

Noncom Notes

NEWSLETTER FOR MINNESOTA'S NONCOMMUNITY PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

Fall 2020

A Note from MDH Drinking Water Protection Leadership – Thank You!

The last six months have certainly been a time of uncertainty and stress for many throughout the state, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For all of you, Minnesota's roughly 6,000 noncommunity public water systems, we recognize that you've faced exceptional pressures in operating your facilities on many different fronts. Through it all, we here at MDH very much appreciate all you've done in helping provide a safe water supply – maintaining your systems, working with MDH staff, collecting water samples, and more. As we enter the fall, please continue to reach out to our staff should you have any questions regarding your water supply. Thank you once again for all your work and cooperation – and have a safe fall season!

Sandeep Burman, Manager, Drinking Water Protection Section and Dave Hokanson, Supervisor, Noncommunity Public Water Supply Unit

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Seasonal Water System Shutdown Guidance

Proper maintenance increases the longevity of a water system and reduces water quality problems that can lead to dissatisfied customers and regulatory issues. Completing shutdown procedures for seasonal water systems, or those systems that depressurize portions of the distribution, will help you reduce contamination risk and minimize work and time required when you begin operations next season. Shutdown is an opportune time for a thorough examination of the system's physical components. Repairs can be accomplished without being an imposition on your customers. Recommended steps for seasonal water system shutdown on system inspection, de-pressurizing, and system protection can be found by referring to [Seasonal Water System Shutdown Guidance \(PDF\)](#).

Contact your sanitarian or engineer if you have questions about seasonal shutdown procedures.

Maintaining Water Quality During COVID-19 Related Shutdowns

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many noncommunity public water supplies are

experiencing unforeseen periods of little to no water usage due to shutdowns or a reduction in business. Water quality problems can arise as water remains stagnant in water storage,

treatment equipment, and distribution piping. Examples of these problems include:

- Warming of cold water and cooling of hot water to within ideal growth range for bacteria including opportunistic pathogens such as *Legionella*;
- Sediment accumulation in pipes, leading to mechanical issues and bacteria growth; Loss of disinfectant residual and formation of disinfection byproducts for systems that disinfect;
- Increased lead and copper levels due to corrosion of pipes and fittings; and
- Growth of bacteria in water treatment equipment such as softeners and filters.

Noncommunity Plan Review Guidance Updates

Minnesota Rules, part 4720.0010 requires that installations, alterations, and extensions of public drinking water systems need to be reviewed and approved by MDH. These projects include any work between the water source and the entry point to the distribution system such as:

- Water service lines between the well and pressure tank;
- Surface water intakes;
- Water treatment;
- Water towers, above-ground water storage, or other water storage installations;
- Well houses (buildings containing wells); and
- Pump houses (buildings containing water treatment, storage, or distribution equipment).

MDH has recently updated the plan review guidance to better communicate to public water systems and professionals designing these installations. The guidance is found on the revised Plan Review webpage: [Plan Review for Noncommunity Systems](#).

For these reasons, it is important to have a plan to restore and maintain water quality before and after reopening. Water quality can deteriorate within a week if water remains stagnant. For guidance on how to implement a reopening and maintenance plan, MDH developed a document that includes links to COVID-19 resources for maintaining water quality. Guidance can be found in: [System Reopening and Maintaining Water Quality \(PDF\)](#).

For more information about protecting public health and COVID-19, including guidance specific to different business and community settings, refer to: [Coronavirus Disease 2019](#).

Information on this page includes:

- When plan review is required, including a new table with specific examples for when plans need to be submitted to MDH;
- Who is qualified and responsible for preparing plans;
- In most cases, a licensed well contractor, master plumber, master water conditioning contractor, or professional engineer will be required, depending on the project;
- What information needs to be submitted for MDH review; and
- MDH has created and updated several forms to facilitate the submittal of plans and make it clear what information we are looking for.

The following forms are available on the webpage:

- [Water Service Line Plan Submittal \(PDF\)](#)
- [Water Treatment Plan Submittal \(PDF\)](#)
- [Surface Water Treatment Plan Submittal \(PDF\)](#)
- [Groundwater Under the Direct Influence \(GWUDI\) and Contaminated Groundwater Treatment Plan Submittal \(PDF\)](#)

For all other projects, including storage and well house projects, where there is no form, a cover letter has been created.

▪ Plan Submittal Cover Letter (PDF)

The forms do not need to be used when submitting plans, so long as the same amount of information is submitted.

For any questions on plan review or construction requirements, please contact Alex

Bartley at 651-201-4699 or alex.bartley@state.mn.us.

For Surface Water and Groundwater Under the Direct Influence of Surface Water systems, contact Nathan Karp at 218-302-6168 or nathan.karp@state.mn.us.

Noncommunity Unit New Hire

Welcome to the newest member of the Unit, Cody J. Tennant. Cody's first day was Wednesday, April 15. Cody will be working as a field sanitarian out of the Duluth District Office, primarily on the Iron Range. Cody has a diverse background, including previous work at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and more recently in the Public Health Laboratory as an Environmental Analyst within the Organic Chemistry Unit.



Factsheet at a Glance



Point-of-Use Reverse Osmosis Installations (PDF)

This new MDH factsheet highlights cross-connection control -- preventing a connection between a drinking water supply and a potential source of contamination – in the installation of these commonly-used treatment systems.

Septic System: Do's and Dont's

SepticSmart Week 2020 is over for this year but maintaining your wastewater system is a daily job. Be sure you know your septic system. The two big "do's" are:

- Inspect it (at least every 3 years); and
- Protect it.

Properly maintaining your septic system helps safeguard human health, protect the environment, and save money. Septic system repairs caused by a lack of understanding about how they work, or even simple neglect, can be very costly. Refer to this guide for more information - Septic System Do's and Dont's (PDF).

Additional resources:

- [Minnesota Pollution Control Agency-Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems](#)
- [University of Minnesota-Onsite Sewage Treatment Program](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency-Septic Systems](#)

Is the We are Water MN Traveling Exhibit Coming to Your Area?

The We are Water MN traveling exhibit examines water issues statewide and in local communities through personal stories, histories, and scientific information. It strengthens Minnesotans' relationships with water, exposes visitors to new perspectives, and increases participation in water stewardship activities. Upcoming dates and locations for the exhibit are as follows and more information can be found on [Minnesota Humanities Center - We are Water MN](#).

- Mankato: October 22-December 21, 2020
- St. Paul: January 7-March 8, 2021
- Rochester: March 11-May 10, 2021
- Chisholm: May 13-July 12, 2021
- Pipestone: July 15-September 13, 2021

Operator Certification

Minnesota Rural Water Association Small Systems Training Update

At this time, Minnesota Rural Water Association (MRWA) in-person training workshops are on hold. MRWA will continue to follow guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as it relates to holding in-person training. MRWA is hosting 1-hour Continuing Education Unit webinars that meet the criteria for Class D and E Small Public Water Systems training. Notices of these webinars are sent two weeks prior to each webinar by email. Please send MRWA your email address to be included in receiving these webinar notices. An email is needed to register for these online remote training workshops.

mrwa@mrwa.com

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jennifer Koenig or Kyle Kedrowski, MRWA Technical Advisors, at 800-367-6792.

Questions?

If any water operators have questions about their renewals or certification, please contact Noel Hansen, Minnesota Department of Health, directly at 651-201-4690 or

noel.hansen@state.mn.us

References in this Issue

- [Seasonal Water System Shutdown Guidance \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/seasonshutdown.pdf)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/seasonshutdown.pdf>)
- [System Reopening and Maintaining Water Quality \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/startupcoverid.pdf)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/startupcoverid.pdf>)

NONCOM NOTES

- [Coronavirus Disease 2019](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/>)
- [Minnesota Rules, part 4720.0010](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/4720.0010/) (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/4720.0010/>)
- [Plan Review for Noncommunity Systems](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/planreview/noncommunity.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/planreview/noncommunity.html>)
- [Water Service Line Plan Submittal \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/waterserv.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/waterserv.pdf>)
- [Water Treatment Plan Submittal \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/watertreat.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/watertreat.pdf>)
- [Surface Water Treatment Plan Submittal \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/surfacewater.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/surfacewater.pdf>)
- [Groundwater Under the Direct Influent \(GWUDI\) and Contaminated Groundwater Treatment Plan Submittal \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/gwudicontam.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/gwudicontam.pdf>)
- [Plan Submittal Cover Letter \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/pscoverltr.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/ncom/pscoverltr.pdf>)
- [Point-of-Use Reverse Osmosis Installations \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/factsheet/pointofuse.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/factsheet/pointofuse.pdf>)
- [SepticSmart Week 2020](https://www.epa.gov/septic/septicsmart-week) (<https://www.epa.gov/septic/septicsmart-week>)
- [Septic system DO's and DON'Ts \(PDF\)](https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-wwists6-14.pdf) (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-wwists6-14.pdf>)
- [Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: Subsurface sewage treatment systems](https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/subsurface-sewage-treatment-systems) (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/subsurface-sewage-treatment-systems>)
- [University of Minnesota: Sewage Treatment Program](https://septic.umn.edu/) (<https://septic.umn.edu/>)
- [Environmental Protection Agency: Septic Systems](https://www.epa.gov/septic/septicsmart-week) (<https://www.epa.gov/septic/septicsmart-week>)
- [Minnesota Humanities Center: We Are Water](https://mnhum.org/we-are-water-mn/) (<https://mnhum.org/we-are-water-mn/>)

Contact Information

The Noncommunity Public Water Supply Unit publishes the **Noncom Notes**. Contact leslie.winter@state.mn.us.

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*To obtain this information in a different format,
call: 651-201-4700.*

