

Cherie Hales

My name is Cherie Hales. I lived rurally with a private well for 40 years, and have paid attention to water quality for a long time.

Here in SE Minnesota nitrate and chemical contamination of the groundwater has been an issue for decades. In spite of numerous studies, recommendations and initiatives, and millions of dollars spent, drinking water has gotten worse. It is a public health crisis.

I'm glad to see some of the proposed changes regarding the NPDES and SDS permits.

- * Application only on fields with a perennial or cover crop in vulnerable areas and phasing out winter application.

- * Setbacks on floodplains and other water access points unless incorporated.

- * Visual inspections.

- * Rule consistency between original source and whoever spreads it.

I feel that our shared water resources would benefit by some additional changes in the permits.

- * Testing of fields pre-planting before more nitrogen is added.

- * Water testing at production and storage sites and fields to establish a baseline.

- * Prohibit winter application everywhere, not just vulnerable lands.

- * Use of the Runoff Risk Advisory Forecast tool should be required and spreading prohibited when the risk is high.

- * Stronger monitoring should be part of the permit because self-reporting has not been effective.

I hope you will consider some of these additional changes as you move forward.

Thank you.

Cherie Hales

Winona Minnesota