

The Role of the Minnesota Department of Health

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) works with noncommunity public water systems in providing safe drinking water. MDH's role includes the following:



Water Sampling

MDH staff will collect many of the required water samples for your public water system, although some water systems will be required to collect specific types of samples on their own. MDH pays for the analytical costs associated with required samples, whether collected by MDH staff or by the water system.



Inspections

MDH routinely conducts inspections called "sanitary surveys" at all public water systems in Minnesota. These inspections can help you identify potential problems, and therefore give you the opportunity to prevent future water quality issues.



Technical Assistance

MDH staff, located in seven district offices around the state, are available to help you prevent and resolve problems with your water system.



Plan Review

MDH performs plan review free of charge for non-community public water systems. Plan review helps ensure that your water system will provide safe, plentiful water.

Penalties

The Minnesota Department of Health generally tries to correct problems through a cooperative effort with the owner of the water system. However, as a last resort, administrative orders, monetary penalties, or legal action may be used to correct problems.

For More Information

Visit the MDH Drinking Water Protection website at:
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/water>

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Noncommunity Public Water Systems in Minnesota



Roles and Responsibilities in Providing Safe Drinking Water



Minnesota Department of Health
Environmental Health Division

What Is Required of Noncommunity Public Water Systems?

Water Meeting Health Standards

The water supplied at your facility must meet federal drinking water standards. **Transient water systems** must meet standards for contaminants that could have immediate health impacts (acute contaminants), such as bacteria and nitrate. **Nontransient water systems** must meet standards for acute contaminants and those that can cause problems if consumed over a long period of time (chronic contaminants), such as metals, pesticides, or industrial chemicals.

Water Sampling

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) collects the majority of your required samples. However, in some situations, you may be required to collect water samples.

Corrective Action

If there is a water quality problem identified at the facility, you will be required to take corrective action, such as repairs or well disinfection. The water system owner is responsible for the cost of these actions.

Public Notification

If your water system is not meeting a drinking water standard, you must inform all water users. This is called "public notification."

Source Water Protection

Noncommunity water systems must take steps to protect their water source(s). This may include measures such as making sure that potential sources of contamination are located at the appropriate distances from a well. Additionally, nontransient systems using wells must complete a wellhead protection plan.

Plan Submission

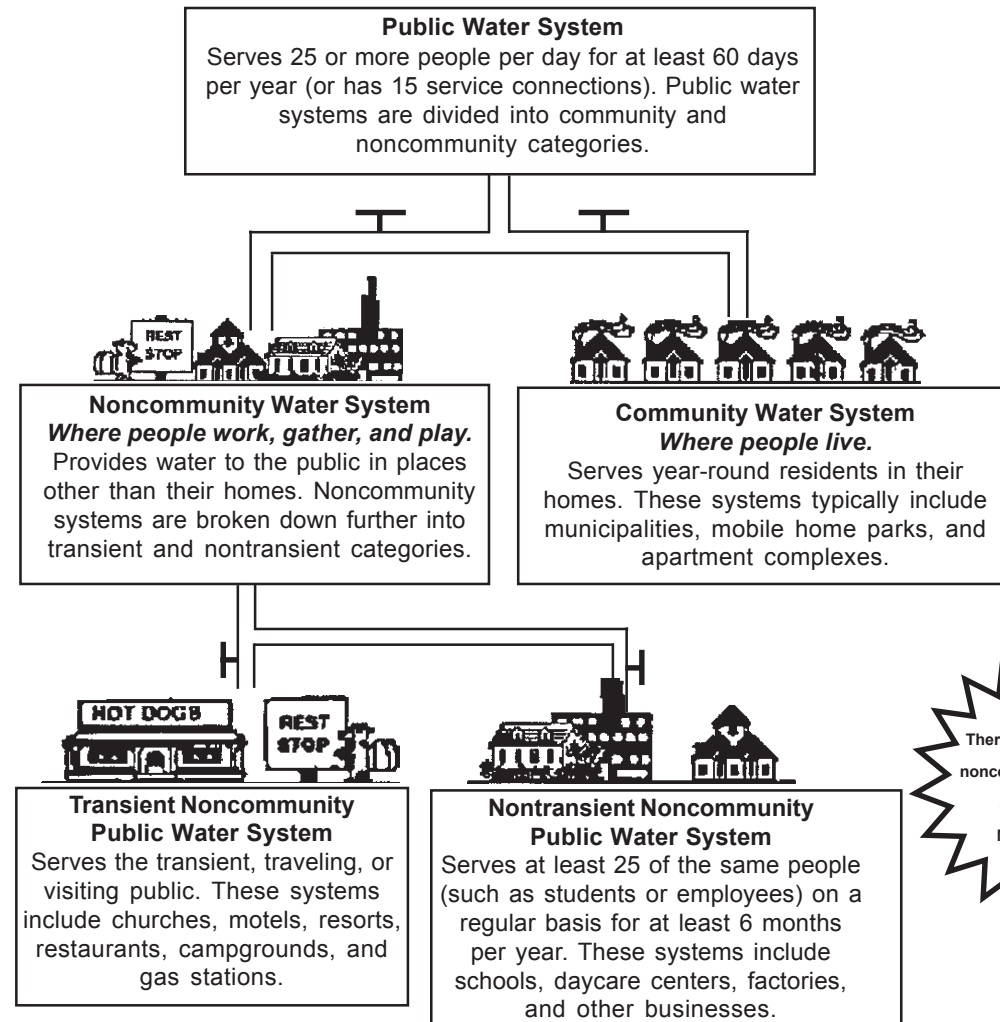
Plan approval is required for any modifications to the water supply system, and is particularly important when treatment is being installed to control health-related contaminants. The system owner must make sure plans are submitted for review. Check with MDH staff about plan review before modifying your water system.

Record Keeping

Records of sampling, inspections, and other correspondence from MDH must be kept on file by the water system.

What is a Noncommunity Public Water System?

Noncommunity public water systems are facilities such as schools, factories, churches, resorts, and restaurants that are served by their own supply of water (usually a well). These facilities are required to provide a safe and adequate supply of water under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and Minnesota Rules, Chapter 4720. The chart below shows the different types of public water systems defined in the SDWA:



Certified Operator

This requirement applies only to nontransient noncommunity public water systems. All nontransient systems must designate at least one certified operator. This operator must meet minimum qualifications and attend continuing education sessions.

Surface Water Treatment

This requirement applies only to systems using a surface water supply (such as a lake). Noncommunity systems using surface water must maintain specific treatment (filtration and disinfection) to comply with the federal Surface Water Treatment Rule.