working with voluntary parties to investigate and, if necessary, clean up property potentially contaminated with petroleum products and provide liability assurances to promote property re-use. [MPCA: \(651\) 296-7999](#)

- **Closed Municipal Solid Waste Landfills:** monitoring and cleanup of contamination resulting from closed municipal solid waste landfills. **MPCA: (651) 297-1780, (651) 296-8454**
- **Open Solid Waste Landfills:** Monitoring landfills still receiving waste. **MPCA: (651) 296-7927**
- **Superfund:** cleanup of contamination from improper disposal or spills of hazardous materials, pollutants or contaminants that pose a threat or potential threat to public health or the environment. **MPCA: (651) 297-8609 or (651) 297-8380**
- **Voluntary Investigation and Cleanup Program (VIC):** working with voluntary parties to investigate and, if necessary, clean up potentially contaminated property and provide liability assurances to promote property reuse. **MPCA: (651) 296-7212**
- **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Corrective Action:** working with existing facilities to investigate and clean up past contamination. **MPCA: (651) 297-8380 or (651) 297-8609**

Permits for Ground-water Pump-out Wells

When ground-water cleanup involves pumping out contaminated ground water, permits are needed from the **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)** and the **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**.

- For the water appropriation permit, contact the DNR. **DNR: (651) 296-4800**
- For a State Disposal System Permit, contact the MPCA. **MPCA: (651) 297-2274.** Pump-out permit application forms are available to download from the MPCA Web site.

Ground-Water Education

Many state and county agencies have educational programs and materials on ground water. Check first with your **county water-plan coordinator** or **extension office**.

- The **Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)** can help you locate ground-water education programs and materials. **BWSR: (651) 296-3767**
- The **Minnesota Ground-Water Association (MGWA)** ground-water education Web page is located at <http://mgwa.org/education/index.html>. **MGWA: (651) 297-5219**
- Minnesota's interactive directory of environmental education resources, **SEEK**, is located on the Internet at <http://www.seek.state.mn.us/>.
- The **Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA)** Education Clearinghouse (clearinghouse@moea.state.mn.us) has videos and other materials. **OEA: (651)215-0232**
- **Minnesota Project WET** (Water Education for Teachers) provides resources for educators. **DNR: (651) 297-4951**

Ground-Water: Who Does What? Listed by State Organization

Emphasis on Ground-Water Protection

Minnesota statutes provide for a multiagency approach to protect Minnesota ground water. In the tables below, state organizations are listed with examples of their major ground-water responsibilities. Contact information for selected activities is also listed for each agency.

Check for assistance first with local organizations in most counties.

Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) (651) 296-3767

Responsibilities: outreach with local government officials, local water planning and management, local cost-share programs

- Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) reserve, a program allowing landowners to take marginal agricultural land out of production for water-quality protection (651) 296-0880
- Comprehensive local water planning (651) 297-7965
- Twin Cities metropolitan area ground-water and surface-water planning (651) 282-9969

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) (651) 296-4800 Division of Waters

Responsibilities: water-quantity monitoring and regulation, sensitivity mapping, development of a plan for using integrated pest management and sustainable agriculture on state-owned lands

- Ground-water level monitoring
- Stream flow, including base flow from ground water
- Geologic atlases, hydrogeologic assessments, geologic sensitivity mapping
- Water use (withdrawals) regulation

Department of Public Safety (DPS) (651) 649-5451 State Duty Officer (800) 422-0798

Responsibilities: emergency management

To report a spill, leak or environmental accident, call the State Duty Officer 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

Environmental Quality Board (EQB) (651) 297-1257

Responsibilities: through the Water Resources Committee, coordination of state ground-water protection programs, a biennial ground-water policy report, evaluation of and reporting on state water research needs, coordination of reports on water quality and water quantity.

- Environmental review of proposed development ■ (651) 296-8253
- Ground-water planning, policy and priorities development ■ (651) 297-2377

Land Management Information Center (LMIC) (651) 297-4986

Responsibilities: the Land Management Information Center (LMIC) collects ground-water data sets from several state agencies.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) (651) 297-2200

Responsibilities: Sustainable agriculture and integrated pest management, water-quality monitoring, development of best management practices, regulations to protect ground water from agricultural chemical contaminants.

- Bulk pesticide and fertilizer storage permits ■ (651) 297-7274
- Pesticide applicator licensing ■ (651) 297-2746
- Waste pesticide and pesticide container collection ■ (651) 297-1062
- Sustainable agriculture ■ (651) 297-7673
- Statewide pesticide management plan ■ (651) 297-8293
- Nitrogen fertilizer management ■ (651) 297-7178
- Agricultural best management practices local program ■ (651) 296-7686

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) (651) 215-0700

Responsibilities: regulation of wells and borings, wellhead-protection measures for public water supplies, ensuring the safety of public drinking water supplies and development of health risk limits.

- Wellhead (source water) protection ■ (651) 215-0800
- Regulation of well installation, well repair and sealing of unused (abandoned) wells ■ (651) 215-0811
- Ensuring the safety of public drinking water supplies ■ (651) 215-0770
- Development of health risk limits ■ (651) 215-0880

Minnesota Geological Survey (MGS) (612) 627-4780

Responsibilities: works in cooperation with DNR to produce ground-water sensitivity maps.

- Conducts studies to understand the state's hydrogeologic framework, ground-water resources and ground-water conditions; provides data, reports and maps to communicate findings and provide essential support to other organizations involved in ground-water management.
- Characterizes aquifer systems and ground-water flow paths
- Provides the hydrogeologic background information to better understand or predict how land use might affect ground-water quality.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) (651) 296-6300

Responsibilities: water-quality monitoring and reporting, development of best management practices, regulations to protect ground water from nonagricultural chemical contaminants.

- Nonpoint sources of pollution (pollution from widespread sources, such as farmlands and urban stormwater) ■ (651) 296-8402
- Clean Water Partnership and Section 319 financial assistance to local government for investigation of pollution sources in local surface and ground water ■ (651) 297-2810
- Feedlots and manure management ■ (651) 296-8440
- Individual sewage treatment systems (septic systems) help for local governments ■ (651) 296-9322
- Business septic systems (Environmental Protection Agency) ■ (312) 353-6058
- Municipal and industrial wastewater treatment permitting ■ (651) 297-2274
- Land application of biosolids (sludge) ■ (651) 296-9292
- Hazardous waste from businesses ■ (651) 297-2274
- Solid waste facility permitting ■ (651) 296-7758
- Underground and above-ground storage tank registration ■ (651) 297-2274
- Storm water ■ (651) 297-2274

Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA) (651) 215-0232

Responsibilities: pollution-prevention grants, technical assistance, environmental education resources

Local Agencies

Many local agencies are involved in ground-water issues. In Greater Minnesota, counties develop and implement comprehensive local water plans. In the Twin Cities metropolitan area, counties develop and implement ground-water plans. These plans include an evaluation of water resources in the county and identify actions needed to protect them. Consulting your county's local water plan or ground-water plan may help provide information on ground-water issues of concern in your area.

Each of these organizations can provide information about ground water in your area and, depending on your county, may operate some of the state ground-water programs described in this guide. Check locally first, where indicated in this guide, for information on your area.

In addition, the following list of local organizations may be able to help answer questions you have about ground-water issues:

- County water-plan coordinators
- County environmental offices
- Community health services
- City and county health departments
- Tribal governments
- Soil and water conservation districts
- County offices of the Minnesota Extension Service
- Metropolitan Council in the Twin Cities area
- City and county planning and zoning departments

Local Web Sites

If you don't have access to the World Wide Web, you may want to contact local organizations by telephone. Many of them can be found in the government pages in most "white pages" telephone directories. Look under environmental services or county health services.

Your city or township government:

- www.state.mn.us/local
- www.greatermncities.org
- www.mntownships.org

Your county government:

www.state.mn.us/local/#counties

Your local soil and water conservation district:

www.maswcd.org/swcds_on_the_web.htm

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services:

www.metrocouncil.org/environment/environment.htm

Federal Agencies

Even though most citizens' questions and concerns regarding ground water are best handled at the local and state level, federal agencies also play a valuable role in protecting and monitoring Minnesota's ground water.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

2280 Wooddale Drive,
Mounds View, MN 55112
(763) 783-3100
www.mn.cr.usgs.gov

USGS collects and interprets water-resource data and information in selected areas of Minnesota. USGS monitors ground-water levels, maps ground-water supplies, and studies ground-water quality. In addition, the USGS regularly cooperates with state agencies on ground-water data collection and analysis efforts.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

U.S. Department of Agriculture
375 Jackson Street, Suite 600
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 290-3675
www.nrcs.usda.gov/

NRCS provides voluntary technical and financial assistance to Minnesotans, in cooperation with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Planning and implementation activities provided by NRCS focus on conserving natural resources on private lands, with an emphasis on positive impacts on surface- and ground-water quality. NRCS also cooperates with other agencies on specific ground-water quality projects in Minnesota.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region V

77 West Jackson
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 353-2000
www.epa.gov/epahome/media.htm

EPA is the federal agency charged with controlling and preventing pollution, and protecting the nation's natural environment. EPA sets standards for a variety of environmental programs and provides partial funding for many of Minnesota's ground-water programs.

Featured Web Sites

Minnesota Ground-Water Information Resources Guide

This Internet-based, online guide is designed to provide convenient access to the most current Minnesota ground-water information. Led by the MPCA, it is an inter-agency cooperative effort to provide a convenient portal to ground-water data, reports and maps in addition to the state's ground-water programs and contact information. It also provides access to online library catalog searches, telephone directories, ground-water education and more.

Access points on the Web for this guide include www.mgwa.org/gwguide.html and www.geo.umn.edu/mgs/gwig/gwguide.html.

'What's in My Neighborhood?'

In Spring 2003, the MPCA will introduce a new resource for people asking "What's in My Neighborhood?" When completed, users will be able to view or obtain a list of sites in a given county, city or zip code with known or suspected sources of soil and ground-water contamination.

It allows users to obtain a printed report or perform a GIS-based search that maps sites in the area that they select. Looking for a specific site? The application allows users to conduct searches by site name, city, zip code, county or even street address.

Check www.pca.state.mn.us/backyard/neighborhood.html to find out if the Web service is ready to roll. Questions? Contact Linda Moon at (651) 297-2731 or by e-mail at linda.moon@pca.state.mn.us.

Minnesota Extension Service

Connect with the Web site of the University of Minnesota's main outreach and public education activities through the Minnesota Extension Service at www.extension.umn.edu/.

Minnesota Ground Water Association

The Minnesota Ground Water Association (MGWA) is a non-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to the following primary objectives:

- Promotion and encouragement of the scientific and public policy aspects of ground water;
- Establishing a common forum for scientists, engineers, planners, educators, attorneys, and other persons concerned with ground water;
- Education of the general public regarding ground water resources; and
- Dissemination of information on ground water through meetings of the membership.

Find out more at the MGWA Web site at www.mgwa.org/

State Agency Regional Offices

State agencies have regional offices located around Minnesota. To contact state agency staff in the regional office closest to you, use the list below:

Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

www.bwsr.state.mn.us

- Bemidji (218) 755-4235
- Brainerd (218) 828-2383
- Duluth (218) 723-4752
- Marshall (507) 537-6060
- New Ulm (507) 359-6074
- Rochester (507) 285-7458
- St. Paul (651) 282-9969

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

www.mdnr.state.mn.us

- Bemidji (218) 755-3973
- Grand Rapids (218) 327-4416
- New Ulm (507) 359-6053
- St. Paul (651) 772-7910

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

www.health.state.mn.us

- Bemidji (218) 755-3820
- Duluth (218) 723-4642
- Fergus Falls (218) 739-7585
- Mankato (507) 389-2502
- Marshall (507) 537-7152
- Rochester (507) 285-7289
- St. Cloud: (320) 255-4216

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)

www.pca.state.mn.us

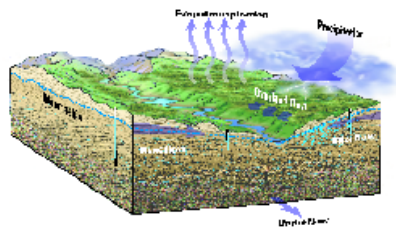
- Brainerd (218) 828-2492
- Detroit Lakes (218) 847-1519
- Duluth (218) 723-4660
- Mankato (507) 389-5235
- Marshall (507) 537-7146
- Rochester (507) 285-7343
- Willmar (320) 214-3786

What Citizens Can Do to Protect Ground Water

Local, state and federal agencies monitor, protect and improve ground water, but citizens can do a lot, too. Ensure that your ground-water resources remain clean and abundant into the future. Try some of the suggestions below and make a difference!

- Seal unused wells using a licensed well contractor. Unused wells can carry pollutants from the land into ground water.
- Conserve water in your home and business.
- Upgrade and properly maintain your septic system.
- Follow label directions when applying pesticides and fertilizers to lawns and crops.
- Never dump chemicals onto the ground or into septic systems or wells. Contact your local household hazardous waste program to find out appropriate disposal options.
- Have your private well tested regularly for bacteria and nitrates.
- Protect the area around your well. Do not clean equipment, store chemicals or dispose of wastes on the ground near your well.
- Find out about and follow best management practices for protecting ground water in agricultural and urban areas. Check with your county extension agent, water-plan coordinator, Soil and Water Conservation District or watershed district for more information.
- Get involved in local ground-water protection efforts. Participate in your county's water-planning or wellhead protection activities. Encourage your city or county to participate in ground-water protection programs, such as wellhead protection, Clean Water Partnerships and agricultural best management practices loan program.
- Support local and state ground-water protection programs. Let decision makers know you care about your ground water.

A Minnesota Ground Water Directory



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