

Wellhead Protection Rule Revision

About the Rule

Each state has a program to protect the groundwater that public water systems use to supply drinking water. This is a requirement of the 1986 Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. As a result, Minnesota adopted the State Wellhead Protection (WHP) Rule 4720.5100-4720.5590 in 1997.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is responsible for administering the State WHP Program. Under the WHP Program, public water systems are required to develop and implement a plan that protects its drinking water source. The main components and requirements of a public water system's WHP Plan include:

- scientifically delineating the recharge area of the public water supply wells,
- determining the vulnerability of the aquifer to human land use impacts,
- identifying potential or existing contaminants based on aquifer vulnerability,
- developing a plan to prevent or reduce contamination in the aquifer used, and
- developing a contingency plan to provide drinking water in case of a major disruption.



Potential changes to the Rule

The WHP Rule has been in place for approximately 25 years. Over this time, MDH and public water systems have identified opportunities to improve the WHP Rule and better protect sources of drinking water. MDH is beginning the process to revise the WHP Rule, evaluating public water system requirements and drinking water protection goals. We will be considering changes in the following areas:

- Assessing public water systems' capacity and costs to develop a WHP plan.
- Evaluating the necessity of requiring all public water supply systems to develop a plan and considering alternate approaches.
- Opportunities to reduce the time to develop, review, and approve a WHP plan, based on approaches used by other resource planning efforts.
- Simplifying plan development processes and requirements.
- Reducing redundancy in plans.
- Identifying ways to improve prioritization and management of contaminant sources.

MDH appreciates your interest in drinking water and the WHP Rule. If you have questions or suggestions regarding the WHP Rule revision, please submit comments at [Wellhead Protection Rule Revision \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/rules/wellhead.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/rules/wellhead.html).

Minnesota Department of Health
health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us • 651-201-4700
www.health.state.mn.us
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