Department of Public Health and Environment

Lowell Johnson
Director

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Annie Felix-Gerth
Pesticide and Fertilizer Management Division
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
625 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538
annie.felix-gerth@state.mn.us

Dear Ms. Felix-Gerth,

Thank you for the opportunity for Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment to review the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Draft *Minnesota Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan (NFMP)*. Please find our comments below.

The county requests notification to its Department of Public Health and Environment if any townships within the county are selected for targeted private well sampling (Chapter 7 of the NFMP). The southern portion of the county in particular contains hydrogeologically sensitive areas, and significant historic (and some current) agricultural land use, particularly in Denmark Township. In addition, the county requests receiving data that is collected from this additional sampling, in order to complement existing well data collected through the county-wide resident well testing program. In turn, the county would be willing to provide historic well test data for affected townships, if MDA would find this information useful.

Regarding the protocol for sampling and screening private wells for potential impacts from non-fertilizer sources of nitrate contamination (Chapter 7 and Appendix H), the county asks how MDA will communicate with well owners who may have high nitrate levels from non-fertilizer determined sources. The county requests this information be shared with the Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment and other relevant local governments (such as the Washington Conservation District) so that these residents can be assisted with alleviating any non-fertilizer source of nitrogen contamination.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at 651-430-6701, or via email at stephanie.souter@co.washington.mn.us.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Souter, Associate Planner

Cc: (via email)
Molly O'Rourke, County Administrator
Lowell Johnson, Director, Department of Public Health and Environment
Kristofer Keller, Program Manager, Department of Public Health and Environment
Jessica Collin-Pilarski, Senior Planner, Department of Public Health and Environment