

**Press Release - March 18, 2019**

**Minnesota Rural Water Association**

**Contact: Lori Blair – Executive Director– 800-367-6792**

**Minnesota Rural Water Association presents the Henry Walraven Award to Dave Neiman, Minnesota Rural Water Association.**



The most prestigious award given by the Minnesota Rural Water Association is the Henry Walraven Award. The criteria for the Henry Walraven Award is leadership contributions for the improvement of a water/wastewater system in Minnesota. Henry Walraven had a vision. His vision was to help Minnesota's small rural community water system with training, troubleshooting problems and improving legislation that governs water systems. Henry was on the first MRWA board and often times when the association was struggling Henry kept the fire lit. Without the foresight and Henry's dedication to helping rural Minnesota solve water problems MRWA would not be what it is today. When Henry

suddenly passed away the MRWA board respected Henry and his vision so much they dedicated an award in his name so that he may live on throughout the growth of MRWA.

Dave joined MRWA on April 5, 1995. Under Dave's leadership and guidance, the program has expanded into more positions which work closely with the Minnesota Department of Health assisting communities in developing and implementing wellhead protection plans. Former MDH officials had this to say about Dave: *"Dave is one of the pioneers involved with developing the wellhead protection program and has greatly helped Minnesota Department of Health staff determine the role that planners have in preparing and implementing wellhead protection plans. Dave is always willing to 'think out of the box' in order to solve problems relating to drinking water protection and you can count on him to give a realistic and practical approach to problem solving. The Minnesota Rural Water Association could not have picked a better ambassador to help public water suppliers develop and implement wellhead protection plans. Dave is responsible for developing the roles that the Minnesota Rural Association plays in protecting public sources of drinking water and was instrumental in helping the Minnesota Department of Health assess the practicality of State wellhead regulations as they were being developed. The people of Minnesota owe a debt of gratitude to Dave for his devotion to drinking water protection and for the countless hours that he has contributed to helping public water supplies protection everyone's drinking water."* And *"It was important to have the buy-in and support of the regulated community from the "get go" for the development and implementation of Minnesota's Source Water Protection Program. In my opinion, Minnesota has one of the best SWP programs in the nation because, in part, of your involvement and the team spirit that existed between the regulator, MDH, and the regulated, members of the Minnesota Rural Water Association. Thanks, my friend and former colleague, for your years of dedicated services to one of the most important and often overlooked resources, our drinking water!"*

Congratulations Dave from the Minnesota Rural Water Association board of directors and staff.

*Photo above (from left to right) MRWA Chairman Les Anderson; MRWA Source Water Protection Specialist Dave Neiman; and MRWA Executive Director Lori Blair.*