

The Source Water Protection Award



Recognition So Richly Deserved

Robyn Hoerr, MRWA Groundwater Specialist

I have focused through my years at Minnesota Rural Water Association (MRWA) working alongside public water supply systems developing Wellhead Protection plans and helping with their drinking water supply protection activities. Over this time I have gained a lasting appreciation for those associated with the operation of a public water supply who, by ingenuity, grit, and sometimes sheer determination overcome challenges that are presented in order to preserve and protect their source of drinking water.

Those of you already involved with drinking water protection activities know that this work is often done without fanfare and usually receiving little appreciation. Many of the drinking water protection 'victories' achieved remain behind the scenes and mostly go unnoticed. Unlike the ease of conveying value of a water treatment plant renovation to the City Council and residents, the final impact of drinking water protection efforts may be difficult to relate to others because what is achieved may be difficult to physically see, or the results may be unknown for many years into the future—when it can be shown that contamination of the water supply has not occurred.

In the early years of the Minnesota Source Water Protection (SWP) Program, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and MRWA SWP staff understood that some great work was being done and wanted a way to showcase to others some of the more notable drinking water protection projects taking place across the state. Thus, in 2007, the Source Water Protection Award was born! The very first award winner was the city of Edgerton for their work towards lowering their nitrate levels in their drinking water. Since then, there has been a winner honored every year at the MRWA Technical Conference in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

You may know of a public water supply system, individual, or organization that fits this description!

The purpose of the SWP award is to recognize public water supply systems, individuals, or organizations who demonstrate outstanding commitment to protecting their drinking water source. Each year the MDH and MRWA select the recipient of the SWP award from the collection of nominees that have been submitted from across the state. This year (2018) the award winner was the city of Mankato for their activities related to nitrate monitoring program, water conservation, and well sealing efforts. In addition to the winner, two award finalists are also recognized each year. In 2018, the finalists included the city of Altura, and the Lincoln Pipestone Rural Water system.

Undoubtedly, there are many worthy nominees for the SWP Award out there today who are quietly going about drinking water protection activities with little thought of gaining recognition for their extraordinary efforts. You may know of a public water supply system, individual, or organization that fits this description! If so, please consider completing a nomination form to include them for consideration of the upcoming 2019 award. They will be glad that you did, and completing a nomination and submitting it became easier with the new fillable PDF form that is on the MDH website. In an industry where good deeds and hard work is being done day in and day out, receiving a pat on the back by being nominated for the SWP Award would definitely be encouraging!



MRWA Source Water Protection Specialist Scott Hanson with SWP award winner Altura, MN



Left to right: Jay Stuefen, Jared Beck, Joe Weber, Jason Overby, Earl DeWilde, and Aaron Meyer



SWP Award with Mayor of Mankato, MN

In case you would like additional information, here are some of the more frequently asked questions about the SWP Award nomination process:

SWP Award Nomination FAQs:

Why should I nominate someone for a Source Water Protection Award?

To recognize public water supply systems, individuals, or organizations who have made a significant difference or contribution to protecting the sources of drinking water.

Who can be nominated?

Public water systems, individuals, or organizations that have made a significant difference or contribution in the field of Source Water Protection can be nominated to receive the award.

Who can submit a nomination?

Anyone can nominate a public water supply system, individual, or organization to receive an award.


How do I nominate a public water supplier, individual, or organization?

Fill out the nomination form that is on the SWP Awards page on the MDH website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/awards/>. Questions about the nomination form may be directed to health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us or 651-201-4700.


Can a public water supply system, individual, or organization be nominated more than once?

Yes. They can be nominated more than once, even if they were previously a winner.

The nomination period for the 2019 MRWA/MDH Source Water Protection Award will be open between November 1, 2018 and January 15, 2019. Go ahead and be someone's ENCOURAGER!



Your first call for
**PROFESSIONAL
PUMP SERVICES**



Minnesota Pump Works
Fluid Handling Professionals

1 Cannon St W | Dundas, MN 55019

Toll Free: 877-645-8004 | www.minnesotapumpworks.com



SERVING ALL OF MINNESOTA

*Video Televising • Sewer Jetting/Cleaning
Root Cutting • Lift Station Cleaning*

www.NelsonSanitation.com
320.393.2787