



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Date:** July 21, 2014**Contact:** Mitch Brinks**Phone:** (218) 824-1128**Crow Wing County Reminds Landowners to Protect Their Groundwater**

Nearly all of Crow Wing County's residents rely on groundwater for their source of drinking water. Groundwater protection is identified as a priority in the new Crow Wing County Water Plan, which can be viewed online at [Water & Wetlands](#). The Crow Wing County Land Services Department wants to remind landowners of simple steps they can take to protect this resource as well as available resources to assist them.

Free Nitrate Testing

Crow Wing County and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture are pleased to once again offer free nitrate testing for residents of Crow Wing County and surrounding areas during the Crow Wing County Fair. Landowners can bring in a fresh sample of water from their tap to the County booth in the Natural Resources building.

"The test takes a matter of seconds and can often be conducted while they wait" stated Crow Wing County Water Protection Specialist Mitch Brinks. For best results, a 1 cup sample should be taken after running the tap for several minutes and before any filtering is done. Participants are also encouraged to bring the unique well number which can be found on the well and the approximate age and depth of the well.

Nitrate testing is also offered on a regular basis at the Crow Wing County Land Service Department in Brainerd during normal business hours. Nitrates and other contaminants are not detected by sight, smell, or taste, and Crow Wing County encourages landowners to regularly test their water. The County only tests for nitrates, however residents can contact one of several certified laboratories in the Brainerd area to conduct a wider range of tests.

Well Sealing Grant

Crow Wing County also wants to remind residents that funds are still available to assist landowners with the sealing of unused wells. A well that is not in use, or abandoned, can be a source of groundwater contamination by providing a potential direct path for surface water runoff, contaminated water, or improperly disposed waste to reach an uncontaminated groundwater source. Unused larger-diameter wells can also be a safety hazard for children and animals. The program will pay for 50% of the cost to properly seal the well, up to a maximum of \$1000. A state-licensed well contractor must conduct the work. All landowners with unused wells are encouraged to apply. Sealing involves clearing the well of debris and filling the well with grout. Funding for this program is from the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment that was passed by Minnesota voters in 2008.

Low-income Septic System Upgrade Grant

Crow Wing County and the Region Five Development Commission also have remaining funds to assist with replacement or repair of septic systems for low income landowners in order to improve and protect groundwater quality in Crow Wing County. For more information or to have an application mailed to you, please visit www.regionfive.org/forms or contact Anne Hanson at Region 5: 218-894-3233. Funding for this program is also from the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment.

The Land Services Department is committed to providing excellent customer service while helping our residents make wise decisions that protect Crow Wing County's extraordinary natural resources. Citizens are encouraged to contact the Environmental Services Office at (218) 824-1125 or to visit the Crow Wing County Web Site www.crowwing.us for more information.

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Our Vision: Being Minnesota's favorite place.
Our Mission: Serve well. Deliver value. Drive results.
Our Values: Be responsible. Treat people right. Build a better future.

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