

3H GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

1. ISSUE

A variety of land use activities can impact groundwater quality and availability. Contaminants from land use activities within well recharge areas; unsealed, unused wells; storage tanks; and unplanned or overuse of groundwater supplies as a result of development can all impact groundwater quality and availability.

2. BACKGROUND

There are several land use activities and issues which impact groundwater in Carver County. These issues include:

- **Wellhead Protection.** Contaminants from land use activities within well recharge zones can significantly impact the quality of the groundwater supply for Carver County cities, towns, and other public and private users.
- **Private and Unused, Unsealed Wells.** Wells provide a direct conduit from the surface to the groundwater supply. Those wells which have been improperly constructed, improperly maintained, or are no longer in use, create the potential for surface contaminants to flow directly to groundwater aquifers.
- **Water Appropriation and Conservation.** Growth and development in Carver County will increase the burden on the groundwater supply. Overuse and unplanned use could result in long term shortages.
- **Storage Tanks.** Storage tanks, both above ground and below ground, are potential major groundwater pollution sources. These tanks are of concern due to the high potential of failure and leaking, and the fact that leaks can go unnoticed especially with underground tanks.

Groundwater related issues discussed in other parts of this updated plan include:

- Feedlots (included in Chapter 3E Agricultural Practices)
- Sanitary Sewer Discharge (Chapter 3F)
- Solid & Hazardous Waste Management (Chapter 3I)
- Education (Chapter 3J)
- Monitoring & Assessment (Chapter 3K)

3. GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT GOAL

Goal GW-1 Protect groundwater quality and groundwater supplies.

4. GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Policy GW-1 Protect water supplies by assisting in the implementation of the MDH Wellhead Protection program.

Policy GW-2 Prevent possible aquifer contamination by identifying and sealing unused, unsealed wells.

Policy GW-3 Support the Metropolitan Council in their efforts to monitor and protect regional groundwater supply.

Policy GW-3 Support the MPCA in regulating storage tanks to eliminate the risk of groundwater contamination.

5. GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Imp Strategy GW-1 Include wellhead protection in the CCWMO Education Program.

Imp Strategy GW-2 Assist public water supply well operators. Assistance may include providing inventories of potential contaminant sources, mapping and other GIS data, and providing input to WPA committees and plans.

Imp Strategy GW-3 Continue to operate the well sealing cost share program.

Imp Strategy GW-4 Collaborate with the DNR and Metropolitan Council in efforts to plan for and monitor water appropriation and long term demand.

Imp Strategy GW-5 Include, as appropriate, water conservation efforts in the overall CCWMO Education Program.

Imp Strategy GW-6 Consider updating the Groundwater Chapter of the Plan upon the completion of the Carver County Geologic Atlas (Part A was completed in January 2010, Part B is expected to be completed in 2011).