

NonCom Scoop

Newsletter for Minnesota's Noncommunity Public Water Systems

Fall/Winter

2017/2018

Source Water Protection Grant Program Success Story

Bob's Cabins is a resort located on the North Shore of Lake Superior and has 16 cabins. It is open from May through October and serves approximately 1900 customers each year. Under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and Minnesota Rules, Chapter 4720, the water system at Bob's Cabins meets the definition of a transient noncommunity public water system (PWS). Therefore, Bob's Cabins is required to provide safe and adequate drinking water to its customers.



Drinking Water Source

Groundwater is the source of drinking water for Bob's Cabins. The current water well was drilled in 2015. Due to the bedrock geology of the North Shore area, well water may be affected by nearby surface water, making it potentially vulnerable to contamination that may affect the water quality. Human activities may also impact the water quality. Periodic, required water testing helps validate the actions taken by the owner and helps ensure the water is safe for drinking.

System Management and Operation

The system is operated and managed by the resort owner, Bill Guse. Bob's Cabins is a seasonal water system, does not provide any water treatment and is not required to have a licensed Minnesota water operator. That said, Mr. Guse does take numerous steps to ensure the safety of his water supply. For example, prior to opening in the spring, the system follows the state-approved start-up procedures before the water is available to customers. During this start-up process, Mr. Guse examines the conditions of the system, makes needed repairs, chlorinates, thoroughly flushes out the chlorinated water, and is ready for water testing before customers arrive.

Overcoming Water Quality Challenges

Staff from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) conducts an annual site visit along with annual total coliform bacteria and nitrate monitoring to ensure the water at Bob's Cabins meets federal drinking water standards. Routine water sampling in 2013 found *E. coli* bacteria. Total coliform bacteria had been detected in 1996, 1999, and 2011. In response to the test results, Bob's Cabins provided bottled water to all customers and tried several times to resolve the issue through chlorination, but this did not work. MDH staff provided technical assistance throughout the process.

Eventually, Mr. Guse decided to drill a new well. He applied for and received a Clean Water Fund grant through the MDH Source Water Protection program. Constructing a new water well provides for reliable and safe drinking water at the resort. This is the well successfully in use today. The old, contaminated well was sealed.

About the Source Water Protection Grant Program

The MDH Source Water Protection Grant Program was established with funding from Minnesota's Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment Fund. There are three types of Source Water Protection (SWP) Grants: Transient, Competitive, and Plan Implementation. Transient and Competitive SWP Grants include a 50/50 cost share, up to \$10,000. Transient grants apply only to transient noncommunity public water supplies. Competitive grants and Plan Implementation grants are open to community and nontransient noncommunity public water supplies. Plan Implementation grants require a current MDH-approved wellhead protection plan or MDH-endorsed intake protection plan, they have no cost share and are awarded up to \$10,000. All grant types are offered in the spring and fall to noncommunity public water supplies that have a need to protect the source (e.g., aquifer, lake, or river) from contamination, with a focus on prevention.

SWP grants are not intended to address all public health concerns but only those activities related to protecting the drinking water source. Grant activities must focus on managing or eliminating one or more potential sources of contamination. The table below shows the total number and amounts of grants awarded to noncommunity public water supplies since 2011.

Noncommunity SWP Grant Type	Number of Grants	Total Amount
Transient	141	\$742,676
Competitive	12	\$71,853
Plan Implementation	8	\$34,753

Potential SWP Grant Activities

All public water suppliers have the opportunity to receive SWP grant funding; however, eligibility for the category of grants is determined by the type of public water supply system. Examples of potential grant-eligible activities are:

- Well construction
- Well sealing
- Managing contaminants
- Connecting to city or rural water supply
- Analysis and investigation
- Treatment
- Public education

For activities to be qualified as eligible for funding, they must be described in a Sanitary Survey Report which is performed once every three years or through other correspondence between MDH and the public water supplier. The correspondence should clearly state how an activity would protect the drinking water source from contamination. Eligibility does not necessarily guarantee funding as project proposals are subject to review and annual funding is limited.

For More Information about SWP Grants

Contact your regional noncommunity public health sanitarian to discuss your water supply system eligibility for a SWP grant. For more information on SWP Grants go to [Source Water Protection Grants \(http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/grants/\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/grants/)

Noncom Scoop survey

The Drinking Water Protection Section is seeking your input regarding the *Noncom Scoop* Publication, as we plan for future publications. We hope you will take two minutes to complete the survey. [Noncom Scoop survey \(https://survey.vovici.com/se/56206EE3461D9849\)](https://survey.vovici.com/se/56206EE3461D9849)
Deadline: November 30. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Leslie Winter at 651-201-4705 or leslie.winter@state.mn.us.

Surface Water Treatment Rule Reminder

NOTE: This article applies only to water systems using surface water or groundwater under the direct influence of surface water.

The Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT2) was published on January 5, 2006, and became effective in 2008 for water systems using surface water or groundwater under the direct influence of surface water. The goal of the LT2 is to reduce the risk of disease caused by *Cryptosporidium* and other microorganisms by identifying the systems at the greatest risk for source water contamination.

Under the LT2, small public water systems being supplied by a surface water source or by a groundwater source under the direct influence of surface water are required to collect two rounds of samples from their **untreated water source** (prior to chlorine injection or any other treatment) and submit them to a contract lab for *E. coli* analysis. The first round of sampling was conducted during 2008 and 2009.

The second round of source water sampling begins October 2017, with samples being collected every other week through September 2018 during the months the system is open to the public. For some systems, this will be the first round of sampling with the second round to be conducted at a later date. This sampling is in addition to the monthly treated water samples already being collected.

Water systems required to conduct this sampling are being provided with their sampling schedules and information for submitting the samples to the contract lab.

If you have any questions on the LT2 source water sampling, please contact Nate Karp at 218/302-6168 or Chris O'Brien at 651/201-4682.



Improving Water Quality in Minnesota 25% by 2025

Governor Dayton's Water Town Hall meetings

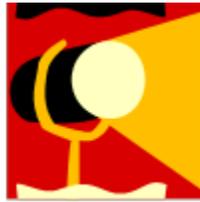
Governor Dayton hosted a series of ten Water Quality Town Hall meetings across the state this summer and early fall to listen to Minnesotans' ideas of what a 25 percent improvement in water quality by 2025 in their communities would look like. These meetings were free and open to the public. Citizens brought numerous valuable ideas to these meetings. Overall, more than 2,000 people participated in the town meetings and provided the Governor's Office with goals, actions and next steps to improve water quality in Minnesota. For additional information go to [Town Hall information \(https://www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/attend-town-hall\)](https://www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/attend-town-hall)

Making Health Equity Part of the Discussion

Plentiful, safe drinking water is a key part of communities assuring conditions in which people can be healthy. Not everyone in Minnesota has the same opportunity for access to safe drinking water. These town halls provided a window to make health and health equity part of broader water resources discussions. While Minnesota has an excellent record of compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, there are still inequities and threats that communities and the state need to address including:

- Private wells have fewer protections from contamination than public water systems.

- The price of water supplied by smaller systems can be much higher because there are fewer customers to share the costs.
 - Smaller water systems may struggle to find a licensed operator or manage the water system.
 - People downstream from contamination have to pay to remove the contamination they did not cause.
 - Reliance on contaminated fish for economical source of food.
 - Limited access to lakes and rivers for recreation.
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Fact Sheet at a Glance

Shutting Down for the Season? Keep Next Year's Startup in Mind

Many of our small water systems will be shutting down for the winter soon. If you are closing down, please plan ahead for next spring. Keeping in mind that seasonal systems that completely depressurize their distribution systems must complete and certify a state-approved startup procedure. For more information [Start-up Procedure for Seasonal Public Water Systems \(http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/ncom/startup.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/ncom/startup.pdf)

MDH Staff Update:

New Noncommunity Public Water Supply Unit Supervisor



Dave Hokanson joined the Unit as its supervisor in August, 2017. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing MDH's work with the nearly 6,000 noncommunity public water systems in the state. Dave previously worked in the Unit from 1998 to 2005 and is returning to MDH after spending twelve years with the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA).

At UMRBA, Dave helped coordinate Clean Water Act and spill response programs among the five states of the Upper Mississippi River Basin (Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin). Dave also worked in the drinking water program for the Indiana Department of Environmental Management in the 1990s. He is looking forward to working in collaboration with the state's noncommunity public systems, as well as state and local staff, to ensure the provision of safe and reliable drinking water all across Minnesota.

Upcoming Training

Class D Small Public Water Systems

Date	Location
TBD	TBD



Class E Small Public Water Systems

Date	Location
November 21, 2017	Little Falls
December 12, 2017	Monticello
March 7, 2018	St. Cloud
TBD	TBD

If you have any questions
regarding plan review,
call
651-201-4700

Minnesota Rural Water Association offers all trainings

For more information on the courses and upcoming events, visit Minnesota Rural Water Association at [Minnesota Rural Water Association \(http://www.mrwa.com/\)](http://www.mrwa.com/)

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Published twice a year by the Noncommunity Public Water Supply Unit, Minnesota Department of Health. Reprinting of articles in this newsletter is encouraged. Please give credit to the Minnesota Department of Health or noted source.