



ANOKA COUNTY WATER TASK FORCE

Anoka County Government Center
2100 Third Avenur, Suite 600
Anoka, MN 55303

Task Force Facilitator - Bart Biernat
Phone - (763) 422-6985
Fax - (763) 323-6150
Bart.Biernat@co.anoka.mn.us

WATER RESOURCES REPORT 2014

Water plays an important role in public health and community wellness. Since recorded time, people have been concerned with sanitation and their environment.

Local water resources are a key to Anoka County's future. The quality and sustainability of water resources impact the health of our residents and our economic future. A sustained and adequate supply of safe water is critical to support our growing communities.

The 2014 Water Resources Report made five recommendations for local water management:

- Coordinated water management
- Coordinated water education
- Local water sustainability
- Drinking water protection
- Seek opportunities to enhance water management locally

On the whole, the natural quality of the County's water resources supports a healthy population. Some lakes, rivers and streams have been designated as impaired, due to impacts of various pollutants, Contamination of private and public drinking water supplies have been observed in some areas. The source of surface water quality impairments and drinking water contamination is from old pollution sources such as landfills or from non-point pollution, such as stormwater runoff into ditches, streams and infiltrating groundwater.

The State of Minnesota and Anoka County have addressed point source pollution. The cumulative impact of non-point source pollution from homes, lawns, driveways, parking lots, streets, septic systems, pet waste, and the like, challenges communities to find an innovative non-regulatory approach.

COMMUNITIES

Andover
Anoka
Bethel
Blaine
Centerville
Circle Pines
Columbia Heights
Columbus
Coon Rapids
East Bethel
Fridley
Ham Lake
Hilltop
Lexington
Lino Lakes
Linwood
Nowthen
Oak Grove
Ramsey
St. Francis
Spring Lake Park

LAKE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

Coon Lake
Lake George

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Coon Creek
Mississippi
Rice Creek
Sunrise River
Lower Rum
Upper Rum
Vadnais Lake

COUNTY AGENCIES

Community Dev.
Conservation Dist.
Environ. Health
Extension Service
Highway Dept.
Parks Dept.
Recycling

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

League W. Voters
Lions / Rotary
Water Stewards
[more]



WATER MANAGEMENT IN ANOKA COUNTY



WATER TASK FORCE

Water programs of state and local agencies focus on specific protection and management program issues. A comprehensive approach, by local agencies, can address how these programs may cooperate to achieve mutual goals in water resources management.

The Water Task Force are to advise, consult with, and make recommendations to the Anoka County Community Health Advisory Committee in the preparation of its Water Resources Report. The Task Force will monitor current and emerging water resources issues to identify opportunities for collaboration in implementing programs that enhance the management of local water resources and protection of human health and ecosystems.

The Task Force should also identify and assess gaps in the management of water resources- finding opportunities or making recommendations to address significant gaps. The identified opportunities are to be summarized in an annual report provided to the Anoka County Human Services Committee and each City and Watershed Management Organization in the County.

The Task Force meets a minimum of twice yearly to review, update and coordinate the efforts and information of organizations and their agencies to manage local water resources.

The Anoka County Community Health and Environmental Services Department supports the Task Force in their activities as part of its assessment and planning activities established in Minnesota Statute 145A.

COLLABORATION IS THE KEY TO MANAGING LOCAL WATER RESOURCES FOR OUR HEALTH AND FUTURE.



DRINKING WATER PROTECTION

WELLHEAD PROTECTION - Anoka County communities established an innovative way to jointly protect the groundwater source of their municipal drinking water wells from contamination, called wellhead protection. In 1997, ten communities formed the Anoka County Municipal Wellhead Protection Group (a joint powers organization formed under Minnesota Statute 471.59) The Minnesota Department of Health and Anoka County Environmental Services work with the Group toward their mutual goal of protecting the safety of drinking water in Anoka County.

After completion of community wellhead protection plans the Group resolved to implement common elements of their plans together. This cooperative implementation not only reduces the cost to each community, but improves the effectiveness because municipal wellhead protection areas often extend into a neighbor community that is a member of the Group.

WELL WATER WISE - Anoka County Environmental Services provides water testing, information and consultative services to owners of private home and cabin water wells through the Well Water Wise (3W) program. 3W collaborates with 14 rural communities and county agencies to encourage private well owners to test the safety of their drinking water annually by distributing test kits at city halls and county offices. The communities also participate in the annual Well Water Wise week promotion (the first full week of May).

Environmental Services collates the water testing information to monitor water quality trends in private wells and rural parts of Anoka County. On occasion, in-depth investigation of well/water quality complaints have been addressed through the 3W water testing service.



OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Communities, Watershed Management Organizations, and county agencies determined that the best water management and protection tool to employ is outreach and education.

The numerous community-based and environmental education initiatives addressing specific issues such as storm water pollution prevention, wellhead protection, septic system maintenance, shoreland protection, and aquatic invasive species will have greater impact with coordinated efforts.

Residents, businesses and organizations are willing to cooperate in the protection and management of their natural resources, when asked and where supported. Leadership and enduring community support are critical elements to garner wider public cooperation. Coordination is another critical element to eliminate confusion over programs competing for public attention.

In 2011 Anoka County developed a water webpage addition to the county website. Through consultation with numerous communities and county agencies- an independent county-wide website was developed with financial assistance of the Wellhead Group municipal members. The Know The Flow website was launched in 2012 as a stand-alone collaborative water and environmental health education/outreach tool to support and coordinate initiatives that benefit our water resources.



www.KnowTheFlow.us