



# MID DAKOTA RURAL WATER SYSTEM

# Quality On Tap!

October 2019 | Volume 15, Issue 2



**A RURAL WATER  
RETROSPECTIVE**

**FIND WATER  
QUALITY  
INFORMATION**

**ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 17 | GALE AUCH RETIRES | SHUT OFF PROCEDURES**

# FROM THE MANAGER

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



My how time flies, where has the year gone! Seems like yesterday it was snowing, and blink, the summer is gone and we are waiting for the cold again. Mid Dakota has had a busy year and we continue to hook up new connections. With all the growth, Mid Dakota continues to strive to provide quality water to all customers. Currently Mid Dakota is designing a fourth lagoon which is larger in size to allow staff to clean the wash water recovery basin more frequently to improve Water Treatment Plant performance. The Ree Heights town project was rejected on its first go around and the town is currently applying for additional funds to aid in the project. As of writing this article, Mid Dakota's mainline expansion project has made to the advertising stage with a bid opening date of September 24, 2019. With the completion of this project it is expected that Mid Dakota will better serve its customers and help with reserve water during peak use months. Mid Dakota is also performing pressure tests in areas of concern to better understand where low pressure concerns are happening and what can be done to remedy these issues. Gale Auch has announced his retirement from Mid Dakota as of November 1. Gale has worked for Mid Dakota for almost twenty years – thank you, Gale. Mike Nicholson has been hired to fill the Mainline Transmission Specialist position.

Mid Dakota is currently working on a recommendation to present to the Board of Directors on the water rates that will be charged in 2020, It is expected that there will be a slight raise in rates due mainly to the age of Mid Dakota and the cost of maintenance. Also, if you have not yet signed up or heard of MiData, I encourage you to do so. This is a program you can sign up for on your home computer and view your water usage and set alarms for high or low usage. This is a good tool for customers who have far away pasture taps, or who travel and get curious on their water use while away, or just like to be able to view their water use. If interested in this program you can call the Mid Dakota office for more information.



## Quality On Tap!

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### Rural Directors

Steve Robbenolt ..... District 1  
Leslie Brown ..... District 2  
Scott Oligmueller ..... District 3  
Lennis Fagerhaug ..... District 4  
Rick Benson ..... District 5

### Municipal Directors

Dwight Gutzmer ..... At Large  
Jim McGillvrey ..... At Large  
Jeff McGirr ..... Huron  
Darrell Raschke ..... Huron

### Office Staff - Miller, SD

Scott Gross ..... General Manager  
Connie Aymar ..... Financial Manager  
Jamie Brueggeman ..... Office Administrator  
Terrek Butterfield ..... Asset Manager  
Sandy Holt ..... Customer Accounts Specialist  
Tammy Oligmueller ..... Customer Accounts Specialist  
Kristen Arthur ..... Customer Accounts Specialist

### Member Services Staff - Miller, SD

Susan Hargens ..... Member Services Manager  
DeAnn Hargens ..... Customer & Legal Records Specialist  
Shane Bush ..... Hookup Specialist

### Operations Staff / Water Treatment - Pierre, SD

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Mike Polak ..... Water Treatment Plant Specialist  
Steve Laird ..... Water Treatment Plant Specialist

### Water Transmission & Distribution - Miller, SD

Lorin Johnson ..... Operations Manager  
Gale Auch ..... Main Transmission Pipeline Specialist  
Calvin Kindle ..... Water Distribution Specialist  
Craig Lunde ..... Data Acquisition Specialist  
Scott Manning ..... Water Distribution Specialist  
Michael Nicholson ..... Main Transmission Pipeline Specialist  
Wayne Ruhnke ..... O & M Specialist  
Mike McCready ..... Small Systems Specialist

### Pierre, SD

Shane Bothwell ..... Water Distribution Specialist  
Ron Ramsey ..... Water Distribution Specialist  
Al Thomas ..... Water Distribution Specialist  
Randy Bauer ..... Electrical Specialist

### Gettysburg, SD

Gary Tobin ..... Water Distribution Specialist

### Wessington Springs, SD


Mark Gran ..... Water Distribution Specialist

### Huron, SD

Troy Dorris ..... Water Distribution Specialist  
Scott Perry ..... Water Distribution Specialist

### Consultants

Bartlett & West Engineers  
May, Adam, Gerdes & Thompson – Law Office  
Endorf, Lurken, Olson & Co. – CPA

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(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# Save the Date



## ANNUAL MEETING

October 17, 2019  
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
All Mid Dakota offices

## MID DAKOTA IMPLEMENTS NEW SHUTOFF PROCEDURES

One of the less popular jobs that come with running a business is collecting accounts that are past due. Another of those jobs is shutting off an account because someone has not paid what is owed. Mid Dakota has a great staff and they will tell you that shutting customers off is something they would rather not have to do.

Up until now, shutoff and collections procedures have been the same as when Mid Dakota has first started serving water to its customers. At a staff meeting the end of May, it was decided to change the procedures used to collect accounts that are past due.

On the Monday preceding the Board of Director's meeting, a shutoff meeting will be held. During this meeting people may be removed from the list if the past due amount is a late charge or staff knows something about the customer that would merit giving them more time such as an illness. Cutoff service orders are generated but not assigned to the operators. The board meeting is most generally held on the second Tuesday of the month and a list of the customers on the shutoff list is given to the board in case there is something they may know about someone on the list.

Office staff calls the customers on the list to let them know they are delinquent and the amount on their account(s) that is past due. If there is no valid phone number or email address available, they have the operator place a door hanger at their location. If there is no payment before the 4th Tuesday of the month, service orders will be assigned to the operators.

Any communication with the delinquent customer will be on the service order so the operator can see what arrangements may have been made or if they promised to pay by a certain day. Operators will then go and shut off the customers who have Cutoff service orders.

Ten days from shutoff, the customer receives a Final Bill letter and 30 days later they receive a Demand letter by certified mail. When Certified Letter Acknowledgment Card is returned, customer is sent to Small Claims Court or to the Collection Agency. It is a long process but it is felt that this arrangement will be more productive than previous collection attempts.



### Rate Table Effective January 1, 2019

#### 501 Residential 1-Unit

\$42.00 per month minimum bill  
\$4.75 per 1,000 gallons 1st 33,000  
\$7.00 per 1,000 gallons over 33,000

#### 502 Rural Household 2-Units

\$52.00 per month minimum bill  
\$4.75 per 1,000 gallons 1st 10,000  
\$3.75 per 1,000 gallons next 56,000  
\$7.00 Per 1,000 gallons over 66,000

#### 504 Rural Household 4-Units

\$70.00 per month minimum bill  
\$4.75 per 1,000 gallons 1st 10,000  
\$3.75 per 1,000 gallons next 122,000  
\$7.00 per 1,000 gallons over 132,000

#### 506 Rural Household 6-Units

\$87.00 per month minimum bill  
\$4.75 per 1,000 gallons 1st 10,000  
\$3.75 per 1,000 gallons next 188,000  
\$7.00 per 1,000 gallons over 198,000

#### 511 Livestock

\$30.00 per month minimum bill  
\$3.75 per 1,000 gallons 1st 300,000 (per year)  
\$4.75 per 1,000 gallons 301,000 to 700,000 (per year)  
\$7.00 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  
\$24.00 per GPM per month demand charge  
\$0.50 per 1,000 gallons

#### 163, 166 Special Class III

\$4.69 per Pers (equiv) per month minimum bill  
\$4.55 per Pers (equiv) per month demand charge  
\$0.50 per 1,000 gallons up to contract amount  
\$7.00 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](http://www.mdrws.com)



# OUT AND ABOUT

## SEPTEMBER

### **21-22 – PIONEER POWER SHOW – MENNO, SD**

Family fun for everyone! Tractors and engines, Steam threshing, Petting zoo, Jail, Corn shelling, Children's Pedal Pull, Craft and Flea Market, Historic Buildings, Parade, and More! [www.pioneeracres.com/powershow.html](http://www.pioneeracres.com/powershow.html)

### **26-29 – SOUTH DAKOTA FILM FESTIVAL – ABERDEEN, SD**

The South Dakota Film Festival features jury-selected films from South Dakota and around the world. The events run Thursday through Sunday. Sessions vary, so please check the website for specific times. Most sessions take place at the Capitol Theatre in downtown Aberdeen. Admission: Tickets may be purchased online, by phone or at the door. [www.southdakotafilmfest.org](http://www.southdakotafilmfest.org)

### **28 – LIVING HISTORY FALL FESTIVAL – GROTON, SD**

Fun for all ages. Enjoy the colors of fall and see history come to life. There will be re-enactors, historic demonstrations, children's activities, music and more. Concessions are available on site. Bring your lawn chairs and prepare to enjoy the activities. Located at the Granary Rural Cultural Center northeast of Groton off of 400th Avenue. Free Admission. [www.dacotahprairiemuseum.com/granary](http://www.dacotahprairiemuseum.com/granary)

## OCTOBER

### **5 – HARVEST FESTIVAL – CHAMBERLAIN, SD**

The Harvest Festival kicks off with a pancake breakfast in the morning. After that, you can enjoy vendors on Main Street, Pumpkin' Chuckin', face painting, a straw bale maze, and a barrel train. Enter and enjoy the pumpkin decorating contest. In the evening, don't miss a concert by Breaking Eight at the Chamberlain Community Center. [www.facebook.com/mychambercoa/](http://www.facebook.com/mychambercoa/)

### **12 – PUMPKIN FEST – GROTON, SD**

Saturday, October 12, 2019 – 10:00AM - 3:00PM at the Groton City Park. Free Pumpkins, Hayrides, Train Rides, Face Painting, Pumpkin Painting, Inflatables. Lunch Served 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM. Alternate Date: October 13, 2019

### **11-13 – BLACK HILLS HORSE EXPO – RAPID CITY, SD**

A great event for any horse enthusiast! Each day of the Black Hills Horse Expo includes Stallion Showcase, Shop-Til-You-Drop vendors, Breed Avenue, Kids Korral, 20+ clinics and presentations, trick riders, and more. Friday evening features a Ranch Rodeo. Saturday evening's Equine Extravaganza presents Gladius the Show, an acrobatic equestrian production with aerialists, fire, and Roman riding. The Expo is held at the James Kjerstad Event Center on the Central States Fairground in Rapid City. Admission fees. [www.facebook.com/BlackHillsHorseExpo/](http://www.facebook.com/BlackHillsHorseExpo/)

### **31-2 – RINGNECK FESTIVAL & BIRD DOG CHALLENGE – HURON, SD**

The annual Huron Ringneck Festival & Bird Dog Challenge is a pheasant hunting competition that draws participants from across the United States. Thirty teams are selected for the competition hunt. The object is to bag the most birds within state limits with only four shells per hunter, six hunters per team. Another 40 teams are accepted for the Bird Dog Challenge. This competition allows for two hunters and one dog to take the field with five shells and 20 minutes to harvest birds. Admission: Details about entry fees can be found online at: [www.huronsd.com/visiting-huron/special-events/ringneck-festival-bird-dog-challenge](http://www.huronsd.com/visiting-huron/special-events/ringneck-festival-bird-dog-challenge)

### **26 – MORTIMER'S MONSTROUS HALLOWEEN EVENT – BRUCE, SD**

Join us for some Halloween fun on Saturday, Oct. 26, from 4:00 PM -7:00 PM at Oakwood Lakes State Park. This come and go event includes activities centered around the historic Mortimer's cabin and the warming shelter including Hay rides, Scavenger Hunt, Face painting, Trick-or-treating, campfires, and more. Park License is Required. Wheelchair Accessible. <https://gfp.sd.gov/events/detail/52/>

## NOVEMBER

### **10 – LUTEFISK, MEATBALL & LEFSE SUPPER – CHAMBERLAIN, SD**

From 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM, come and enjoy the fun, food, and festivities – lutefisk, meatballs, lefse supper with homemade salads and desserts – at Trinity Lutheran Church 902 S. Main Street in Chamberlain. Proceeds from the supper go toward church missions and expenses. For more information call Jeff Tveit 730-0553. Fee: \$15.

### **26 - DECEMBER 26 – CHRISTMAS AT THE CAPITOL – PIERRE, SD**

The annual Christmas at the Capitol display in Pierre includes nearly 100 trees that are decorated by volunteers from communities, schools, churches, nonprofit organizations and state government offices. This year's Grand Lighting Ceremony takes place in the rotunda on Tuesday, November 26, at 7 p.m. The display is then open to the public daily, 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM, through Thursday, December 26. Other areas of the Capitol are also decorated for the holiday season, including the Capitol grounds. Free admission. <http://christmasatthecapitol.sd.gov>

### **29-30 – HOLIDAY EXPRESS – HILL CITY, SD**

Journey to the North Pole on the 1880 Train, where Santa waits to get on board. All passengers receive hot chocolate and a sugar cookie. All Dates: Nov 29, 2019 - Nov 30, 2019 ; Dec 7, 2019 - Dec 8, 2019 ; Dec 14, 2019 - Dec 15, 2019; Dec 21, 2019 - Dec 24, 2019; Dec 27, 2019 - Dec 28, 2019. Tickets required. [www.1880train.com](http://www.1880train.com)

# IT'S TIME TO WINTERIZE YOUR HOME

**A** quick step outside and a glance at the calendar will remind you of the inevitable – colder temperatures are on their way. For South Dakotans, winter is just a way of life. Taking a little time and the proper steps to winterize your home – and especially your pipes – in preparation for the cold and snow, you can save yourself time and money, and unnecessary heartache.

A broken pipe can add up to big water losses. A 1/8 inch hole can lose 296,000 gallons of water over a three month period of time – about 3,200 gallons a day. That is equivalent to the amount of water that one person will use in a month of normal use. To put things into perspective – it is enough water to fill an 850 square foot basement with six inches of water in just 24 hours. Below are some steps you can take now to winterize your home and keep your pipes from freezing this winter.

## Insulate your pipes

Pipes bursting in winter are a homeowner's worst nightmare. Insulate pipes in areas of your home that are not well heated – such as crawl spaces and attics. Wrap them with pre-molded foam rubber sleeves or fiberglass insulation – both of which can be found at your local hardware store. Another option can be to install heat tape – which is basically a special electrical cord that is wrapped around your pipes and emits heat. It is crucial to install UL-approved heat tapes according to manufacturer's instructions so as to not cause an accident or fire. The heat tape should be used on both the water pipes as well as the valves that shut off the water pipes. If you already rely on heat tape to keep your pipes from freezing, inspect it thoroughly to make sure it is working properly as it can burn out after a number of years.

## Know where your master shut off and service line valves are located

If there is an emergency, you will need to know where your master shut off valve is in a hurry. If your water meter is in your basement, the valve should be close by. Your service line water valve shuts off water to your entire property ahead of your water meter – and should be marked with a sign.

## Inspect your meter pit

You can cover the pit with straw or other insulating material if desired to further protect the meter and pipes. Also remember to mark the location of your meter pit to avoid damage from snowplows and other equipment. If it looks damaged, contact your local rural water provider to come and check it out.

## Disconnect outside hoses and faucets

It is very important to disconnect and drain your outside hoses. You should also drain your outside faucets by installing an inside shut-off valve and drain if the outside faucet is not self-draining. In-ground lawn sprinklers also need to be drained before winter hits.

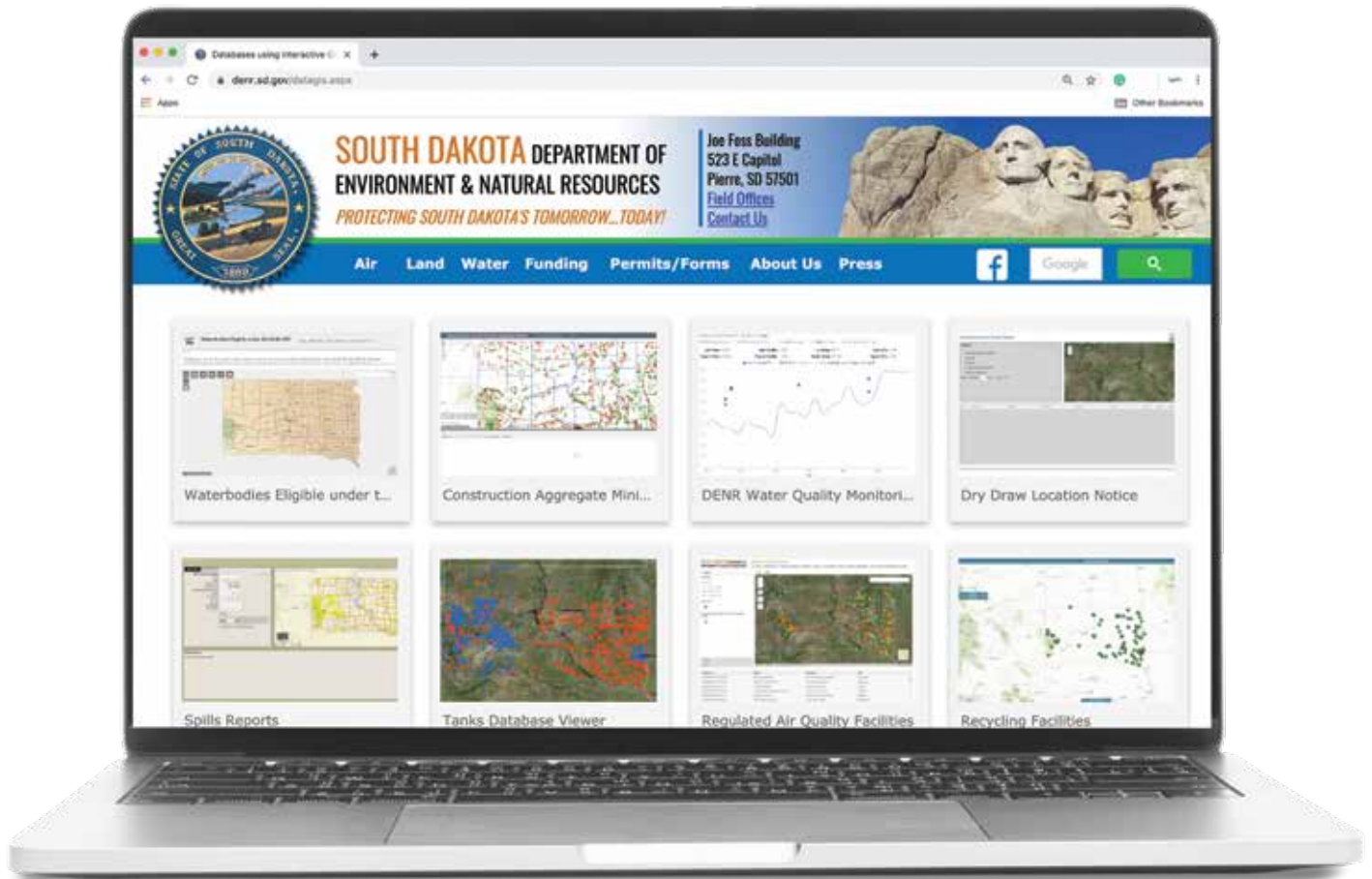
## Seal Outside Openings and Cracks

Locate places along outside walls, foundations, sill plates, doors and windows that may allow cold air to penetrate your home – and seal with caulk, foam or fiberglass insulation. Close any basement windows and access doors and make sure they are properly sealed.

## OTHER WINTERIZING TIPS

- Clean your gutters! Gutters clogged with leaves and debris can form ice dams, which can cause water to seep into your house and cause damage. Also check to make sure your downspouts are carrying water away from your home's foundation to further prevent flooding or water damage.
- If you are going to be away from your home for a long period of time, have your rural water system shut off your water.
- Keep sink cabinet doors open during cold spells or winter power outages to allow warm air to circulate around the pipes.
- Trim trees to prevent snow and ice from weighing them down and causing breakage – possibly damaging your home or vehicles.

# WATER QUALITY INFORMATION



**Jay Gilbertson,**  
*East Dakota Water Development District*

**M**any South Dakotans participate in a range of water-based recreational activities, like swimming, fishing or boating. For some, their home or cabin might be located adjacent to a lake or stream. For the rest of us, access comes by way of our many public parks and beaches. In any case, people are frequently asking questions about our surface water resources. The questions typically center on concerns over water quality (Is it safe?), but questions about quantity also arise (especially during times of flood or drought).

The references below are intended to provide links to a few of the available sources of water information where many (most?) of the basic questions can be answered.

## WATER QUANTITY INFORMATION SOURCES

**USGS Stream Gages** – The United States Geological Survey (USGS) maintains a network of over 150 stations that monitor stream flows across the state. In many instances, the records go back over fifty years, so they provide a good, long-term perspective. The stations record the river level (stage) on a continuous basis, and the readings can be accessed via the Dakota Water Science Center website (<https://www.usgs.gov/centers/dakota-water>) under the Data Tools button. Click on Real-Time Streamflow SD for the latest information on South Dakota rivers and streams. USGS Dakota Water Science Center (605-394-3200).

**Smartphone Applications** – In the past few years, Smartphone applications have been developed that provide

access to real-time stream flow information. The information they provide is similar to what is available from more formal, web-based platforms, i.e., real-time stream stage and discharge information. One example is a product called Rivercast™, developed by Juggernaut Technology, Inc., which is available for both Apple and Android platforms.

**DENR Water Rights Lake Level Site** – The South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Water Rights Program maintains an interactive database map that provides information on lake levels within the state (Historical Lake Elevations Database). The site provides water level data, along with established elevations for lake outlets and the ordinary high and low water marks. The site can be accessed by selecting “Data & Mapping” on DENR’s homepage at <https://denr.sd.gov/> under the “One-Stop Shops” heading. DENR Water Rights Program (605-773-3352).

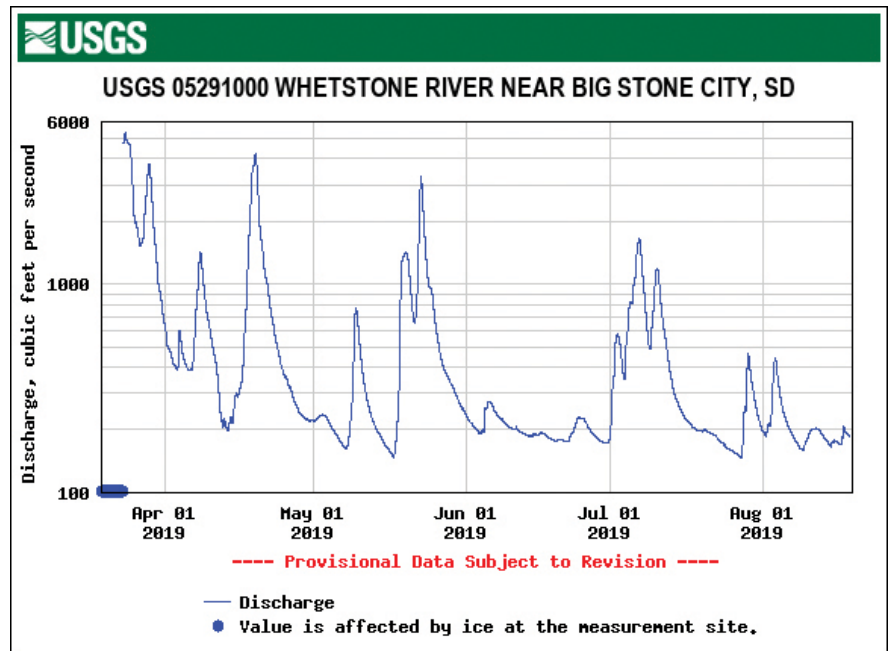
## WATER QUALITY INFORMATION SOURCES

**Annual Consumer Confidence Reports** – Every year, public water suppliers are required to provide a consumer confidence report (CCR) to their customers describing the quality of the water they are providing. This requirement applies to rural water systems and municipal water utilities. This report typically comes out in the spring, with many rural water systems publishing their CCR in this magazine.

**305(b) & 303(d) Integrated Report** – Every two years, DENR publishes the Integrated Report for Surface Water Quality Assessment. Prepared under requirements of Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act, the report provides a status report on the condition of rivers, lakes and streams across the state. The report identifies the designated beneficial uses of each water body, such as swimming, fisheries, or drinking water, along with a determination of whether the uses are supported. A variety of water quality standards have been established to determine whether a water body supports a particular use. If more than ten percent (10%) of samples fail to meet the standard, the water is considered impaired. Water quality data used in the biennial Integrated Reports come from a broad range of public sources. The most recent report can be found on the DENR website, (<http://denr.sd.gov/documents/18irfinal.pdf>). DENR

Surface Water Quality Program (605-773-3351).

**Water Quality Monitoring Access Portal** – Earlier this year, DENR launched a new interactive database map providing the public internet access to water quality data for South Dakota’s lakes and streams. This is the same data on which the Integrated Reports are based. The Water Quality Monitoring Access Portal Map (WQ Map) provides water quality data collected during the past 50 years from DENR’s Statewide Water Quality Monitoring Network, intensive water quality monitoring surveys, Total



Maximum Daily Load assessments, regional lake surveys, and citizen monitoring. Altogether, WQ Map contains data for over 3,600 water quality monitoring stations and includes results for more than 140,000 water chemistry samples, 2,500 algae samples, and 8,400 fish flesh samples. WQ Map can be accessed by selecting “Data & Mapping” on DENR’s homepage at <https://denr.sd.gov/> under the “One-Stop Shops” heading. DENR Watershed Protection Program (605-773-4254).

The sources listed above are by no means all of the available resources, but they are some of the most commonly searched. It is also important to note that information is not likely to be available for every water body, and even if there is data, it may not be from exactly where you’d like. If you’d like to learn more about potential sources of water quality and/or quantity data for your area, feel free to contact your local public water supplier, the DENR or the USGS at the numbers listed above. The East Dakota Water Development District (605-688-6741) is also a source.

# A Rural Water Retrospective

Rural Water is a relatively new concept in South Dakota – beginning in the 1970s and 1980s when forward thinking folks sought out better alternatives to private wells. As rural water systems popped up across the state, they have grown and flourished – now serving over half the state's population with a clean, safe, and reliable drinking water source. Many of the water systems in the state are managed by an aging workforce that is nearing retirement. In fact, this year two managers, Greg Merrigan, manager of the Clay Rural Water System, and Randy Jencks, manager of the Kingbrook Rural Water System are hanging up their hats after 37 and 22 years respectively. With their retirement goes decades of experience and expertise. We decided to ask them some questions about their tenure as they retire to get a perspective of what running a rural water system is like, and how the industry has changed.



Greg Merrigan

## Did you ever think you'd be a rural water manager? What brought you to the position?

**Greg:** Working in plumbing construction while Clay was being built made me aware of what was going on, but I never gave a thought to working for the system. In 1982 an acquaintance made me aware that the system had an opening for a manager and I applied more out of curiosity. When I got the job I was very excited for the opportunity.

**Randy:** When I applied for the job 21 years ago I didn't know rural water systems existed. They began in the late 1970's after I had left home for college, and I spent the following 20 years in the Navy. When I got out of the service and was looking for a job in the private sector, I came across the advertisement for Kingbrook Rural Water in the *Argus Leader*. The rest is history.

## You've worked for your system a long time. What kept you there?

**Greg:** Providing safe drinking water is a very noble profession. Growing up on a farm I knew the issues with wells and cisterns. Every time we can connect someone you can see the improvement in their lives. It is very gratifying. I've always had a great Board and Staff to work with. That has certainly contributed to my tenure here.

**Randy:** It was a combination of things; good company, good Board of Directors, good employees, but in addition, a significant aspect was that South Dakota was a great place to raise a family. When I came to the job our two small girls were in first grade and preschool. They thrived in our mid-western, small town atmosphere, and have gone on to successful careers on their own.



Randy Jencks



## What was the biggest project you oversaw while manager?

**Greg:** For a number of years we worked on a project to expand into southern Union County. The project took many turns over several years and then in 2005 fell into place. We built a new water treatment plant, elevated tank and distribution system that served four housing developments and a rural area.

**Randy:** We have about a month left on the largest project in Kingbrook history. It was a \$12.8 million project to add approximately 260 new customers, 200 miles of distribution piping from 2-inch to 16-inch, and a 600,000 gallon storage tank.

## What do you see as the biggest change in the water industry during your tenure?

**Greg:** I would have to say technology. I would have never guessed in 1982 that we would monitor our entire system on a mobile phone or read our member's meters from our office. Technology has made us so much more efficient.

**Randy:** Technology advancements that have improved our ability to manage our system facilities, i.e., treatment plants, pumping stations, water towers, etc. that all combine to improve the service we provide to our customers.

## What is your favorite thing about working in the water industry?

**Greg:** Providing safe drinking water. Working in an industry that has great support from engineers, funding agencies, regulatory agencies, etc. Working with other water professionals from across the state. The opportunity to get involved in industry-related associations.

**Randy:** The people. My Board of Directors and employees from our system, managers from other rural water systems, representatives from our lending agencies, i.e., DENR, CoBank, and Rural Development, have all become good friends and made the job that much more enjoyable.

## What stands out as you look back on your time as manager?

**Greg:** How much we have grown... from 1,000 members to 2,400. Watching staff members grow in their positions. Always having a supportive board.

**Randy:** How fast the time has gone by. It seems like yesterday when I returned to South Dakota to begin my second career and, now that it's over, I look back with pride and satisfaction on what we have accomplished. I have been very fortunate to have a great Board of Directors and two outstanding Chairmen during my time with Kingbrook.

## Thoughts as you retire?

**Greg:** I will miss our staff, our board and the many fellow water professionals from across the state. I am excited about my replacement ... the system will be in good hands.

**Randy:** I am continually amazed at the foresight that the rural water pioneers had in the beginning. I'm sure most people thought they were nuts to have a vision that you could run water lines across vast stretches of the country. But they did it, and we are the beneficiaries today. To my replacement I would advise to focus on one simple axiom; your only job is to help your Board do its job. To the Boards of the many South Dakota rural water systems; be proactive and dream big dreams, as did those early pioneers in our industry. And finally, to our Kingbrook employees; continue to represent our system to the best of your ability. You are the face of our organization and our reputation rests in your hands.



**Randy Jencks and Greg Merrigan with a Governor's Proclamation proclaiming January 10, 2019 as Greg Merrigan and Randy Jencks Day.**

## BLACK HAWK WATER USER DISTRICT

Back in 1949, organizers of a water system in Black Hawk, SD sent a letter out to fellow community members to begin the process of establishing a water company. The articles of incorporation were received by the members on June 6, 1949. During the Initial system sign-up, ten recruited members paid \$400.00 each for service. Well construction began on the 28th day of June, 1949 on land donated by one of the members.

The well began producing water one year later in July of 1950. Initial production was 750 gallons per hour, with that water being pumped into a 1,000 gallon holding tank. By 1951 the system had installed water meters on all services. Initial rates were established at the 1949 annual meeting; \$3.00 per month for commercial users and \$2.00 per month for homes.



Once the system was established, it never really quit growing. By 1956, 150 accounts were served by the system. A new pump house was built and an old railroad water tower was moved in from Rochford, by truck – in one piece!

Black Hawk Water added wells as the system grew. Between 1956 – 1963 a well was purchased from a private individual for backup purposes with another one purchased in the late 60's to early 70's for the same purpose. In 1986 a new well was drilled into the Madison formation which began providing water at a rate of 550 gallons per minute. The original well from 1949 has now been abandoned and

a second well was constructed in the late 90's in the Madison Aquifer to provide the system with two primary sources of water and has two wells to serve as backups.



# BLACK HAWK WATER USER DISTRICT



Updates have not been limited to the physical attributes of the system; Black Hawk's original system map was constructed on a white piece of plywood. In the early 90's Cindy Swanson, system manager, contracted a local engineering firm to digitize the map and save it to a computer. Now Black Hawk has the ability to have its larger maps printed on paper; the plywood map is still consulted occasionally.

In 1996, Black Hawk Water Company, Incorporated was dissolved as a corporation and Black Hawk Water User District was formed. Though the organizational structure of the system changed, the goal remained the same – provide the highest quality water in the area. System expansions resulted in the system supplying water outside of the Black Hawk community. Today Black Hawk Water serves the communities of Black Hawk and Summerset and also sells bulk water to the Stagebarn Subdivision and the city of Piedmont.

## DIRECTORS:

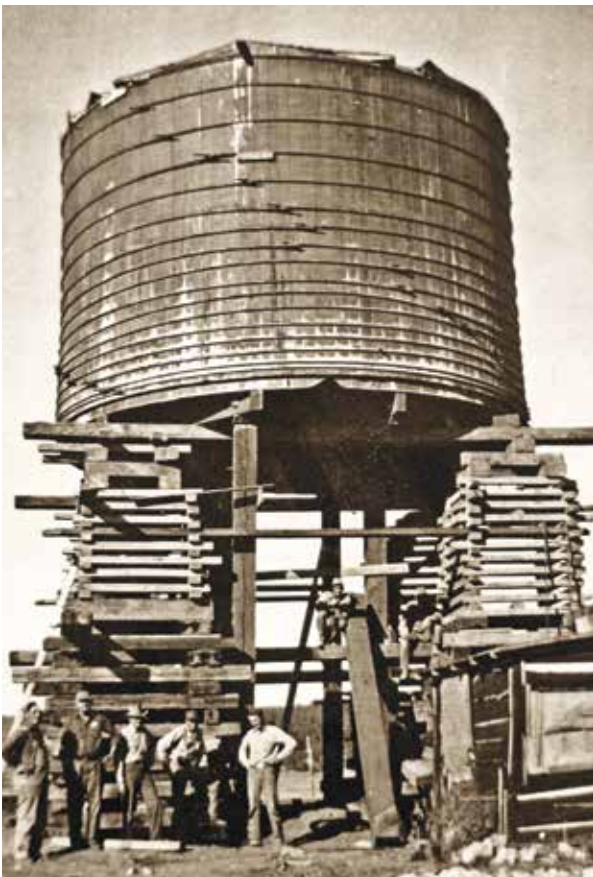
- Ed Striebel – Chairman
- David Braun – Vice Chairman
- Loren Kuper – Secretary
- Brian Peterson – Treasurer
- Gerry Scharer – Director
- Chad Neiger – Director
- Mike Marsland – Director

## STAFF:

- Cindy Swanson – Manager
- Ken LeBon – Assistant Manager

## STATISTICS:

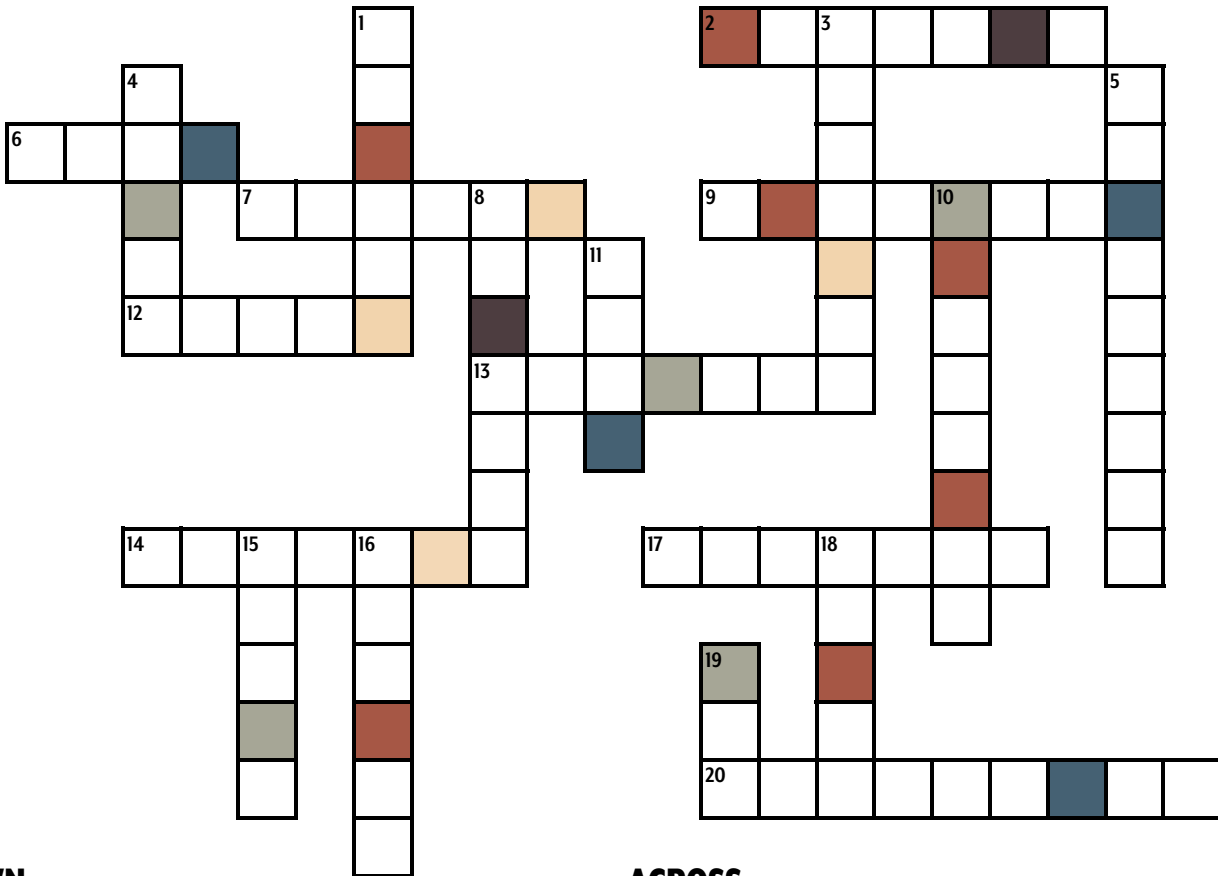
- Hookups: 1,487
- Miles Of Pipeline: 23
- Water Source: Madison Formation
- Counties Served: Meade
- Towns Served Individual: Black Hawk - Summerset
- Towns Served Bulk: Stagebarn Subdivision, City of Piedmont



# RURAL WATER CROSSWORD & WORD SCRAMBLE CONTEST

## THE HUNT

Enter to Win \$100



### DOWN

1. A spread of these range in sizes from standard to super magnum
3. Popular hunting outfitter in southeast South Dakota
4. Cover device for hunters
5. Breed of gundog good for pheasant hunting
8. Weapon popularly used for bird hunting
10. Process of looking for a good hunting spot
11. What does the coyote do that the domestic dog also does?
15. This spooks game very easily
16. Waterfowl and pheasant hunting hours typically end at \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Snows and Blues
19. Deer breeding season

### ACROSS

2. Type of hunting using a bow
6. Deer, but not related to a donkey
7. Ruffed, Sage, Blue, Spruce
9. Ring Neck
12. Like many bird species, the males of this breed of waterfowl often have more colorful feathers than their female counterparts.
13. Jakes and Jennies
14. Deer meat
17. Moving a lure to attract fish
20. Open or enclosed platforms used by hunters

### 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](http://www.sdarws.com/crossword.html) with the correct phrase by October 4, 2019 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 Angi Burnham of Emery who had the correct phrase of "luck is not a strategy" for October 2019.

# RURAL WATER

ACROSS SOUTH DAKOTA

## SOUTH DAKOTA'S WATER AGENCY RESPONSE NETWORK

### What is WARN?

WARN is a statewide Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN) of “utilities helping utilities” to prepare for the next natural or human-caused emergency. SDWARN was organized in 2008 when the first five members joined. The City of Fort Pierre was the first to sign the agreement, along with the TM Rural Water System, Minnehaha Community Water Corporation, the City of Winner, and the Clay Rural Water System. As of 2019, there are 125 members. SDWARN has approximately 77% of the population covered in the state with nearly every Class 1 municipality as a member. Membership also includes a tribal member and a Fortune 500 member, making it unique among the rest of the state WARNs.

### Why Do We Need SDWARN?

Water and wastewater systems provide our communities with a life-sustaining resource that is of vital importance to maintaining public health, sanitation, and safety. When water and wastewater services are interrupted for extended periods of time, a community's well-being quickly deteriorates, as evidenced by Hurricane Katrina. And without an adequate water supply, our communities are vulnerable to devastating fires. By restoring water and wastewater service in the most efficient manner possible, SDWARN provides renewed hope for fast recovery from such disasters.

This spring, SDWARN set up a command post to help with the spring flooding, but the flooding was more long term and less catastrophic than anticipated. However, several SDWARN pumps were deployed to multiple locations, and there are places where pumps are operating, along with active requests for more pumps. We had pumps dispatched to at least seven different locations this spring and summer. The City of Flandreau has been utilizing several pumps for a couple of months and has made great use of the SDWARN equipment to help them with sewer problems.

Many of the pumps were a donation from the City of Fort Pierre after the 2011 Missouri River Flood. Fort Pierre had purchased a lot of pumps and had no use for them after the flood. SDWARN solicited the pumps, and the city donated them for all members to use. The South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) has been host to the WARN pumps and equipment since 2015 when the pumps were donated. Pumps are housed in Madison and at the City of Spearfish who stepped up and provided a housing location west river. SDWARN is currently searching for a home for some pumps and equipment in the center of the state, and the City of Chamberlain has offered up some space for the future. The SDWARN board members are looking at the best arrangement of pumps to ensure that the shortest time is needed to access the greatest amount of pumping capability possible.

Last year, The City of Madison created the Challenge Grant program for SDWARN and put out a system challenge to match their \$500 grant to SDWARN. From that challenge, \$13,151 was donated to SDWARN, and it was an overwhelming success. The



one-dollar came from the City of Harrisburg who decided to “one-up” the challengers with a \$501 donation. Many rural water systems jumped in and donated the lion's share with four systems donating \$1,000

each. 2019 has seen the rural water systems taking the lead again with a CoBank matching grant donation of \$10,000. The City of Madison is again issuing a challenge to any system that wants to match the \$500. These donations will provide the equipment that has been in use this year and some new forms of equipment that are not presently available.



## **ARE YOU READY FOR WINTER?**

At the time you receive this newsletter, the trees leaves will be turning; the weather will be cooler; school has started; and gardens will be giving up the last of their produce. It is a great time to be outside enjoying the time with family and friends before “Old Man Winter” returns to send us back inside. It is also time again to think about preparing for the cold and protecting your home from frozen pipes and water damages that can result in large expenses.

Detaching hoses from outside faucets and rolling them up for storage is a great place to start. It will save your hoses for next year’s use and keep your outside faucet from freezing. If there is a valve inside the house to turn off the water to the outside faucet it could help to protect your property also.

Using heat tape on water pipes helps to prevent pipes from freezing and bursting. This is especially important for pipelines which are close to outside walls, under mobile homes or a distance from a heat source. Be sure the products you use on water pipes have Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Certification to prevent fires or costly repairs.

A large number of farmers and ranchers use heated cattle waterers to water livestock during the winter months. Most companies have information on their websites on how to test your heater, care for your heater in warmer weather, winter maintenance, etc.

Have a great fall and enjoy it while it is here; but remember, winter is not far away.

# GALE AUCH RETIRING, NEW MAIN TRANSMISSION PIPELINE SPECIALIST HIRED



*Gale Auch*



*Michael Nicholson*

After 19 years of employment with Mid Dakota, Gale Auch has announced he will be retiring from Mid Dakota on the 1st of November. He began his time with Mid Dakota as a Construction Inspector for two years, then started working as a Water Distribution Operator from 2002 until the new position of Main Transmission Pipeline Specialist was opened in 2005. Mid Dakota directors and staff give Gale their best wishes in his retirement.

With Gale's retirement, there would be a need for someone to fill in that position. The position was advertised, and Michael Nicholson from Miller was hired to fill that position. Michael accepted the job offer in April of this year. Mike has had experience on working with electrical and hydraulic systems which should be helpful working on the main transmission pipeline. The 7-month gap between Michael's hiring and Gale's retirement has allowed Michael to train with Gale on the job, which was very advantageous. Michael had been employed in Huron previously so this job is closer to home. The directors and staff welcome Michael to the Mid Dakota team. They look forward to getting to know him and working with him in his new position.

## Mid Dakota CALENDAR

The Mid Dakota Rural Water System offices will be closed on the following dates:

**October 14, 2019 – Native American Day**

**November 11, 2019 – Veteran's Day (observed)**

**November 28, 2019 – Thanksgiving Day**

**December 25, 2019 – Christmas Day**

**January 1, 2020 – New Year's Day**

In case of an emergency, please call the office Toll Free at 1-800-439-3079,  
or call our After Hours answering service direct at 1-888-545-7440.

Mid Dakota Rural Water System, Inc.

608 W. 14th St., P.O. Box 318

Miller, South Dakota 57362-0318

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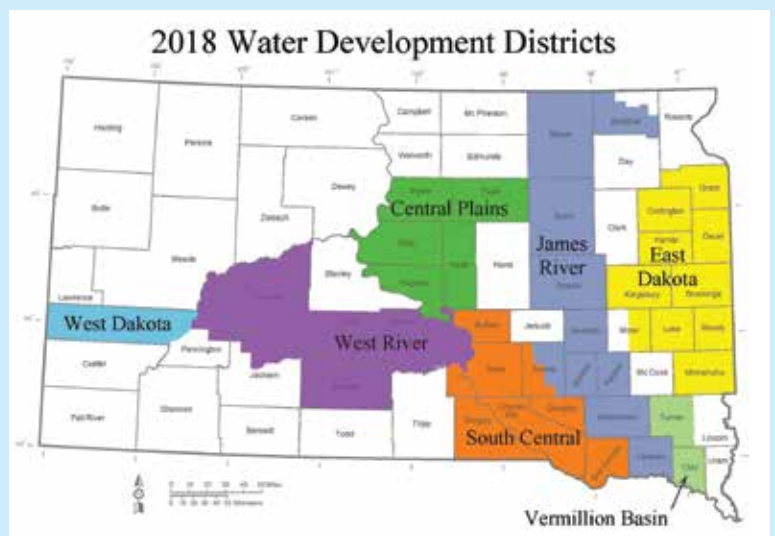
# WATER MATTERS

## South Dakota Water Development Districts

**Water development districts (WDDs)** are political subdivisions of the State. WDDs promote the conservation, development, and proper management of water resources according to district priorities. They can provide technical, organizational, and financial assistance to prospective and existing projects and activities. While sharing many common efforts, each of the seven existing WDDs (see map) have developed programs and expertise designed to address those issues most important to their area.

Each WDD is governed by an elected Board of Directors, consisting of 5, 7, or 9 members, depending on population. The Board hires or contracts for staff and other services as necessary. WDDs have a limited taxing authority, being able to levy a tax of no more than thirty cents per thousand dollars of taxable valuation (0.3 mill). They also pursue external grant support for priority activities.

If an organization, entity, group or individual has a project or activity that needs technical, organizational, or financial assistance, contact the WDD for that area. Staff has extensive experience in developing and supporting projects. They can assist in preparing an application to include a project on the State Water Plan, an important step if a project needs state or federal assistance. They can also help project sponsors search for funds from other sources.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**East Dakota WDD** – Jay Gilbertson  
605-688-6741 • edwdd@brookings.net

**Vermillion Basin WDD** – Brad Prehiem  
605-563-2883 • vbwdd@hotmail.com

**James River WDD** – Dave Bartel  
605-352-0600 • davebartel@midconetwork.com

**Central Plains WDD** – Lynette Eckert  
605-280-6763 • cpwdd@midconetwork.com

**South-Central WDD** – Peg Haenfler  
605-724-2624 • scwdd@unitelsd.com

**West River WDD** – Jake Fitzgerald  
605-669-2931 • jfitzgerald@wrlj.com

**West Dakota WDD** – Daniel Mullaly  
605-394-2685 • wdwdd0@outlook.com



**Back page content provided by:**  
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