

# NEWS



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**CROW WING COUNTY**  
BRAINERD, MINNESOTA 56401

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## CROW WING COUNTY TO OFFER FREE NITRATE TESTING AT COUNTY FAIR

The Crow Wing County Land Services Department, in association with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, is pleased to offer free nitrate testing at the Crow Wing County Fair for residents of Crow Wing County and surrounding areas on July 31 – August 4, 2012 in the Land Services-Natural Resources Building.

The test takes a matter of seconds and will be conducted by Land Services staff. For best results, a 1 cup sample should be taken after running the tap for several minutes and before any filtering is done. A disposable bottle or container should be used to collect the sample in case County staff is unable to run the test right away. In that case, the results will be sent to the landowner. Participants are also encouraged to bring the unique well number which can be found on the well and the approximate depth of the well.

Nitrates are a common contaminant found in many wells in Minnesota. Too many nitrates in drinking water can cause serious health problems for young infants, including “blue baby syndrome” (or methemoglobinemia). Nitrates in our environment come from decomposition of plants and animal wastes. People also add nitrates to the environment in the form of fertilizers. Although natural nitrate levels in Minnesota are generally quite low, elevated levels are often found in agricultural areas where nitrate sources are often concentrated. Nitrates are tasteless and odorless, so routine testing is important, especially for landowners with shallow wells. If high nitrate levels are detected, landowners will be directed to a certified lab for further analysis.

Groundwater protection is one of the 6 priorities of the Crow Wing County Water Plan. Water planning is identifying what works best to protect and enhance Crow Wing County’s surface and groundwater resources by identifying existing and potential threats to these resources and implementing actions to minimize them. Most of Crow Wing County’s residents rely on groundwater for their source of drinking water. Protecting this resource is one of the most important things we can do to help keep our water clean.

The Land Services Department is committed to providing excellent customer service while helping landowners make wise choices that protect Crow Wing County’s extraordinary natural resources. Citizens are encouraged to contact the Environmental Services Office at (218) 824-1125 or [environmental.services@crowwing.us](mailto:environmental.services@crowwing.us) to discuss land use and water protection activities. Crow Wing County information and resources can be found at [www.co-crow-wing.mn.us](http://www.co-crow-wing.mn.us)

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