

Press Release - Minnesota Rural Water Association

March 20, 2017

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Minnesota Rural Water Association and Minnesota Department of Health present the Source Water Protection Award to Rock County Rural Water.



The MRWA/MDH Source Water Protection Award is given annually at the MRWA Technical Conference to recognize the importance and value of source water protection efforts in Minnesota, and to recognize individuals, public water systems and organizations that have shown long term commitment, initiative, leadership, sharing of successes, and initiation or participation in activities which resulted in the protection or improvement of their source water.

The recipient of the 2017 MRWA/MDH Source Water Protection Award is Rock County Rural Water.

Rock County Rural Water (RCRW) is located in the southwest corner of the state and provides water to approximately 2,900 people and is the sole source for three communities. RCRW is in the process of amending their wellhead protection plan for the 12 public supply wells they operate. The aquifer which the RCRW system uses for their drinking water is high in nitrates. In order to try and prevent the need for treatment, RCRW has taken a very aggressive approach to try and determine the source of this nitrate loading. RCRW conducts an extensive monitoring program within their wellhead protection area and monitors the Elk River, the Rock River, and many tile outlets. RCRW has also formed very strong partnerships for their local county government and farmers within their wellhead protection area. These relationships have led to a number of important perpetual conservation easements up gradient of their wells and the development of a cost share program to provide financial incentives to farmers to implement nitrogen BMPs. Due to this program, nitrogen BMPs have been implemented on 1,700 acres within their wellhead protection area. These nitrogen BMPs likely would not have been implemented without the efforts of the RCRW cost-share program.

Our congratulations to Rock County Rural Water System.

Photo above from left to right: MRWA Chairman Steve Burklund, Rock County Rural Water Board Member Del Walraven, and NRWA Representative Steve Wear.