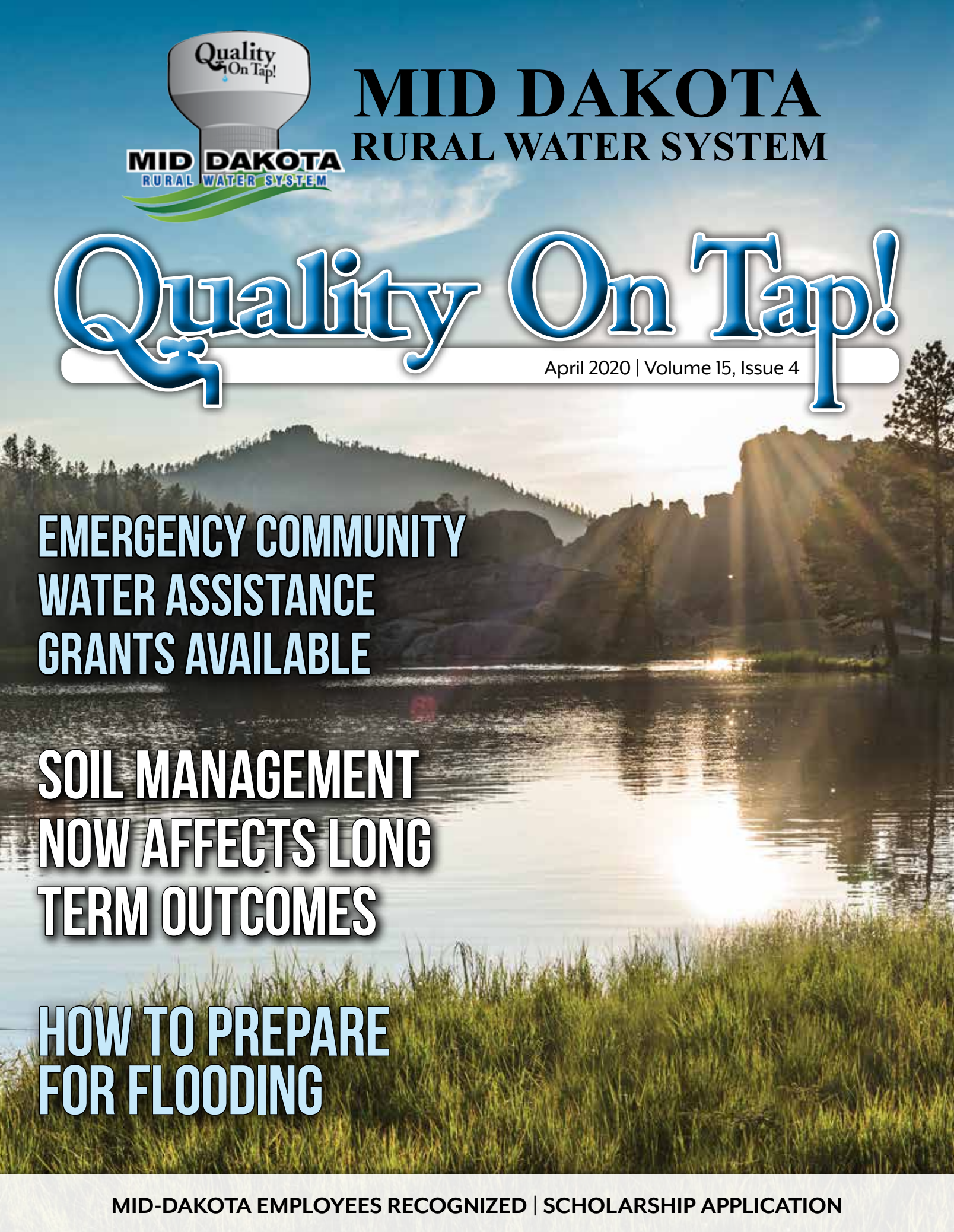

MID DAKOTA RURAL WATER SYSTEM

Quality On Tap!

April 2020 | Volume 15, Issue 4

EMERGENCY COMMUNITY WATER ASSISTANCE GRANTS AVAILABLE

SOIL MANAGEMENT NOW AFFECTS LONG TERM OUTCOMES

HOW TO PREPARE FOR FLOODING

MID-DAKOTA EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZED | SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

FROM THE MANAGER

Scott Gross, General Manager
Mid Dakota Rural Water System, Inc.

This time of year, we at Mid-Dakota are always concerned with the weather and upcoming construction season. This finally looks like the year that construction will begin on projects Mid-Dakota has been working toward for quite some time. Mid-Dakota has awarded Landmark our new water tower project and construction will begin in the spring of 2020 with substantial completion expected in the fall of 2021. Along with the erection of a new water tower Mid-Dakota will also be installing approximately 20 miles of 24-inch mainline pipe running alongside existing 20-inch pipe in three different areas between just east of Highmore the last portion ending west of St. Lawrence. These three contracts have been awarded to contractor and working through the final paperwork to begin work this spring. Carstensen Contracting was awarded two of the schedules and S.J. Lewis was awarded the third. As of writing this report I do not have a schedule of work to pass along to the landowners affected by the construction, but hope to have this very soon so Mid-Dakota can contact each landowner affected of our plans. Also, the town of Ree Heights has awarded their project of replumbing the town to Northern Improvements. This project will also be started in the spring of 2020 and should be substantially completed by early fall 2020. When this project is complete Ree Heights will have Mid-Dakota in charge of the water system and Ree Heights will change from a bulk user of Mid-Dakota to individual service of Mid-Dakota for each hookup.

We continue to improve our Automatic Meter Reading system and are still striving for 100% reads every day. If you have not taken advantage of our customer portal, I encourage you sign up for this service. This is a web-based service for viewing your water usage for your hook-up, you can set up alarms to alert you for continuous usage and high or low usage. You can call Mid-Dakota for more information about this service.

I would like to thank all of Mid-Dakota's customers for all their understanding and patience as Mid-Dakota works through our growing pains in continuing to serve our population with a quality product and service. Thanks again for all of your support.

Quality On Tap!
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Consultants
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SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Successful applicant will receive one of four $500 scholarships. Applicant must be a child of a member of Mid-Dakota Rural Water System or a resident in one of Mid-Dakota's participating communities. **The applicant must attend a South Dakota Post-Secondary educational facility and have a grade point average of 2.8 or higher (please provide a copy of transcript). This form must be completely filled out and a 250-500 word essay on what rural water has meant to the applicant or his/her community must be attached.** A current photo is also required to be used for publicity purposes. Mid-Dakota reserves the right to print any and all essays that have been submitted.

Please fill out completely:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Parent(s) Name(s): _____

Mid-Dakota Acct. #: _____ If no Account number, please state which participating community you are a member of: City of or Town of:

_____

Grade point average: _____ *(Remember to attach a copy of transcript)*

College Applicant will be attending: _____
(must be a post-secondary education facility in South Dakota)

Career Applicant is pursuing: _____

School Activities: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Community Involvement: _____

_____

_____

_____

Please compose and attach a 250-500 word essay about the benefits of rural water or what Mid-Dakota has done for you or your community (title is of your choosing). Deadline for the applications to be in the Mid-Dakota office is **5:00 p.m. April 1, 2020.**

Send completed application, transcript, current photo and essay to:

Mid-Dakota Rural Water System, Inc.
Attn: Scholarship Committee
P.O. Box 318
Miller, SD 57362-0318

Rate Table Effective January 1, 2020

501 Residential 1-Unit
$43.00 per month minimum bill
$5.00 per 1,000 gallons 1st 33,000
$7.25 per 1,000 gallons over 33,000

502 Rural Household 2-Units
$53.00 per month minimum bill
$5.00 per 1,000 gallons 1st 10,000
$4.00 per 1,000 gallons next 56,000
$7.25 Per 1,000 gallons over 66,000

504 Rural Household 4-Units
$71.00 per month minimum bill
$5.00 per 1,000 gallons 1st 10,000
$4.00 per 1,000 gallons next 122,000
$7.25 per 1,000 gallons over 132,000

506 Rural Household 6-Units
$88.00 per month minimum bill
$5.00 per 1,000 gallons 1st 10,000
$4.00 per 1,000 gallons next 188,000
$7.25 per 1,000 gallons over 198,000

511 Livestock
$31.00 per month minimum bill
$4.00 per 1,000 gallons 1st 300,000 (per year)
$5.00 per 1,000 gallons 301,000 to 700,000 (per year)
$7.25 per 1,000 gallons over 700,000 (per year)

161, 162, 164, 165 Special Class I & II
$16.40 per GPM per month minimum bill
$25.00 per GPM per month demand charge
$0.55 per 1,000 gallons

163, 166 Special Class III
$4.69 per Pers (equiv) per month minimum bill
$4.75 per Pers (equiv) per month demand charge
$0.55 per 1,000 gallons up to contract amount
$7.25 per 1,000 gallons over contract amount

1 Minimum & demand charges do not include any water.
2 Livestock (511) water allocations are annual use, not monthly.
3 "equivalent" population "person" = contract GPD ÷ 270

After Hours or Emergencies
Call Mid Dakota
TOLL FREE at: 1-800-439-3079
or call the answering service direct at
1-888-545-7440

For online bill paying:
www.mdrws.com

Find us on: facebook

FOLLOW US ON twitter

OUT AND ABOUT

APRIL

3-4 – JACKRABBIT STAMPEDE RODEO, BROOKINGS

The Jackrabbit Stampede is a National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association approved rodeo that holds all the standard college rodeo events; Bareback Riding, Breakaway Roping, Tie Down Roping, Saddle Bronc Riding, Steer Wrestling, Goat Tying, Team Roping, Barrel Racing and Bull Riding. www.sdstate.edu/jackrabbit-stampede

4-5 – ZONTA CRAFT SHOW, PIERRE

The Zonta Club of Pierre-Fort Pierre is holding its annual Spring Vendor & Craft Show at the Northridge Plaza Mall 1615 N Harrison Avenue, Pierre, SD. The event offers over 50 booths with delicious hand-made foods, artisanal hand-made items and unique products. For more information, visit: www.facebook.com/ZontaClubOfPierreFortPierre/

MAY

9 – CINCO DE MAYO FESTIVAL, FALLS PARK, SIOUX FALLS

The Wells Fargo Cinco de Mayo Fiesta at Falls Park is a family event that brings together the business and civic community of Sioux Falls and the surrounding area to recognize, appreciate and celebrate the cultural gifts and heritage of the Latino people in our midst. While observing this traditional Mexican holiday, Cinco de Mayo in Sioux Falls creates awareness of and develops pride in the diverse Latino cultures that make up our community. Latino food, dance, art, music, children's activities and more make this a festive and fun family day. Join us at Falls Park from 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM. Free Admission.

16-17 – STATE PARKS OPEN HOUSE AND FREE FISHING WEEKEND

The annual Open House Weekend includes free entrance to all South Dakota state parks. Camping fees do apply. A number of parks will also host special events to kick off the summer and it is free fishing weekend, so licenses are not required. https://gfp.sd.gov/events/

23-24 – SDRA FOOTHILLS RODEO, WESSINGTON SPRINGS

Slack, Team Penning and 40 and Over Calf Roping on Saturday. Rodeo performances both Saturday at 6 pm & Sunday at 2 pm. Bareback, Saddle Bronc, Tie Down Roping, Steer Wrestling, Team Roping, Sr. Men's Breakaway Roping, Ladies Barrel Racing, Ladies Breakaway Roping, Ladies Goat Tying, Mixed Team Roping and Bull Riding. Don't foget the Mutton Bustin'. Event takes place at the Jerauld County 4-H Rodeo Grounds. For more information, visit www.wessingtonsprings.com/event-calendar.html

JUNE

5-6 – ORIGINAL SD BBQ CHAMPIONSHIPS, HURON

The Original SD BBQ Championships began in 2007 and is a Kansas City BBQ Society sanctioned event. The event shares the 180 wide-open acres with another major annual event known as Wheel Jam, featuring everything on wheels from motorcycles to classic cars to 18-wheelers. Event takes place at the SD State Fairgrounds in Huron. For more info, visit: www.sdbbqchampionships.com/

13 – LUCE PIONEER DAY, LAKE HERMAN STATE PARK, MADISON

History comes alive with old time crafts, demonstrations, and displays. Join in the pioneer fun in front of the Luce Cabin at Lake Herman State Park from 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM. No fee to attend, but a park entrance license is required. https://gfp.sd.gov/events/detail/1005/

25-27 – 31ST ANNUAL RED POWER ROUNDUP, HURON

Attention International Harvester aficionados! South Dakota Red Power Chapter 21 welcomes all International Harvester collectors, vendors and the general public to the 31st annual Red Power Round Up June 25th-27th on the South Dakota State Fairgrounds in Huron. Along with an impressive selection of tractors, engines, trucks, and equipment, attendees can also browse exhibits which include household appliances, milking equipment, and toy collections. The three-day event includes an auction, parade, quilt show, children's activities, tours, steak and chicken feed and a variety of other entertainment including the Great Plains Truck and Tractor Pull presented by Titan Machinery. For more information visit www.redpowerroundup2020.com.

If you would like your event featured in the July 2020 issue of Quality on Tap!, please email your event description to: info@sdarws.com. July's issue will cover events taking place July - September 2020. Event listings are subject to approval by the QOT Editorial Board.

USDA Rural Development Increased Rural Population Limits to 50,000 for Some Loan Guarantee Programs

Julie Gross, State Director, USDA Rural Development

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Donald "DJ" LaVoy announced in October of 2019 that in accordance with the 2018 Farm Bill, USDA's Rural Housing and Utilities Service will change rural population limits, fees and funding priorities for some loan guarantee programs administered through the Rural Housing Service and the Rural Utilities Service. The changes went into effect December 2, 2019.

USDA increased the rural population eligibility limit to 50,000 residents for the Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program (CF) and the Guaranteed Water and Waste Disposal Loan Program (WEP).

For fiscal year 2020, projects financed through the Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program will still receive priority in rural areas of 20,000 or fewer residents. Projects financed through the Water and Waste Disposal Guaranteed Loan Program will receive priority in rural areas of 10,000 or fewer residents.

USDA increased the Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program's one-time guarantee fee from 1 percent to 1.5 percent. The Agency also established an annual renewal fee of 0.5 percent of the loan's principal balance each year. There are no changes to the Water Waste Disposal Guaranteed Loan Program fee rates. For additional information, see page 52869 of the Oct. 3, 2019, Federal Register.

This provides new funding opportunities for communities over 10,000 and less than 50,000 including the communities of Aberdeen, Brookings, Watertown, Mitchell, Yankton, Pierre, Huron, Spearfish, Vermillion and Brandon.

Eligible applicants for CF include public bodies, community-based non-profit corporations, and federally recognized tribes. Eligible applicants for WEP include most state and local government entities, nonprofit organizations, and federally recognized tribes. For both CF and WEP, the maximum guarantee is typically 90 percent of the loan amount, one-time guarantee fee, interest rates may be fixed or variable as negotiated between the lender and the borrower and subject to USDA approval, and up to 40-year payback period,

Applications may be filed with the USDA Rural Development Area Office serving the county where the applicant is located. For information about either the CF or WEP, contact USDA Rural Development field staff in the Area Offices - Aberdeen contact Valerie Jensen at (605) 824-3624; Mitchell contact Austin Claeys (605) 299-3349; Pierre contact Brian Ring (605) 301-3411; Sioux Falls contact Diane Sieperda (605) 937-4773; and Rapid City contact Dylan Tramp (605) 858-6679 or Katie Hammer (605) 858-6703.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

USDA Rural Development – Emergency Community Water Assistance Grant Funds Available to Eligible Communities

By Julie Gross, State Director, USDA Rural Development

The effects of heavy snow and rain have influenced water resources throughout the state of South Dakota, especially during the past two years.

Rural communities whose water supply is being impacted may find assistance through USDA Rural Development's Emergency Community Water Assistance Grant (ECWAG) program.

This program provides funds to assist rural communities that have experienced a significant decline in quantity or quality of water, or in which such a decline is considered imminent. Funds may be used for several purposes related to water supply issues caused by an emergency. Some examples are waterline extensions, repairs related to an emergency, construction of new wells or other permanent water sources, provision of a temporary water source in certain circumstances, equipment replacement, and related project fees such as engineering or legal.

Under the ECWAG program, funds may be used in incorporated communities of less than 10,000 residents or any unincorporated area. Eligible applicants include public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and Federally recognized Indian tribes.

Applicants must possess the legal authority to own and operate the water facility and must document the emergency that caused the problem. Examples of emergencies include, but are not limited to, drought; earthquake; flood; tornado; hurricane; disease outbreak; or chemical spill, leakage, or seepage. A disaster designation is not required.

The maximum grant is $150,000 for repairs, partial replacement, or significant maintenance on an established system, or $1,000,000 to alleviate a significant decline in quantity or quality of water that occurred within two years of filing an ECWAG application, or to attempt to avoid a significant decline that is expected to occur during the 12-month period following the filing of an application.

Applications must demonstrate need for the grant based on median household income and repayment ability and are subject to environmental review. ECWAG funds may be used in conjunction with other sources of funds.

Applications may be filed with the USDA Rural Development Area Office serving the county where the applicant is located. For more information about the ECWAG program visit www.rd.usda.gov/sd or contact USDA Rural Development field staff in the Area Offices - Aberdeen contact Valerie Jensen at (605) 824-3624; Mitchell contact Austin Claeys (605) 299-3349; Pierre contact Brian Ring (605) 301-3411; Sioux Falls contact Diane Sieperda (605) 937-4773; and Rapid City contact Dylan Tramp (605) 858-6679 or Katie Hammer (605) 858-6703.

We understand the importance modern and reliable water systems have in helping rural communities thrive. From economic opportunity to public health and the environment, modern infrastructure, including water infrastructure, is a foundation for enhanced quality of life and prosperity in rural America.

Rural Development also provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunity and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR A FLOOD

Buy and install sump pumps with backup power

Floodwaters can often cause power outages that can last for days or weeks. You'll want a sump pump that can run on backup batteries or even a generator. Your best bet is to get both. Pumps that run on electrical current won't run as long as those designed to run on a 12-volt battery. Your best bet is to have a knowledgable electrician or plumber evaluate your systems and recommend the best backup for your home.

Install septic pump alarms

Alarms can alert you to flooding before the issue becomes serious. If you have a septic system and it becomes flooded, refrain from flushing your toilets until you have had an expert check out your system. Tanks can often float free, or rupture, sending sewage into your home. Tanks should not be used or pumped out until floodwaters have receded and inspected by an expert.

Waterproof your basement entrances

Make sure your gutters and storm drains are clean and that your property slope directs water away from your home. This includes diverting water flow from window wells and entrances into your basement that could flood in high waters.

Anchor fuel tanks

An unanchored fuel tank can wreak havoc during a flood – it could be swept downstream and cause damage to other houses, break open and contaminate water, catch fire, or even explode or burn if exposed to sparks from downed power lines.

Install backflow prevention valves or plugs

During a flood, sewer and storm drains can back up and force sewage back into your home through washing machines, bathtubs, sinks, and dishwashers. Talk to a plumber about installing valves and plugs to prevent sewage from backing up into your home.

Learn how to use sandbags and plastic liners properly

Sandbags, even when properly used, won't keep all the water out of your home. However, they are effective at reducing and re-directing the water flow to prevent water from seeping into doors and windows at ground level. Make sure to build at least 8 feet from your sandbag wall and the building it is protecting. Walls should also be three times wider than they are tall, and one foot higher than the predicted crest of water.

Have a backup water supply

After a flood, it is not advised to drink water from your well or water system until the water has been tested and verified safe by the state health department. Having a supply of bottled water is always a good idea in the event of an emergency. The rule of thumb is one gallon per person per day.

Have a backup toilet system

The more use a septic system gets when flooded, the more likely it is to fail. Have a backup plan for toileting. If city water services are disrupted, you may need an alternative system to flush (consider collecting rainwater or floodwater in the tank). Another alternative would be to use a 5-gallon bucket lined with heavy-duty trash bags. You can also shut off the water to your toilet, flush the remaining water out, and drape heavy-duty trash bags or red sanitation liners into the now dry toilet bowl, allowing you to use it without water. Make sure to duct tape or securely tie the bags shut after use and dispose of safely.

Soil Management Now Affects Long Term Outcomes

By Janelle Atyeo for the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition

"Tillage in soil is like if a tornado went through the heart of Sioux Falls." That's how Roscoe, South Dakota, farmer Dennis Hoyle describes the practice of churning soil to prepare fields for planting. Houses may remain in the aftermath of a tornado, but some are uninhabitable, and some are completely destroyed.

"Whoever survives that is going to have to start over," Hoyle said. Likewise, the soil is home to a busy community of microbes. Pulling a tiller through even once disrupts the natural balance of microbes that can be so beneficial for farming.

Many farmers broke out their tillage equipment this spring as they eagerly waited for fields to dry out, so they could plant between what felt like endless spring rains. Tillage is a standby method for drying soils quickly, but soil health experts say the practice does more harm than good. "Tillage is very hard on soil structure," said Sara Bauder, Agronomy Field Specialist with South Dakota State University Extension.

The practice can add oxygen to top soil and increase soil temperature in the short term, but the damaging effects of tillage are long term. It actually contributes to the excess moisture problem farmers are battling this year.

Tillage decreases water infiltration by disturbing the root channels and worm holes that provide a path for water. "This generally results in more runoff and hard pan issues that cause moisture management problems in the long run," Bauder said.

The urge to till can be strong in a wet year, however. Hoyle watched his neighbors work their low ground to prepare for planting this spring. "I understand the temptation, but soil health is a long-term deal," he said. "It's not about this year. It's about the next generation."

He has spent decades reversing effects of tillage on his farm ground. In recent years, his focus has turned to building organic matter that will make for more productive soils when he passes his operation on to his kids and grandkids.

Tillage decreases water infiltration by disturbing the root channels and worm holes that provide a path for water. "This generally results in more runoff and hard pan issues that cause moisture management problems in the long run," Bauder said. Photo Credit: USDA-NRCS South Dakota

"We have to protect this resource," he said. Tillage reduces organic matter soil microbes need to thrive, noted Kent Vlieger, South Dakota's Soil Health Specialist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. He listed other problems the practice causes: it destroys soil structure, creates a space for weeds to thrive and always increases erosion.

No-till fields, on the other hand, hold up better in wet years. Water moves through its porous layers instead of ponding on the surface, and crop residue helps hold soil in place, so it doesn't wash away in heavy rain.

"It's kind of a snowball of good benefits you're going to have not tilling," Vlieger said.

Back in Roscoe, Hoyle tested one

of his fields to see how different management practices affected the way they handled water. One area was green with a full season cover crop. Twenty feet away, the other spot was brown with wheat stubble. An inch of water took more than four minutes to soak in through the soil surface in the wheat stubble field. The cover crop area handled the water in 28 seconds.

Not disturbing the soil structure also allows layers to build strength. A no-till field will support heavy equipment better than one with disturbed soil. Hoyle is often out in his fields earlier than farmers next door – planting in muddy conditions or spraying when heavy equipment would sink into tilled acres. "It allows me to do things the neighbors question," he said. "You have the structure to hold you up."

Hoyle and another northeastern South Dakota farmer both gave up tillage during a dry period in the 1980s as a way to save moisture. The soil health they've built in the decades since then has helped them through the recent wet cycle, too.

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Pictured above, infiltration test performed in a no-till soybean field. Photo Credit: USDA-NRCS South Dakota

Ryan Wagner farms in the heart of Prairie Pothole country in Day County, where there's been an overabundance of moisture in recent years. His dad started the transition to no-till before Wagner was in school, and their farm has been 100 percent no-till since the 1990s. The younger Wagner said it's helped them manage moisture.

"If you get that water to go through the soil rather than pond on the surface, you're better off," he said.

His planting season went smoothly this spring compared to what fellow farmers had to deal with in southeastern South Dakota. Wagner caught good stretches between rains and got his corn planted in early May before many other farmers in the state could even get in the field. He feels for them but hopes it doesn't cause them to lose faith in no-till.

"It's definitely been one of the more challenging years," he said. "Just because we're in the wet cycle, I hope we don't see people going backwards on no-till." Bauder urges those getting into no-till to allow time for soil structure and water infiltration to improve. In some cases, this year, the soil was so saturated it was unlikely anything could fix it overnight, she said.

Vlieger agreed there is no quick fix for saturated fields and warned against undoing the good effects of no-till. "One tillage pass can set you back quite a ways," he said.

A healthy soil structure is built up over years and years of no-till management, he said. He encourages farmers to use a diverse crop rotation mixed with small grains and consider planting cover crops to use excess moisture in the fall. A cover such as cereal rye seeded after harvest can grow before planting work begins in the spring, soaking up early season rains.

"When mother nature slams us with crazy amounts of rain and flooding, there really aren't a lot of things we can do to control or fix the situation but having healthy soils with good structure and a growing, living root can help us be as prepared as possible," Bauder added.

Reprinted with permission from the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition – www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org

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A cover such as cereal rye seeded after harvest can grow before planting work begins in the spring, soaking up early season rains. Pictured above, cover crops planted in a crop field that was flooded out in June of 2014, near Canton, SD to protect soil from erosion and utilize excess moisture. Photo Credit: USDA-NRCS South Dakota

GRANT-ROBERTS RURAL WATER SYSTEM

The idea of a rural water system to serve area farmers and small towns was not a new idea in the mid 70's in eastern South Dakota. When Phase II of the Brookings-Deuel Rural Water System was undertaken, the town of LaBolt was included. The residents of the town of Stockholm expressed a desire to also be included and sign-up of area farmers between the two towns started. When FmHA discovered there was a great deal of interest in a rural water system as far north as Big Stone Lake and Wilmot area, they suggested that this area would be better served by another system rather than a continuation of the Brookings-Deuel System.

In early 1976 the interest in rural water was heightened by the extreme drought the area experienced. Farmers were finding their stock ponds dry and that put additional strain on the wells to water livestock. Many shallow wells went dry and the quality of the water in some changed. Don Davis (first Chairman of Grant-Roberts) had to haul water every day to keep his dairy farm functioning. Many area farmers reduced the size of their herds or sold out altogether because of lack of water and feed.

The initial planned system consisted of 650 miles of pipe, ranging in size from eight inch down to inch and a half. That pipe was intended to serve 840 users from Stockholm on the south to Big Stone Lake, on the north and west to the Wilmot and Marvin areas. The well and treatment plant sit on the original site one mile north of South Shore on the old Dale Drake farm. The system started with one well that had the capacity to pump 500 gallons of water per minute for 12 hours continuously.

As originally designed, the well site is 700 feet above Milbank and 900 feet above the lowest customer. The original system did not require water towers or pumping stations, but rather a series of pressure reducers were required to provide water at a desirable pressure.

Initial System construction cost $7.04 million. FmHA loan of $4.83 million, FmHA grant $1.52 million, state grant of $300,000 and membership contributions of $390,000.

The original hookup fee was $245.00. Once the water started to flow, the original minimum for a farm hookup was $16.00. Currently a hookup for Grant-Roberts Rural Water is $1,045.00 (not including a meter pit) and a farm hookup monthly minimum charge is $28.00

Since the early eighties the system has continued to expand. Grant-Roberts RWS is currently providing water to around 1800 service connections. The well field which had three wells when the initial construction was completed has been expanded to six current active wells. Initially there were three 100,000 gallon storage reservoirs; now we have three 300,000 gallon reservoirs. In 1997 the system expanded into parts of Minnesota by serving the communities of Nassau and Marietta. Marietta has a water tower that is maintained by Grant-Roberts and Nassau has some in-ground storage as well. Grant-Roberts also has a 140,000 gallon standpipe that is utilized seasonally along the shores of Big Stone Lake. The treatment plant was originally designed with three pressure filters, and after an expansion in 2005, six pressure filters are now used to remove iron and manganese.

Water quality has always been a top priority for Grant-Roberts. Through the years the system has purchased over 500 acres around the well field for Source Water protection. These land purchases will help ensure that Grant-Roberts will continue to provide the highest quality water. When the system first started delivering water, the water had a total hardness of 256.5 ppm. Over the years the water has gotten a little harder and currently has a total hardness of around 307 ppm.

Looking forward, the board is aiming to provide service to several communities within or near the footprint of the current Grant-Roberts distribution lines. Within the next 5-10 years the board hopes to add Corona, Marvin and the entire city of South Shore. They are also looking at the feasibility of running an expansion up to the Summit area and a few other possible minor expansions. These expansion opportunities and a continued desire to strengthen the existing distribution system will allow us to continue providing water to our customers long into the future.

From the time those early pioneers decided to work together to bring reliable, high quality water for the area up until today, Grant-Roberts has strived to provide our members quality water that meets safe drinking water standards, and to operate and maintain a water distribution system for a long term water supply in our service area.

Grant-Roberts Board of Directors
Back row L-R: Attorney Mark Reedstrom, Director Gary MacDonald, Director James Mertens, Secretery Robert Hicks, Treasurer Tom Frogner. Front row L-R: General Manager Brent Hoffmann, Vice Chairman Bruce Granquist, Chairman Galen Zemlicka, Director Ron Bowen.

Grant-Roberts Staff
Back Row L-R: Operator Cory Veen, Operator Doug Gulley. Front Row L-R: General Manager Brent Hoffmann, Utility Billing Clerk Jen Wellnitz, Operator Todd Kuefler.

Grant-Roberts
Rural Water System

DIRECTORS:

Galen Zemlicka – Chairman
Bruce Granquist – Vice-Chairman
Robert Hicks – Secretary
Tom Frogner – Treasurer/State Association Director
Ronald Bowen – Director
James Mertens – Director
Gary McDonald – Director

STAFF:

Brent Hoffmann – Manager
Jen Wellnitz – Utility Billing Clerk
Doug Gulley – Operator
Todd Kuefler – Operator
Cory Veen – Operator

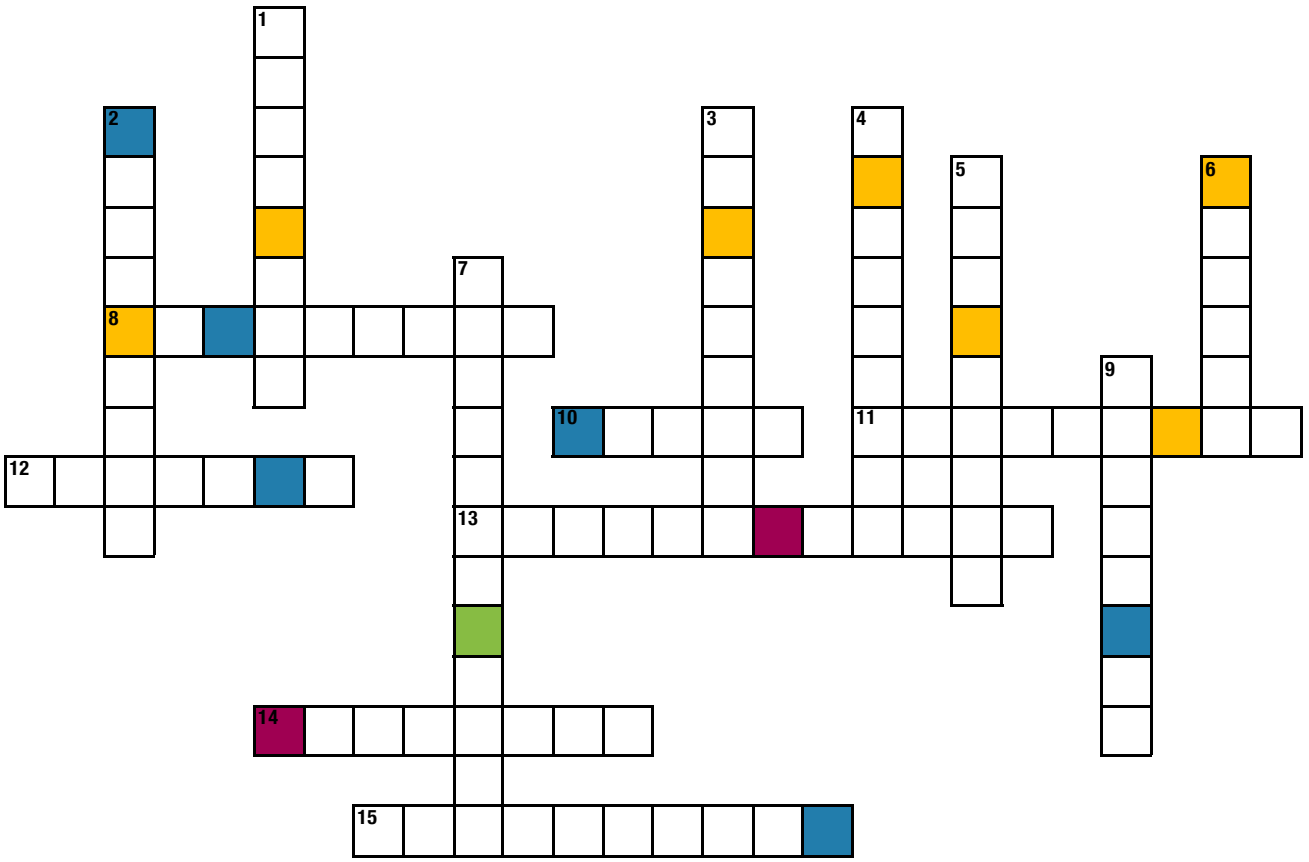
STATISTICS:

Hookups: 1,930
Miles of Pipeline: 760
Water Source: Antelope Valley Aquifer
Counties Served: Grant, Roberts, Codington, Deuel, Lac Qui Parle (MN)
Towns Served Individual: Albee, Stockholm, Strandburg, South Shore, Twin Brooks, Nassau (MN), Marietta (MN)
Towns Served Bulk: Wilmot

RURAL WATER CROSSWORD & WORD SCRAMBLE CONTEST

TAXES

Enter to Win $100



ACROSS

8. IRS forms that are used to report various kinds of income, deductions, and credits.
10. When the IRS examines and verifies your return or any other transaction with tax consequences.
11. _____ tax. What the taxpayer expects to owe in taxes over the course of the year, generally paid quarterly with vouchers.
12. Reductions of tax liability allowed by Congress for various purposes.
13. Wages, commissions, tips, fees, or self-employment income from services rendered.
14. _____ deductions. Expenditures that the tax code deems appropriate for reducing adjusted gross income.
15. _____ income. Income that is not taxed.

DOWN

1. Costs incurred doing one's job.
2. An IRS document that is provided to the taxpayer to compile information and is not usually filed with the return.
3. A subtraction from taxable income.
4. A person who meets the five tests of dependency and thereby qualifies to be claimed as a dependent for tax purposes.
5. A reduction of income that would otherwise be taxed.
6. Money received, especially on a regular basis, for work or through investments.
7. Deduction for the wear and tear of an item used for business.
9. _____ loss. A loss caused by the complete or partial destruction of property that results from an unexpected event, i.e., floods, fires, etc.

SCRAMBLE ANSWER

RULES: Use the colored squares in the puzzle to solve the word scramble above. Call your Rural Water System (See page 2 for contact information) or **enter online at www.sdarws.com/crossword.html** with the correct phrase by April 10, 2020 to be entered into the $100 drawing.

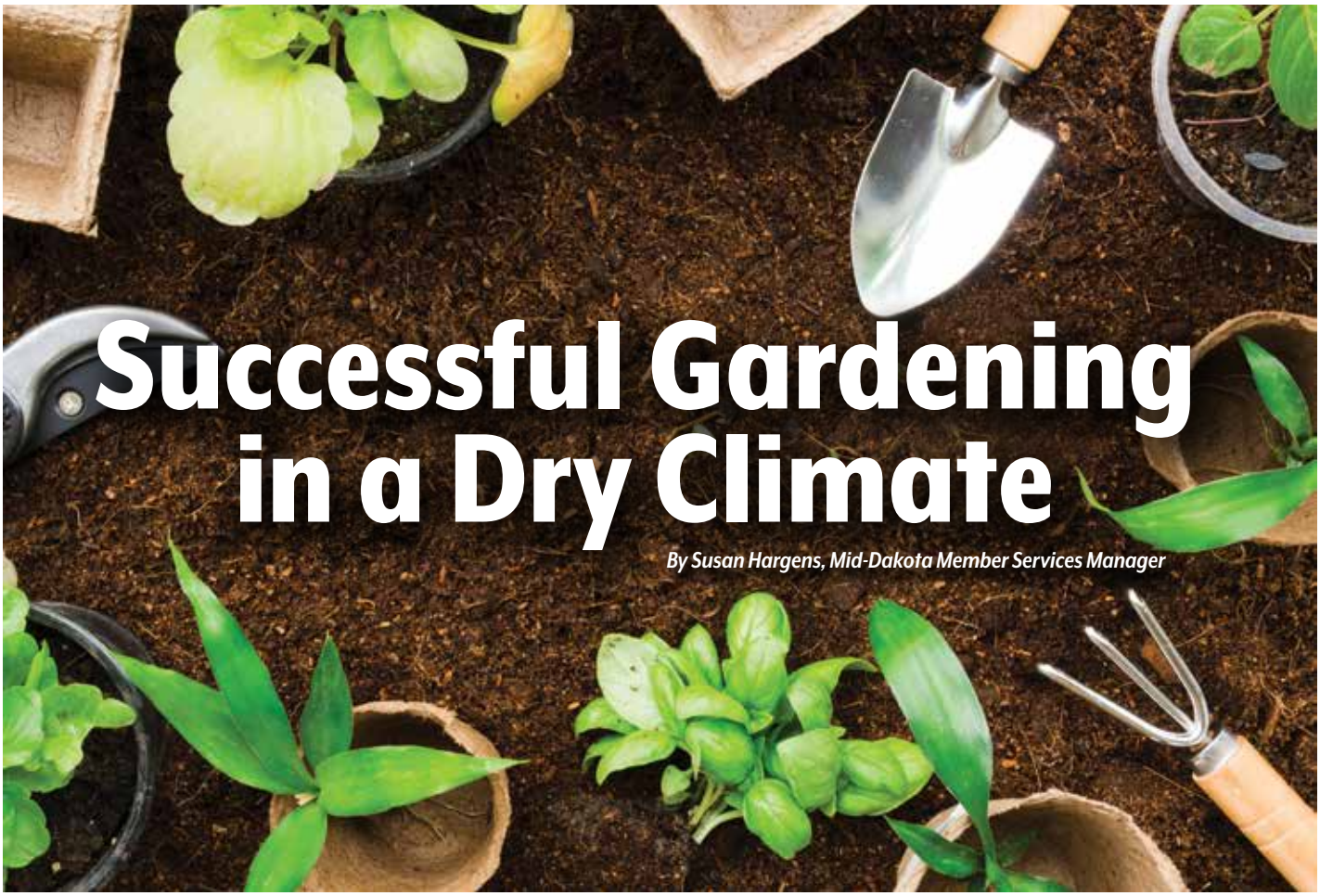
Only one entry allowed per address/household. You must be a member of a participating rural water system to be eligible for the prize. Your information will only be used to notify the winner, and will not be shared or sold.

Congratulations to Lisa Palo who had the correct phrase of "Hunting Promotes Conservation" for January 2020.

LEWIS & CLARK RECEIVES $18M IN FUNDING FOR CONTINUED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The Bureau of Reclamation announced that the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System will receive $18 million in federal funding for FY20, an increase of $3 million compared to FY19. "Thanks to the hard work and strong support of our tristate delegation, Congress approved an additional $117.4 million for the Rural Water Program in the FY20 Budget. Reclamation in turn allocated $17.9 million of this amount to Lewis & Clark. When combined with the $100,000 proposed by the administration it brings our total for FY20 to $18 million," said Executive Director Troy Larson. The FY20 funding will be used to cover a portion of three construction projects – a radial collector well adjacent to the Missouri River near Vermillion that is anticipated to produce 16 million gallons per day, a 2.5 million gallon water tower just east of Beresford, and the 12.6 mile middle segment of 24-inch pipeline between Beresford and Sioux Center.

The administration's proposed FY21 Budget was released on February 10. For the third consecutive year it only includes $100,000 for Lewis & Clark. "While very disappointing, the proposed funding is not surprising. We will again be counting on our tristate delegation to secure additional funding for the Rural Water Program."



Successful Gardening in a Dry Climate

By Susan Hargens, Mid-Dakota Member Services Manager

Planning a garden is so much easier than it was in my grandmother's day. Today there are so many varieties of plants that are adapted to the climate we live in. There are great sources of information on plant selection and care available to those who like planting a garden for the fresh and nutritious fruits and vegetables.

I have heard it said that we live on the eastern side of the Great American Desert. After last year, I am not so sure this is true anymore. But I have seen a lot of years that it was very necessary to water your garden if you wanted any produce out of it. I still believe there are dry days to come and to avoid problems; we still need to plant crops that work well in drier climates.

Our growing season is shorter than locations to the south of us. We need to ensure that the plants we use are able to have enough time to grow to maturity and produce a crop. Most nurseries have zone charts available to help customers decide which plants will work best. Our area is situated in Zone 5, but sometimes it is best to choose plants that do well in Zone 4. This limits the selection somewhat but it would give the gardener a better chance of success. Our summer days are most generally windy, hot and dry. Using plants that take a lot of water generally means a higher water bill and puts unnecessary pressure on your local supplier. To reduce your garden's watering needs it is a good practice to mulch or use plastic between your rows to hold in moisture and help keep weeds under control. If you use grass cuttings for mulch, be sure to use cuttings from grass that hasn't been sprayed with a herbicide. A herbicide not only kills weeds but it may kill your garden plants also.

The best chance for success is to research what plants will do well in your area. For more information on garden plants for your garden, call your local county extension agent, nursery experts or your local master gardeners. Search the internet for information also. Some good sites to visit include: www.gurneys.com, www.directgardening.com or www.highcountrygardens.com.

MID-DAKOTA RURAL WATER SYSTEM RECOGNIZED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE BY SDARWS

Connie Aymar
25 Years of Service

Ron Ramsey
30 Years of Service

Al Thomas and Gary Tobin
35 Years of Service

Scott Gross and SDARWS President Ron Gillen - 3rd Place SD Rural Water Taste Test

At the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems' Annual Technical Conference in Pierre several employees and directors were recognized for their years of service in the water field.

Gary Tobin and Alan Thomas were both recognized for 35 years in the water industry. Gary worked for the city of Gettysburg until he was hired in 2001 to work as Mid-Dakota's Distribution Operator in the Gettysburg area. Alan began his career in the water industry working for the city of Pierre until he was hired at Mid-Dakota in 2004 to work as a Water Distribution/Water Treatment Operator out of the Water Treatment Plant. Both are Water Distribution Specialists with Mid-Dakota.

Ron Ramsey was recognized for 30 years of service in the water industry. Ron was hired as an Inspector on the rural distribution lines during initial construction in 1997. Prior to that, he worked at the city of Ft. Pierre. He is now a Water Distribution Specialist for Mid-Dakota.

Connie Aymar was recognized for her service in the water industry for 25 years. She was hired in 1995 as the bookkeeper and is now the Financial Manager for Mid-Dakota.

Others recognized were Scott Manning and Tammy Oligmueller for 20 years; Director Jim McGillvrey and Shane Bothwell for 15 years; Director Steve Robbennolt and Randy Bauer for 10 years; and Jamie Brueggeman for 5 years. Altogether they represent a combined 220 years of service to the water industry.

Mid-Dakota was also fortunate to receive third place in the Water Taste Test for 2021. Harrisburg was the winner of the Water Taste Test and will be representing South Dakota in the National Contest in 2021. Mid-Dakota represented South Dakota this past February for the 2020 National Taste Test at the National Rural Water Rally.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 1, 2020

For the past 13 years Mid-Dakota Rural Water System has presented scholarships to students attending a post-secondary school in South Dakota. This year will be no exception, and once again Mid-Dakota will be selecting four students to receive $500.00 scholarships to be used in their continuing education. The students must be a child of someone who is a member of Mid-Dakota or a resident of a community that is a Mid-Dakota member. An application can be found on page 3 of this issue of *Quality on Tap!*, on our website at www.mdrws.com, or at the Mid-Dakota office in Miller. Copies of the application have been sent to schools within the Mid-Dakota service area. The completed application must be accompanied by the most recent transcript from high school or college, a photo to be used for publicity purposes, and a 250-500 word essay about what rural water means to the applicant or the applicant's community.

Applications must be received at the Miller office by 5:00 p.m. April 1, 2020. All applicants will receive a letter letting them know whether or not they were chosen to receive a scholarship. A $500.00 check will be sent to each of the successful applicants' schools at the beginning of their second semester at the post-secondary school of their choice located in South Dakota.

Mid Dakota Rural Water System, Inc.
608 W. 14th St., P.O. Box 318
Miller, South Dakota 57362-0318
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WATER MATTERS

Bacteria in Surface Water

Every summer, thousands of South Dakotans spend time in and around the rivers, streams and lakes of the state. In fact, the state has officially identified immersion recreation (swimming) and limited-contact recreation (other uses of the water like fishing or boating) as beneficial uses for hundreds of individual lakes, along with many miles of rivers and streams.

To assess whether or not the water at a particular lake or stream is suitable for these recreational uses, the state has adopted measurable criteria for water samples. The primary criteria is the concentration of Escherichia coli (E. coli) in the water. E. coli bacteria are measured as indicators of possible contamination because they are commonly found in human and animal feces. Most varieties of E. coli bacteria are harmless (or even beneficial) to people. However, the presence of E. coli in elevated numbers indicate that there is a higher probability of the presence of pathogenic (disease-causing) bacteria, viruses, and protozoans that are also found in human and animal wastes.

Sources of fecal contamination to surface waters include wastewater treatment plants, on-site septic systems, domestic livestock and pets, wildlife and storm water runoff. However, regardless of the source, the presence of elevated levels of bacterial contamination suggests that pathogenic microorganisms might also be present and that use of the water might be a health risk.

Is My River/Stream/Lake Safe?

The South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (SD DENR), along with a number of partners (including the East Dakota Water Development District), gathers, tests and evaluates water quality information from numerous locations across the state to determine if the designated beneficial use(s) are being met. Every two years, SD DENR publishes a report on their findings, including data on measured bacteria levels. If your particular lake or stream is not listed, you may want to explore other options, including taking your own samples.

In most cases, measured bacteria levels are well within safe ranges. However, it is never a bad idea to have at least some understanding of what to expect when visiting the local lake or stream.

To learn more, consider the following resources:

SD DENR 2020 South Dakota Integrated Report for Surface Water Quality (the most recent version) - http://denr.sd.gov/documents/20irfinal.pdf;

SD DENR Water Quality Monitoring Access Portal, an interactive, web-based map of water quality monitoring locations, with links to site-specific water quality data - https://apps.sd.gov/NR92WQMAP/#

Back page content provided by:
East Dakota Water Development District
132B Airport Drive • Brookings, SD, 57006
(605) 688-6741 • http://eastdakota.org