



# January – March 2026 Update

## ADDRESSING NITRATE IN SOUTHEAST MINNESOTA

This document provides updates from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) on their efforts to address nitrate in groundwater in southeast Minnesota from January – March 2026. The updates are categorized by how work is listed in the [Work Plan: Addressing Nitrate in Southeast Minnesota \(PDF\)](#).

Text in the shaded blue boxes is an explanation of the goal as defined in the [Work Plan \(PDF\)](#).

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## Phase II: Public Health Intervention

Phase II work began in July 2024 and will continue throughout the duration of the effort.

Note: Phase I work was completed in October 2024. Many of the efforts that began during Phase I continue or have been expanded to a broader audience in Phase II.

### Goal 1: Identify impacted residences (MDH)

Identify each residence that obtains drinking water from a private well. The identification process will combine existing information with a project to add missing information.

#### Well inventory workplans and contracts

MDH continues to work with each of the eight counties to develop well inventory programs. MDH is working with partners from each county to develop strategies to address well inventory minimum requirements, increase knowledge about where private wells are located, funding availability, and capacity to do well inventory work. These partners include local public health departments, delegated well programs, environmental services, and soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) who work with private wells and local government leadership.

MDH is working with each county individually to develop strategies and contracts to complete a well inventory that meets each county's unique needs. This work is being done strategically in a phased approach to address differing funding and capacity at each county. All eight counties expressed interest in a grant to increase the number of wells in the well inventory.

The Dodge, Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, and Wabasha County grant agreements have been executed, and work has begun. MDH is working closely with Winona and Olmsted Counties to develop workplans and grant agreements. MDH expects that Winona and Olmsted County grant agreements will be executed in the next quarter (Figure 1).

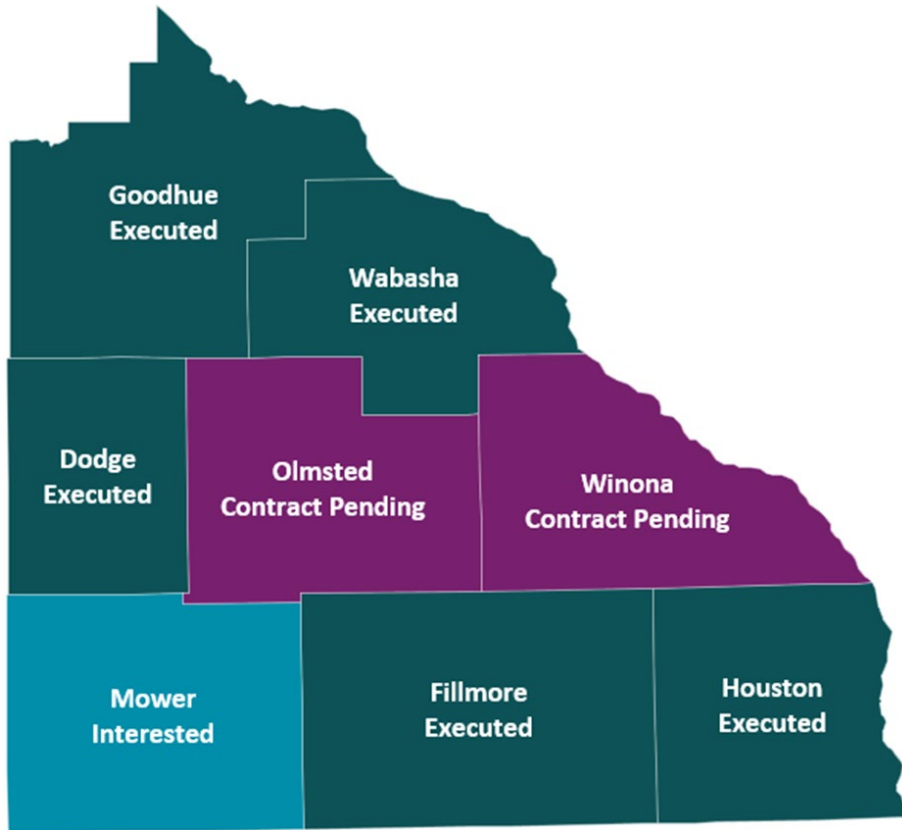


Figure 1: Well Inventory interest and contract status by county.

### Well inventory progress

So far, **local partners have located 2499 wells** during the well inventory that were not previously included in the County Well Index (CWI). As local partners reviewed the database to ensure no well is assigned two well numbers, they also identified 1061 wells to update with improved locations.

Note: While developing the workplan, MDH estimated 11,895 wells were not included in CWI. Wells missing from this database were probably constructed before 1974 when MDH began licensing well contractors and requiring submittal of well records.

This estimate assumes that each rural household has a well on their property. However, we know that some properties share wells, but at the time the estimate was made, we did not know how many might be shared. Since then, we have found that approximately 20% of well users who requested a water test in SE MN indicate that they are on a shared well. With this information a more realistic estimate is 9500 wells that were not included in the well inventory at the time the workplan was developed.

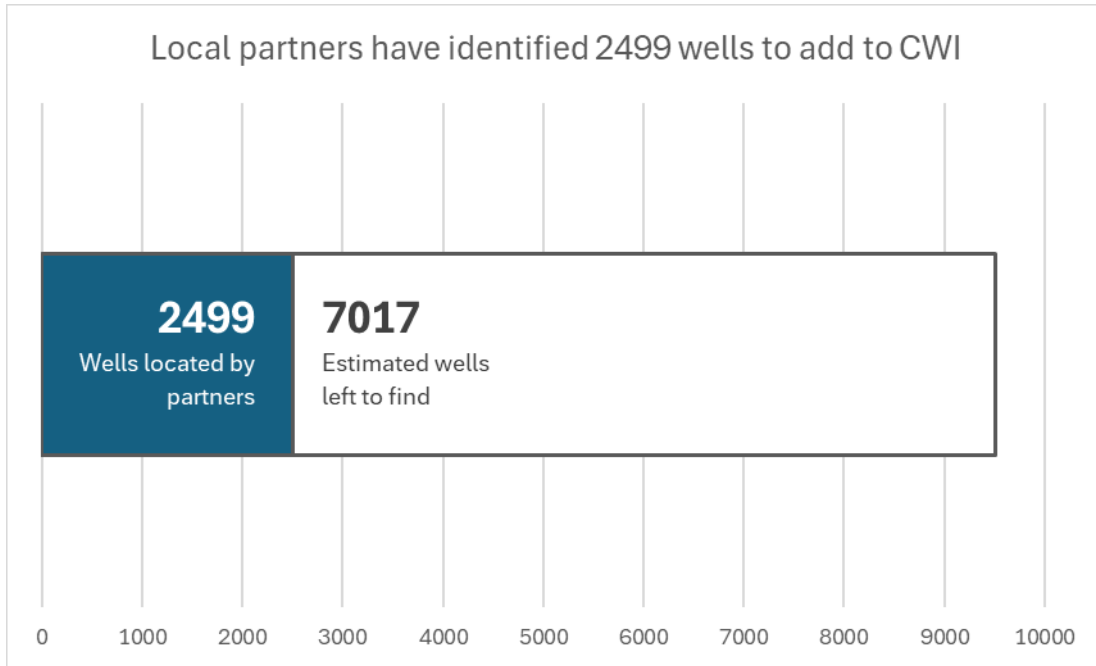


Figure 2: Local partners have located 2,499 of the 9,516 wells estimated to be “missing” from the County Well Index.

### Minnesota Geologic Survey

The Minnesota Geologic Survey (MGS) is the agency responsible for the County Well Index. MGS has trained each agency on best practices for the well inventory. This includes how to gather information, cross-check against wells already in the inventory, and implement data quality control and quality assurance. MGS will also serve as a resource for the grantees when they have questions.

### Dodge County

Dodge County has identified 74 wells this quarter for a total of 423 private wells not previously included in the County Well Index. Dodge County has also identified and updated a total of 100 wells that needed updated location information.

### Fillmore County

Fillmore County continues making progress on their well inventory. Over the life of the project, staff have checked and verified 918 wells (116 wells in this quarter). Staff modified or put new billion series numbers on 175 wells across 5 (of 36) townships.

Progress was (as planned) slower this quarter as they resolved an issue with how the contract was set up and because the lead worker is a college student and is in school this semester.

### Houston County (Root River SWCD)

Root River SWCD has identified 21 private wells not previously included in the County Well Index. They have been reviewing wells by township and have updated 153 wells with improved location information.

## Goodhue County

Goodhue County has identified 1,356 wells this quarter for a total of 1,706 private wells not previously included in CWI. They have also identified and updated 525 wells in CWI that needed updated location information for a total of 686 wells with improved location information over the life of the project.

## Olmsted County

MDH worked closely with Olmsted County this quarter to develop a workplan and grant agreement for their well inventory work. It is expected that the grant agreement will be executed in Q2 2026.

## Wabasha County

Wabasha County has identified 8 wells this quarter for a total of 90 private wells not previously included in the County Well Index.

## Winona County

MDH worked closely with Winona County this quarter to develop a workplan and grant agreement for their well inventory work. It is expected that the grant agreement will be executed in Q2 2026.

### **Water testing & well inventory outreach collaboration**

SEM WAL and the well inventory grantees have partnered to send out free water testing flyers along with well inventory mailers inviting well users to send in information about their wells. SEM WAL developed and distributed the flyers and the well inventory contracts mailed the flyers.

## **Goal 2: Conduct education and outreach (MDH)**

Provide notice to newly and previously impacted residents and continue to provide notice as long as contamination persists at or above the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for nitrate.

### **Partners promoted free private well testing**

Between January and March, partners actively promoted private well testing through a variety of channels, including television, social media, and postcards. Tap-In continued their partnership with advertising agency Townsquare Media to distribute promotional video content.

Another notable effort was partnering with Goodhue County to distribute 2,000 postcards directly to potential well users advertising the test kit opportunity. Over 289 requesters identified the postcards as the way they heard about the test kit opportunity (figure 2) and it continues to be the number one way people have heard about requesting a test kit. We plan to

continue to use this strategy with other counties, sending out batches of postcards at a rate where the increased demand will not exceed lab capacity.

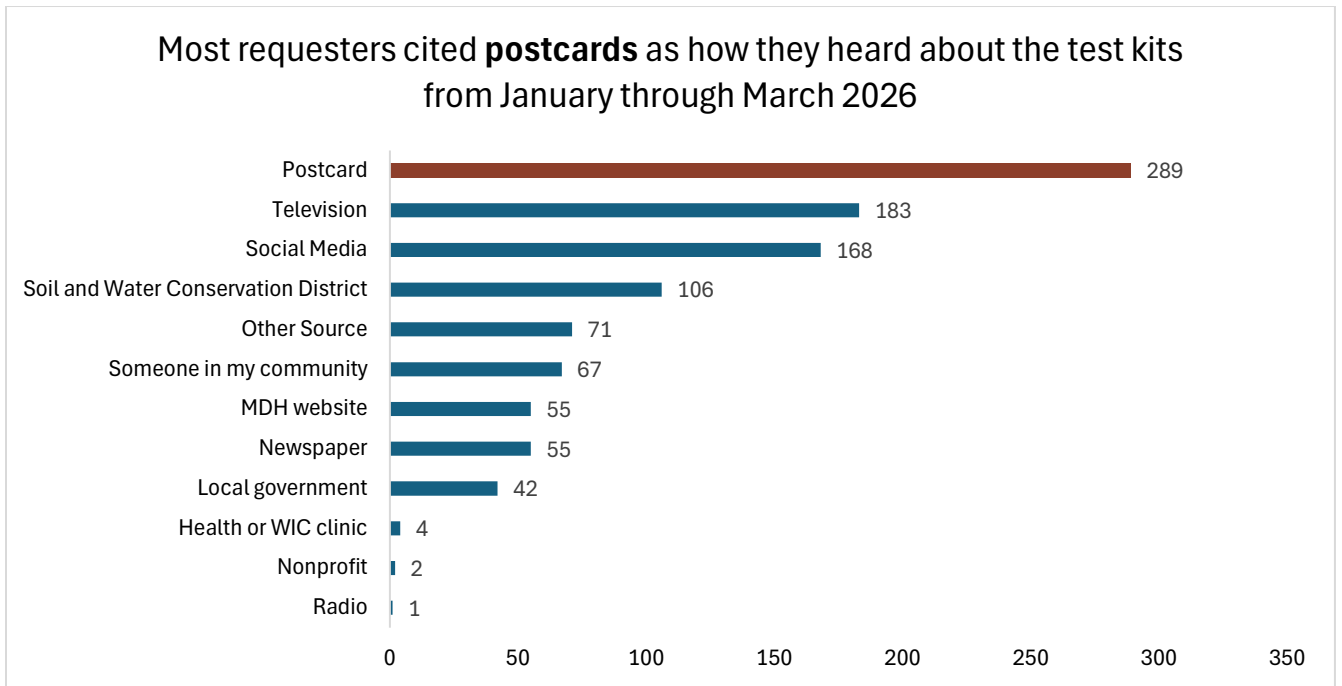


Figure 3: Most requesters cited postcards as how they heard about test kits. Direct mailing to potential well users drove this increase in awareness and ultimately demand for test kits.

**Social media ad campaign and marketing work**

MDH continues to collaborate with the marketing firm [MP+G](#) to support outreach efforts for private well testing. In early January 2026, MDH launched five YouTube [videos](#) as part of the [Get Well Tested](#) campaign. Four of the videos are approximately 90 seconds long and formatted vertically to optimize mobile viewing, while one two-minute video is presented in a horizontal format for desktop viewing.



The vertical videos have been used in targeted Google and Meta advertising campaigns focused on residents in eight counties in southeast Minnesota.

As of March 31, 2026, each of the four advertisement videos had received more than 18,000 views, with the “Short Overview: Well Tested, Well Done” video exceeding 100,000 views. The majority of these views are attributable to paid advertising. While full video completion rates are lower than total views, performance is consistent with benchmarks for government agency content.

The campaign has generated 985,271 impressions, 35,120 video views, and 168 respondents who reported social media as their source of information when asked how they learned about the opportunity. The advertising campaign is scheduled to continue through May 2026.

In addition to video content, MDH and MP+G have developed supporting graphics for use in the social media campaign. During the second quarter, additional materials - including printable flyers, billboards, and direct mail pieces - will be finalized to support in-person outreach and partner-led distribution.



### Goal 3: Test private well drinking water (MDH & SEMWAL)

Offer nitrate analysis of drinking water samples from any private well users in the Karst Region that request testing. The aim is to test at least 10 percent of the private wells during this first year.

During Phase I (2024), free private well tests were available to households with vulnerable populations (households with babies under one year old or pregnant people). At the end of 2024, the response transitioned to Phase II and free testing became available to all private well users in the eight-county area. MDH has a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with Olmsted County to conduct the free water testing through the Southeast Minnesota Water Analysis Laboratory (SEMWAL). Test kits for five contaminants (bacteria, nitrate, arsenic, lead, and manganese) are available to private well users in each of the eight counties. Private well users can apply for a free water test kit through an online request form that is maintained by MDH. Each week MDH provides a list of eligible requests to the lab. The lab mails test kits directly to the requestor’s designated mailing address. The kit includes a return UPS label to return the test kit by mail for free.

#### Quarter 1 data

From January 1 – March 31, 2026:

- 1,004 eligible households requested a private well water test kit.
- 541 households who received test kits returned them and received water test results.

- 26 households or approximately **5 percent** of wells tested this quarter had a nitrate concentration of 10 milligrams per liter (mg/L) or more (Table 1).

**Table 1: Private Well water quality test results from January 1 through March 31, 2026.**

| County         | Number of Kits | Bacteria Present | Nitrate (> 10 mg/L) | Arsenic (> 0.5 µg/L) | Lead (> 0.5 µg/L) | Manganese (> 100 µg/L) |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Percent</b> |                | 11%              | 5%                  | 23%                  | 43%               | 9%                     |
| <b>Total</b>   | 541            | 61               | 26                  | 126                  | 233               | 49                     |
| Dodge          | 30             | 3                | 1                   | 15                   | 10                | 2                      |
| Fillmore       | 47             | 4                | 2                   | 5                    | 21                | 4                      |
| Goodhue        | 89             | 8                | 6                   | 17                   | 45                | 10                     |
| Houston        | 97             | 15               | 5                   | 8                    | 54                | 4                      |
| Mower          | 105            | 8                | 6                   | 60                   | 37                | 22                     |
| Olmsted        | 91             | 9                | 1                   | 11                   | 35                | 5                      |
| Wabasha        | 57             | 9                | 4                   | 7                    | 23                | 1                      |
| Winona         | 25             | 5                | 1                   | 3                    | 8                 | 1                      |

**All time results data**

Since the beginning of the response through March 31, 2026:

- 4,243 eligible households requested a test kit.
- 10% of households requesting a test report that they have a pregnant person or baby under 1 year old in the household that drinks well water.
- 2,327 households who received test kits returned them and received water test results.
- 55% of test kits have been returned to the lab for testing.
- Approximately **seven percent** of wells tested had a nitrate concentration of 10 mg/L or more.

Year two of the project began January 1, 2026. MDH set a goal of 20% of private well households requesting and testing a sample in the first two years of the project.

- Houston, Mower, and Winona Counties are the closest to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year target of having 20% of households request a water test. In Winona and Mower Counties, this is likely due to public awareness campaigns by local partners using traditional media and social media. In Houston County a postcard campaign increased the number of requests significantly.
- Fillmore County is the furthest away from meeting the 2nd year target. A postcard campaign for the counties is planned for the second quarter of 2026 to help boost the request numbers.

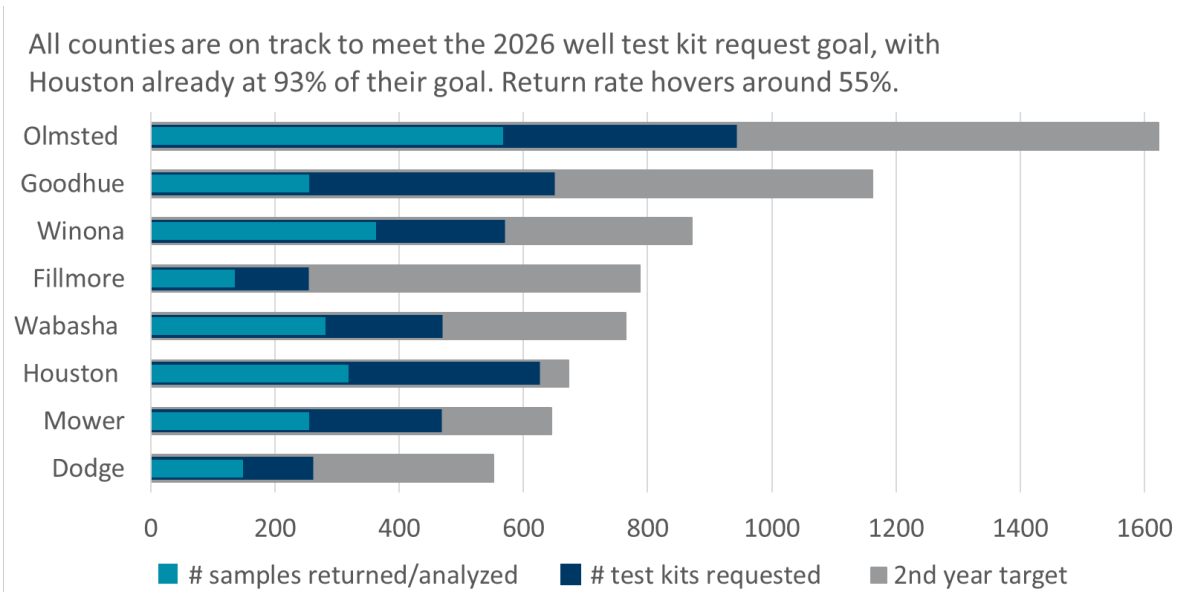


Figure 4: MDH set a goal of 20% of private well households requesting and testing a sample in the first two years. Year 2 began January 1, 2026.

**Table 2: Private Well water quality test results - all time**

| County         | Number of Kits | Bacteria Present | Nitrate (> 10 mg/L) | Arsenic (> 0.5 µg/L) | Lead (> 0.5 µg/L) | Manganese (> 100 µg/L) |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Percent</b> | <b>100</b>     | 13%              | 7%                  | 19%                  | 41%               | 8%                     |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>2327</b>    | <b>301</b>       | <b>153</b>          | <b>437</b>           | <b>947</b>        | <b>186</b>             |
| Dodge          | 148            | 15               | 5                   | 65                   | 58                | 14                     |
| Fillmore       | 130            | 28               | 18                  | 9                    | 56                | 6                      |
| Goodhue        | 260            | 33               | 12                  | 38                   | 113               | 21                     |
| Houston        | 321            | 61               | 25                  | 23                   | 146               | 19                     |
| Mower          | 254            | 24               | 15                  | 152                  | 89                | 63                     |
| Olmsted        | 568            | 57               | 19                  | 64                   | 181               | 35                     |
| Wabasha        | 282            | 43               | 25                  | 43                   | 136               | 16                     |
| Winona         | 364            | 40               | 34                  | 43                   | 168               | 12                     |

**Mitigation navigator**

SEMWAL has a Mitigation Navigator on staff funded by the JPA with MDH. The mitigation navigator is responsible for reaching out to private well users with unsafe levels of nitrate and other contaminants shown in the water tests. They discuss treatment options with well users and answer any questions well users may have.

**Test kit follow-up**

In order to improve the return rate for the test kits, SEMWAL developed a postcard reminder for well users who had not yet sent back their test kit. The postcard is sent regularly to households who have not yet sent their test kits in to be tested.

**Goal 4: Provide alternate water (MDA & Olmsted SWCD)**

Drinking water will be offered as soon as practical to each residence where water tests show an exceedance of the MCL for nitrate in the private well. When funding is identified, most of the funding will be passed through to the TAP-IN Collaborative.

MDA, in collaboration with Olmsted County, is continuing to provide water filtration systems for eligible well owners in southeast Minnesota. In October 2024, the first reverse osmosis systems were installed, at no cost, for households that have elevated nitrate or cyanazine in their drinking water well. **As of March 31, 2026, a total of 263 reverse osmosis (RO) systems have been installed throughout the eight-county area.** The majority of RO systems were installed for nitrate mitigation. There were 21 ROs installed at sites with cyanazine exceedances; however, 14 of those also had a nitrate exceedance. Winona County (61) has the most RO installations to date, followed by Fillmore (46), and Goodhue (42) Counties (Table 3). More water filtration systems will be installed in the coming months as this effort continues.

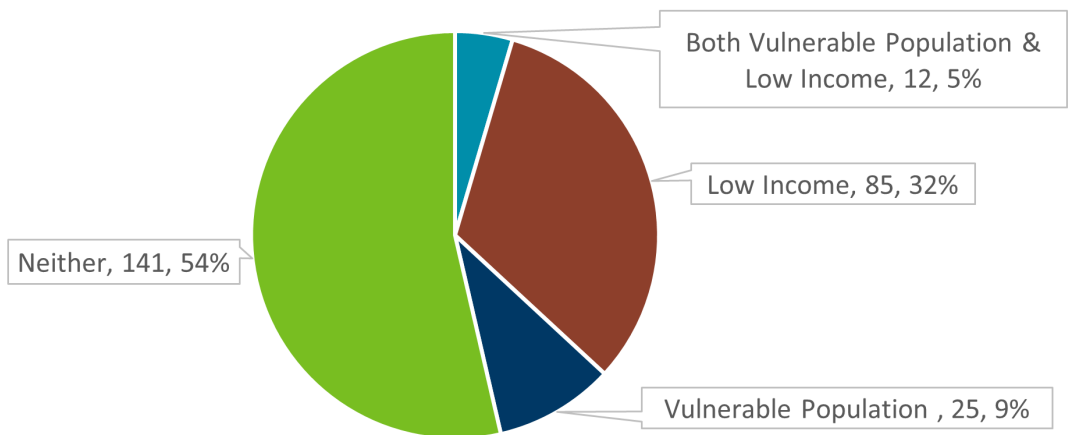
**Table 3. Reverse Osmosis Installations, by County**

| County        | Dodge | Fillmore | Goodhue | Houston | Mower | Olmsted | Wabasha | Winona | Total |
|---------------|-------|----------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|--------|-------|
| ROs Installed | 10    | 46       | 42      | 36      | 19    | 14      | 35      | 61     | 263   |

**Vulnerable population and low-income households**

The mitigation program prioritizes households with a vulnerable population (pregnant people or infants), and low-income households (below 300% of the federal poverty level). Approximately nine percent of the households that received the RO mitigation systems were in a vulnerable population, 32% were low-income households, and five percent met both criteria (Figure 4).

**Reverse Osmosis Installations at Households with a Vulnerable Population and Low Income**



■ Both Vulnerable Population & Low Income ■ Low Income ■ Vulnerable Population ■ Neither

Figure 5: Reverse osmosis installations at households with a vulnerable population or low income.

### Follow-up water sampling

After RO installations are completed, water test kits are sent to the homeowners to test the effectiveness of the system for nitrate removal. As of March 31, 2026, **all post-treatment nitrate samples have been below 10 mg/L.**

### RO maintenance visits

RO maintenance visits are provided for interested homeowners who had an RO installation over one year ago. The maintenance visits began October 2025 and include pre-treatment and post-treatment water samples. As of March 31, 2026, a total of 118 visits have been conducted, and all the post-treatment nitrate samples have been below 10 mg/L.

### Quarter 4 data

From January 1 – March 31, 2026:

- 18 RO systems were installed throughout the eight-county area.
- 63 RO maintenance visits were provided for interested homeowners who had an RO installation over one year ago.

### MDA Alternate Nitrate Mitigation Program

Last year, MDA and MDH worked together to develop an interagency agreement that passes mitigation funds from MDA to MDH. The funding allows MDH to stand up their own mitigation program that allows additional options for nitrate mitigation.

During this and the previous quarter, MDH and Olmsted County worked to set up the framework for this project including: development of a policy that guides installers to use the most effective and appropriate treatment option, expanding mitigation options to include well reconstruction, other treatment methods, and new well construction, and developing policies to ensure the well users 300% below the federal poverty level can receive additional financial assistance when mitigating nitrate in their private well. MDH developed an online income verification tool to support this effort. Alternate mitigation options will be available to eligible households starting in the next quarter.

### Goal 5: Provide public record of work (MDH)

This goal has three main components and separate strategies. The components and strategies are below:

- Maintain and regularly publish records
- Measure Minnesota's progress
- Effective way to communicate updates to the public

The Water Policy Center (WPC) at MDH is in the process of hiring an information strategy position. The candidate has been chosen and will be hired in Q2. This position will assist with well and water quality information storage, analysis, and display. Current WPC staff are taking

data visualization training to increase clarity and effectiveness of data visualizations that are shared with partners and the public.

MDH continues to work with the Environmental Public Health Tracking team to develop maps of nitrate in private wells for southeast Minnesota and a dashboard on the [MN Public Health Data Access Portal](#). Maps with aggregated nitrate testing data have been added to the [Private Wells in Southeast Minnesota page](#) that show the percent of private wells with nitrate levels at or above 10 mg/L by county and by census tract. At this time, the maps are limited to using data from Southeast Minnesota Water Analysis Laboratory (SEM WAL) 2016 - 2024. MDH will continue to add data points to the visualizations as it is available. Note that SEM WAL is only one of the laboratories private well users may use; therefore, the data visualization is not inclusive of all private well testing for nitrate completed in southeast Minnesota.

A dashboard with data measuring the progress of the response is in development and will be added to the MDH website as soon as it is ready and will be updated quarterly as information is available to MDH.

Additional data visualizations, including data by township as requested by local partners, are planned and will be added to the site as capacity to develop and display data visualizations increases.

## Goal 6: Engage stakeholders and develop and maintain partnerships (MDH)

We will continue engaging stakeholders and partners by elevating the work of the TAP-IN Collaborative and providing regular updates and opportunities to dialogue about public health approaches and nitrate in groundwater.

This phase may also include forming an advisory council consisting of petitioners, local government leaders, and other local partners to help guide the public health intervention work.

### TAP-IN

MDH meets with TAP-IN leadership when needed and regularly consults with TAP-IN to ensure we are meeting their needs. MDH has developed a SharePoint Site to have a central location for updates and documents.

MDH shares quarterly email updates and hosts quarterly meetings for local leadership to learn and ask questions about progress.

### Olmsted County & Southeast Minnesota Water Analysis Lab

MDH continues to meet weekly with SEM WAL to discuss challenges, successes, and other updates.

### Prairie Island Indian Community

Members from the Prairie Island Indian Community (PIIC) live and use private wells within the petition area. MDH and SEMWAL lab staff continue to work with PIIC staff to increase accessibility to private well water tests and information about private wells for PIIC members.

### **Petitioners/NGOs**

MDH met with the Minnesota Well Owners Organization and the Minnesota Ground Water Association to discuss private wells, including efforts in southeast Minnesota. When developments in the work plan or the legislature have arisen, MDH connected with Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy to discuss the updates. MDH also provides regular updates on progress to the Well and Boring Advisory Council at its quarterly meetings.

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy invited MDH staff to present with them at a guest lecture for the University of Minnesota Law School on March 16, 2026.

MDH discussed current work with the Minnesota Source Water Protection Collaborative coordinators on Wednesday March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

### **Clean Water Council**

The Clean Water Council recommended to the Governor and to the Legislature that the Clean Water Fund support the work being done in Phase II, except for mitigation. MDH provides regular updates to the Council about the progress of the work.

## **Work completed beyond the scope of the workplan (MDH, MDA, & MPCA)**

Water Policy Center staff have been sharing information about the work we are doing in southeast Minnesota by presenting at conferences. We have presented to a variety of audiences including groundwater and public health professionals. Presentation topics have included communication strategies, community engagement, developing and maintaining partnerships, private well program strategies, and general updates about the work. During this quarter, WPC staff presented about the work at these opportunities:

- Guest Lecture: University of Minnesota Law School, St. Paul, MN, March 16, 2026, with Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
- Exhibit table on private well information at the Women in Agriculture Conference St. Cloud, MN February 3<sup>rd</sup> and at the Sustainable Farming Association Annual Meeting St. Joseph, MN February 7<sup>th</sup>

### **Cost Benefit Analysis**

MDH contracted with one of the State Master Contractors for Remediation to conduct an initial cost benefit analysis for private well mitigation approaches (including home water treatment, connection to public or rural water supplies, new well construction, and repairs) and to develop a decision tree tool to help local partners and households identify the best mitigation approach for their private well drinking water based on the contaminant(s), condition, and location of their private well. This effort is part of a larger statewide analysis of the social and actual costs and benefits of providing free well testing and mitigation. This project is funded through a

separate appropriation but will be a tool that MDH and partners can use in southeast Minnesota when implementing the MDA Alternate Nitrate Mitigation Program. The initial mitigation cost analysis and evaluation (on a house-by-house) basis is complete and will be posted soon.

We are now working with the University of Minnesota Department of Applied Economics to build out the statewide analysis for cost and public health benefit of offering free private well testing and income-based mitigation. This portion of the project will be completed by the end of 2026 (calendar year). This project aims to assess if there is net benefit to offering free private well testing and income-based mitigation statewide.

## Phase III: Long-Term Nitrate Goals and Strategies

MPCA and MDA completed the following Phase III work from January through March 2026.

### Work group to address nitrate in southeast Minnesota (MPCA & MDA)

MPCA and MDA developed and jointly lead a work group to address nitrate in southeast Minnesota. MDH and the Board of Water and Soil Resources will partner on this effort.

The goals of this work group include providing a forum for discussing concerns and answering questions; developing a shared understanding of nitrate in surface water and groundwater in southeast Minnesota; developing recommendations for reducing nitrate in southeast Minnesota; and providing input on ongoing nitrate work within MDA and MPCA.

This goal is complete. The work group wrapped up its work and submitted their final report in July 2025.

The final report can be found at: [Addressing nitrate in southeastern Minnesota](#).

### Updating Minnesota's Nutrient Reduction Strategy (MPCA)

As noted in the December 1, 2023, letter to EPA, the State is in the process of updating the Nutrient Reduction Strategy (NRS), a critical guiding document that lays out water quality goals for nutrients in surface water and provides a road map to Minnesota's nutrient reduction work for both point source and nonpoint source areas.

The 2025 [Minnesota Nutrient Reduction Strategy](#) (NRS) was finalized and published to the MPCA website on January 29, 2026. The 18 support documents and a formal response to public comments were also published on that same date.

Since the final publication date, eleven presentations and trainings, reaching over 750 people, have been given on the 2025 Minnesota NRS, including presentations at the annual Hypoxia Task Force meetings, the Minnesota Nutrient Management Conference, and the Minnesota Nitrogen Management Conference. Trainings have been conducted via the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Tech Talk series and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Advisory Meetings to explain how NRS tools can be incorporated in watershed and agriculture conservation work.

The 2025 Minnesota NRS was designed to complement Minnesota's watershed-based work, and NRS goals for individual watersheds and recommended nutrient reduction actions are currently being incorporated into two updates to MPCA Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies. Guidance for using NRS tools and goals within watershed plans is currently under development with MPCA and BWSR.

### Feedlot Permits (MPCA)

The General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and State Disposal System (SDS) permits that the MPCA administers to confined animal feedlots expire in 2025

(SDS) and 2026 (NPDES). Work to reissue these permits has begun. The MPCA is planning to concurrently public notice and issue the permits and intends to have consistent nutrient requirements in both permits, to the extent possible.

The General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and State Disposal System (SDS) permits that the MPCA administers to confined animal feedlots were reissued in 2025 (SDS) and 2026 (NPDES). Both permits include new requirements to further minimize the risk of surface and groundwater contamination from livestock production areas and manure land application sites, with the most protective requirements applicable to regions of Minnesota where nitrate can move more easily through the soil and into groundwater. The MPCA continues to process permit applications for renewed coverage under the updated general SDS and NPDES permits. Almost all required SDS permit coverages have been issued. The NPDES application process is on-going and will continue through 2026.

## Feedlot Rules (MPCA)

Starting in 2024, MPCA plans to conduct a multi-year process to review state feedlot rules (Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7020).

Starting in 2024, the MPCA started a multi-year process to review state feedlot rules (Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7020). In January 2026, the MPCA web-published [Planned Amendments to Rules Governing Animal Feedlots, Minnesota Rules, chapter 7020, Revisor’s ID Number R-04928](#) (PDF). A [Animal Feedlots Rulemaking Scope Announcement \(wq-rule4-29h\)](#) (PDF) is available for more information. The MPCA is now in the rule development stage of rulemaking, providing key stakeholders opportunities to engage in the rulemaking process over the next several years. More information is available on the rulemaking webpage.

## Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan implementation (MDA)

Work continues in the high-risk nitrate townships of Caledonia, Mayville, Black Hammer, Spring Grove, and Wilmington in Houston County. A focus on working with feedlot operators has shown a need by producers to improve nitrogen crediting of manure and legumes in their cropping systems. Some producers utilizing manure in their cropping systems were having a difficult time with proper crediting due to lack of manure storage infrastructure on individual farms. It was found that those who lacked proper crediting of manure were less likely to have adequate manure storage.

MDA staff have met with around 30 producers in the high-risk nitrate townships with around 15 producers showing interest in financial assistance to build or improve the manure storage infrastructure on their farms.

Work also continues in Fillmore County where the SWCD is working with MDA and has hired a private company (Kanati) to develop similar (one-on-one, on-farm) work in Preble Township. All outreach and technical assistance efforts are handled by the company with a focus on nitrogen management for corn production along with upland conservation practices that are noted during farm walk overs.

Two Local Advisory Team (LAT) meetings were held in Spring Grove since the first of the year. The LAT members represented farmers, agronomists, and landowners in Black Hammer and Spring Grove Townships. Attendees discussed local crop rotations, typical sources of nitrogen for crop use and average nitrogen rates. They also reviewed University of Minnesota Best Management Practices (BMPs) related to nitrogen and learned how the MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program may be an option for their operations. One more LAT meeting is being planned with a goal to publish nitrogen BMPs this summer for the two townships. After the BMPs are published, producers will begin adoption of the practices on their farms during the 2027 growing season. Promotion of adoption of the BMPs will begin shortly after the BMPs are published so producers can be informed of the recommended practices.

## Manure Management Grants

The Board of Water and Soil Resources received a General Fund appropriation in 2024 for \$850,000 for manure management activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect groundwater. The grant went to the Southeast Area SWCD Technical Service Area, comprised of 11 SWCDs. It is led by the Goodhue SWCD as host manager. Eligible activities include manure management and storage facilities, projects and practices that limit use of vulnerable lands, conservation easements and more. Projects were awarded funding this quarter. [BWSR RFP Manure Management GW Protection FINAL FY26.pdf](#) (PDF).

## Resources

[Work Plan: Addressing Nitrate in Southeast Minnesota \(PDF\)](#)

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/wells/waterquality/epaworkplan.pdf>)

[MP+G \(https://www.mpgmarketingsolutions.com\)](https://www.mpgmarketingsolutions.com)

[Get Well Tested - YouTube](#)

(<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnv1INVkxmmtA1W9XBAJjaPSoG68JxyQR>)

[Well Tested? Well Done SE Minnesota - MN Dept. of Health \(www.mn.gov/getwelltested\)](http://www.mn.gov/getwelltested)

[MN Public Health Data Access Home - MN Data](#)

(<https://data.web.health.state.mn.us/web/mndata/home>)

[Private Wells in Southeast Minnesota \(https://data.web.health.state.mn.us/private-wells-in-southeast-mn\)](https://data.web.health.state.mn.us/private-wells-in-southeast-mn)

[Addressing nitrate in southeastern Minnesota \(https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air-water-land-climate/addressing-nitrate-in-southeastern-minnesota\)](https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air-water-land-climate/addressing-nitrate-in-southeastern-minnesota)

[Minnesota Nutrient Reduction Strategy \(https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air-water-land-climate/minnesota-nutrient-reduction-strategy\)](https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air-water-land-climate/minnesota-nutrient-reduction-strategy)

[Planned Amendments to Rules Governing Animal Feedlots, Minnesota Rules, chapter 7020, Revisor's ID Number R-04928 \(PDF\) \(https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-rule4-29g.pdf\)](#)

[Animal Feedlots Rulemaking Scope Announcement \(wq-rule4-29h\)](https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-rule4-29h.pdf)  
(PDF)(<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-rule4-29h.pdf>)

[BWSR RFP Manure Management GW Protection FINAL FY26.pdf](https://bwsr.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2025-10/BWSR%20RFP%20Manure%20Management%20GW%20Protection%20FINAL%20FY26.pdf) (PDF)  
(<https://bwsr.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2025-10/BWSR%20RFP%20Manure%20Management%20GW%20Protection%20FINAL%20FY26.pdf>)

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