

Nancy Ventura

The pollution of water in our aquifers and rural wells in SE Minnesota with karst topography are predominantly caused by agricultural practices of excessive manure and synthetic nitrogen applications exacerbated by hard rain run-off into streams and other bodies of water.

* Within the current federal and state permitting processes are rules in place that end up protecting some agricultural practices because the rules make it tremendously difficult to specifically and quickly make changes to regulate problem practices. Acknowledgement of water nitrate contamination has been recognized for decades and though agencies say they are working on these issues the aquifers are more contaminated.

* Best Management Practices (BMP) as guidelines to control and minimize negative consequences of manure and fertilizer applications are wholly insufficient and have not worked. Since the emphasis of these permitting changes are focused on factory farms, reduce animal unit caps per location, such as in Winona County; as well as provide federal and state subsidies for building manure storage facilities for all farms. We must have stringent regulations, oversight, and accountability with consequences for factory farm operations in order to protect our water supply and clean it up.

* Epidemiological evidence shows colon cancer begins with long term use of water with nitrate contamination even under 2 ppm (Dr. Eleta Borrud research). We should plan that until the EPA limits are revised downward that no more than 5 ppm of nitrate in wells and bodies of water currently testing over 10 ppm or more would be acceptable for human use and consumption.

To conclude, I (BW) have witnessed the painful death from colon cancer in my family. There are no families that have not experienced the scourge of some kind of cancer. The population at large would accept bold measures to improve water quality. This is the time for action.

Sincerely,
Bonnie Wochinski
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