

# Advisory Council on Wells and Borings Meeting

## WELL MANAGEMENT SECTION

**Date** December 3, 2025

**Location** Hybrid Meeting

**Attendees** **In Person:** David Duffey, Tannie Eshenaur, David Henrich, Bruce Johnson, David Kill, Mike Liljigren, Jordan Mayer, Don McKeever, Roger Renner, Mike Steffl, Joe Stevens, Gabe Sweet

**Virtually:** Ed Lenz, Kelly Gribauval-Hite, Richard Lamb, Steven Traut

**Others Present:** Jon Olson, Kara Dennis, Kelly Medellin, Kira Silvers, Mindy Erickson, Teresa Purrington, Mark Malmanger

**Absent:** Danny Nubbe

## Call to Order

David Henrich, Chair, called the meeting to order. Kelly Medellin went through roll call.

## Approval of meeting agenda

Joe Stevens made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Mike Steffl seconded the motion. David Henrich asked to add data centers and water use at open forum. David Henrich asked the council to vote on the motion to approve the revised agenda with those in favor say “aye” and those opposed say “nay”. Motion carries.

## Approval of last meeting minutes

David Kill made a motion to accept the Advisory Council minutes from September 3, 2025. Roger Renner seconded the motion. David Henrich asked the council to vote on the motion to approve the minutes with those in favor say “aye” and those opposed say “nay”. Motion carries.

## Old Business

### Threaded PVC pitless adaptors

David Henrich reported on threaded PVC pitless adaptors. There was some discussion as to what the wording is in well rules. David stated that we need to decide if we’re going to accept the use of these fittings. Mark Malmanger stated that the small diameter ones are failing, and drillers are replacing them. He also stated that the 4 and 5 have been in rules since 1998. Steven Traut stated that all casings could get hit and break. Teresa Purrington stated she

appreciates the council input and clarifying what the rule states. She'll need to meet with program supervisors, talk to other states, and revisit the rule.

Mike Steffl made a motion to revisit this at the next meeting with an update from MDH. Roger Renner seconded the motion. Motion carries.

## **New Business**

### **MDH Announcements**

#### **Water Policy/Clean Water Fund updates**

Tannie Eshenaur reported on the Water Policy Center (WPC) and multiagency SE MN Nitrate response. She reported on the ongoing work of the SE MN nitrate response, currently in Phase II, Public Health Intervention. They are still offering free water tests; over 3,000 test kits have been requested, with 59% of kits returned. This is the highest rate of return they have seen in several testing programs. There have been over 226 reverse osmosis mitigation systems installed. And in the counties conducting well inventories, 789 wells have been submitted for addition to the County Well Index. Tannie reviewed summaries of the private well test results for the five contaminants. The council discussed the high lead results at 39%. The council agreed this is probably not from the well or the groundwater, but from old premise plumbing. Gabe Sweet suggested MDH consult with the Minnesota Geologic Survey to see if they have additional information about the geology to figure out why. Steven Traut asked if they're running the water first. Tannie responded that they don't ask them to do that first but ask for the first draw so that water that has stagnated in the pipes overnight is what is analyzed.

Tannie reported on a household level cost benefit analysis for well treatment and mitigation. Bay West is providing this analysis. After this report is complete, applied economists at the University of Minnesota will conduct a statewide analysis of the costs to treat water from private wells in relationship to the diseases and deaths that would be prevented. Tannie also reported on a statewide assessment of private well users' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. The survey was mailed to 4000 private well owners and had nearly 50% respond. Tannie reported on the results, and focus group discussions, and action plans. Tannie reported on potential policy recommendations, including advanced drinking water protection for FY26-27 and high-volume water users. Water Quality Center is leading MDH staff in compiling drafts of FY28-29 proposals for the Clean Water Fund FY28-29 budget cycle.

#### **eLicensing updates**

Kara Dennis reported on Well Management Section MDH Licensing System. She reported that the soft launch is tomorrow for licensing and rig registrations only. All new applicants will need to apply online, no more paper applications. For those already licensed, you'll be able to renew online or on paper. Kara challenged the council to renew through the new system. Kara reported that notifications, permits and records should be launched in early 2026.

Kara reported that there are changes to expect. Renewal paper applications have been revised and look different. If you want to pay by credit card, you have to submit and pay through online

system. License numbers will be changing for all licenses. You'll still be able to see your original license numbers. Kara showed the council a demo of the MDH Licensing System.

## Education Topic: Arsenic in Groundwater

Mindy Erickson from US Geological Survey (USGS) reported on arsenic in groundwater. From a national perspective, Arsenic is most common, including in Minnesota. There's no place it's not detected in Minnesota. Arsenic is a carcinogen, causes neuropathy and other adverse health effects. The study including sampling the well after initial installation, 3-6 months later and 12 plus months after drilling. There were about 250 wells sampled. Overall, 28% exceeded >10 mg/L. High concentrations were elevated up to 80 mg/L. She presented results in the context of redox condition and pH, showed how the initial sample collected was more similar to later samples or not, and how the placement of the well screen can affect the level of arsenic. Study major findings included learning water quality prediction in complex glacial aquifer settings, mapping variables proxy for arsenic sources, and regional-scale verification that clay gap is an important risk factor. 50% of glacial aquifer wells had an increase in arsenic after 12 months, and half had greater than 16% increase. Mindy reported routine disinfection can cause a spike of very high arsenic concentration. Wells need to be tested twice to understand acute and long-term exposure risk, and regional equilibrium groundwater geochemistry lies at the boundary of solid and aqueous iron. She reported on the Private Well Education Program. David Henrich stated that well contractors should be invited to this list. Tannie stated that she suggested adding well contractors, and she'll follow-up to see why they weren't included.

## MGS Updates

Jordan Mayer reported on MGS updates and the County Geologic Atlas (CGA) status as of Dec. 2025. The CGAs are comprehensive maps of geology at the county scale. CGA maps are available on the MGS website or in person at the MGS. The CGAs are funded through LCCMR. CWI/MWI modernization might include updates to both. Jordan reminded the council that they can use the CWI Data Viewer and included a QR code in his presentation. The CWI viewer application works great on mobile devices.

## Advice Topic: CWI Modernization

Kira Silvers from MDH Drinking Water Protection reported on CWI modernization. Kira asked the council questions on how they access CWI data, what data do they use and why, what problems have you encountered, how do you address issues and do you send corrections/updates to MGS. Council suggested a way to send corrections to well locations online. Kira asked the council to try the CWI Data Viewer and let Jordan know of any suggestions.

## DLI-MDH Water Service Line Plan Review

David Henrich reported on MDH water service line plan review starting Jan. 1, 2026. Teresa Purrington asked DWP staff in attendance to report on this topic. Dave Hokanson reported that there is a draft delegation agreement with the commissioner that needs to be signed by the end of the month. MDH is preparing to access those plans and execute those inspections. David Weum stated that MDH is delegated to review the plumbing and the plumbing code. He stated

that it will be useful to MDH to have some contractors weigh in on new process. Anita Anderson stated they're updating the plan submittal form and inspection options available. She would like to know if the Advisory Council would like to review this documentation. Mike Steffl asked if they would be allowed to video the water main and send the video as the submittal. Anita stated they're working on a virtual option and would want to bring back to a group to test. Mike also asked if they know how long the approval will take. Anita stated they are hiring new staff for this approval and turn-around should be within 2 weeks. Don McKeever asked if this is just for the water lines. Anita stated it would be everything listed in the statute. David Henrich asked which types of water lines does this inspection apply to. David Weum responded that anything that the plumbing code applies to, which includes all service lines, that serves a commercial or industrial purpose or residential with 5 or more. David Henrich stated that there are multiple definitions of public, and there will be an increase in the number of plan reviews submitted for contractors. Joe Stevens asked what MDH will request to see as part of the review. David Weum responded that there won't be a lot that needs to be submitted by contractors. David Weum also stated that he's on the plumbing board, and they are reviewing the plumbing code. David Henrich stated that MDH should use the EPA guidance for what is a public water supply. Dave Hokanson responded that they must follow DLI's authority. Teresa asked the council who has the authority to enforce if a plan isn't submitted. Mike Steffl responded that the drilling industry monitors each other. Dave Hokanson stated that DWP will be responsible for enforcement. Teresa stated that if WMS has any guidance or information on the delegation, they will send that to the LWCs through gov.delivery .

## Council Member Open Forum

The council discussed industry hot topics:

- David Henrich reported that data centers and water use will be a hot topic in the new year.
- David Henrich stated he also wants Tannie to report on small water supply systems at the next meeting.

## Next meeting

Date: March 4, 2026

Time: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: MPCA

## Adjourn

Joe Stevens moved to end the meeting. David Kill seconded the motion. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned.

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