

# Contacts for Local and State Water Information

Based on <http://www.cleanwatermn.org/Resources/Directory-of-Contacts.aspx>

There are many federal, state and local units of government and organizations that you can contact for more information on water resource management, monitoring, regulation, and education. Since all levels of government—local, state, and federal—are involved in managing different aspects of water resources, knowing who to contact can be confusing. If you are uncertain, a good first call is your Soil and Water Conservation District (sometimes simply called “Conservation District”). They will be able to tell you what watershed you live in and what level of government is responsible for your issue of concern. Several online directories exist to help you track down contacts in your area.

**Minnesota Shoreland Management Resource Guide’s “Who to Contact”** <http://shorelandmanagement.org/contact/index.html>

**DNR’s Water-related Permit Contacts Directory** [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/permits/water/water\\_permit\\_contacts.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/permits/water/water_permit_contacts.html)

**Minnesota Water Let’s Keep it Clean website’s Directory of Contacts** <http://www.cleanwatermn.org/Resources/Directory-of-Contacts.aspx>

## Who’s Who?

### Local Water Managers

**City Water Managers** (stormwater pollution prevention programs): City departments involved in water management vary from city to city. Try Public Works, Planning and Zoning or Environmental Services. Some cities have taken on watershed management responsibilities through joint-power agreements with neighboring cities.

**County Water Managers:** Every county has a Local Water Manager, who coordinates water management on the county level and oversees sources of state water program funding.

**Conservation Districts** (MN Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts) <http://www.maswcd.org/>: These local units of government are based on county lines, but are separate from county government. They assist landowners, townships, cities and counties in carrying out projects to reduce soil erosion, stabilize stream banks, establish natural habitats, protect wetlands, monitor water, and reduce runoff pollution.

**Watershed Districts** (MN Association of Watershed Districts) <http://www.mnwatershed.org/>: Watershed districts are local units of government based on watershed lines. They often involve more than one county and several cities. Watershed districts are responsible for comprehensive water management and are able to create rules, levy taxes, purchase property and carry out projects to get their work done. Watershed districts exist in some communities throughout Minnesota.

**Joint Powers Watershed Management Organizations** (In the Twin Cities Metro Area only) <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/directories/wmolist.pdf>: These organizations are similar to watershed districts, but are governed differently. They do not have their own government, but rather are cooperative organizations of cities located in a watershed. The best way to contact a Joint Power Watershed Management Organization is through the public works department of a member city (see City Water Management section above).

### State Water Managers

Five state agencies are most heavily involved in different aspects of water management.

**Board of Water and Soil Resources** <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/index.html> (651-296-3767) BWSR is the state soil and water conservation agency, and it administers programs that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our lakes, rivers, and streams; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; and protect wetlands. The 20-member board consists of representatives of local and state government agencies and citizens.

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture** <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/en/protecting/waterprotection.aspx> (1-800-967-AGRI) The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is responsible for or involved in many agriculturally-related water quality programs. Examples include: Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program that helps finance water quality practices, research aimed at making cleanup efforts more effective, and regulation of most matters relating to pesticides and fertilizers.

**Minnesota Department of Health** <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/index.html> (651-215-0770 or 888-345-0823) The Minnesota Department of Health protects public health by ensuring a safe and adequate supply of drinking water at all public water systems, which are those that serve water to the public. This includes municipalities, manufactured housing developments, businesses, schools, and other facilities that serve water to more than 25 people on a regular basis.

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/water/index.html> (651-296-6157 or 888-646-6367) The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has the unique role of water quantity management for the state. The DNR strives to help citizens ensure the future of our water resources through programs that manage water resources, watersheds, ecological resources, Wild and Scenic Rivers, shorelands, floodplains, aquatic and terrestrial plants, public waters inventory, and by providing statewide water education and climate, stream, lake, wetland and groundwater information to local and state level decision-makers.

**Minnesota Pollution Control Agency** <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/index.html> (651-296-6300 or 800-657-3864) Water is one of Minnesota's most abundant and precious resources. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) helps protect our water by monitoring its quality, setting standards and controlling what may go into it.