



Safe Drinking Water for Private Well Users Grant Application Instructions

Dakota County (“County”) received a fixed amount Clean Water Funds (“grant funds”) from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to help ensure safe drinking water for private well users. Private well users in Dakota County are eligible for financial assistance through the Safe Drinking Water for Private Well Users Grant Program (“Program”) to address drinking water quality concerns in their private wells. The County will award Safe Drinking Water for Private Well Users Grants (“Grant”) while the grant funds are available to the County and until the grant funds are exhausted to eligible landowners or renters to repair, reconstruct or replace a well, or treat drinking water supplies that are contaminated with arsenic, manganese, nitrate, coliform bacteria, or lead.

Each Grant will provide cost-share funding for the following eligible activities to remediate a drinking water contamination issue:

Table 1. Grant Program eligible activities and cost-share breakout based on financial need

Eligible Activities	Financial Need	
	Cost-share: If well user meets low-income* criteria	Cost-share: If well user does <u>not</u> meet low-income* criteria
Well repair, reconstruction, or replacement: repair/replacement of a contaminated well to address nitrate over the maximum contamination level and/or coliform bacteria contamination	up to 100% of the cost, not to exceed \$10,000 per household	up to 50% of the cost, not to exceed \$5,000 per household
Well Water Treatment Equipment and Installation: purchase of a drinking water treatment system and installation by a licensed water conditioning company to address contaminant(s) found over the maximum contamination level	up to 100% of the cost, not to exceed \$3,000 per household	up to 50% of the cost, not to exceed \$1,500 per household
Well Disinfection: well disinfection/chlorination by a licensed well contractor if coliform bacteria are present	up to 100% not to exceed \$500	up to 50% not to exceed \$250

*See Table 2 for low-income criteria

The private well water must be the primary source of potable drinking water for the resident to qualify. Funding will be made available on a first come, first served basis. However, applications that meet the low-income criteria will be given priority in the County's award of Grants when there are not sufficient grant funds still available to award Grants to all eligible applicants at any given point in time.

Your Privacy Rights - Tennesen Warning Notice

The County is required to provide you with the following Tennesen Warning Notice ("Notice") regarding data collected pursuant to **Application for the Dakota County Safe Drinking Water for Private Well Users Grant Program ("Program")**. This Notice is written to enable you to make an informed decision about whether to provide private information about yourself to the County. The Notice explains the County's purpose for collecting the information and its intended use, whether you are legally required to provide the County with the information, known consequences of providing or refusing to provide the information, and the identity of those authorized to receive the information.

What Information will the County Collect?

The County will ask for your name, address, telephone number, email address, address of your well, if you are the owner of the property where the well is located, your most recent well water test from a certified laboratory, and for a redacted copy of your most recent Federal or Minnesota State Income tax return. If approved for the program the County will also be collecting water testing data specific to your well.

Why is the County Collecting this Information?

The County is collecting this information in order to determine eligibility for the Program for those who apply. This information will be used to screen for qualifying wells, determine cost-share eligibility, to communicate with and contact individuals who apply, well water testing data will be used to monitor well quality, and evaluate the effectiveness of any system installed through the Program.

Am I Legally Required to Provide the Information?

You are not legally required to provide the requested information.

What are the Consequences for Providing or Refusing to Provide the Information?

If you do not provide the necessary information, the County may be unable to enroll you in the Program to receive grant funds.

Who May Access My Information?

The data collected from you may be shared with the Minnesota Department of Health and persons or entities authorized by law to receive it, including: County employees to screen for Program qualification and administration, as well as well water monitoring; and others who may be required or permitted by law to access your information.

What Items are Grant Eligible?

The following items are eligible for reimbursement under the Program up to the maximum dollar amount set forth above:

Eligible Items

- Water tests that determine if the well is contaminated (must be completed at a certified laboratory and certified test report must be provided upon request).
- Repair, reconstruction or disinfection of an existing contaminated well.
- Construction of a new well, including the cost of purchasing and installing a pump if necessary.
- Equipment and installation to treat and remove contaminants from the water.

Grant Ineligible Items

- Costs for any labor, equipment and materials incurred to install a water treatment equipment or to repair, reconstruct, replace or disinfect private wells before a grant agreement is executed by the applicant, the County, and property owner when necessary.
- Costs for any labor, equipment and materials incurred to install a water treatment equipment or to reconstruct, replace or disinfect private wells where well water does not meet the established contamination criteria.
- Private wells that are not used for a drinking water source.

A. Application Process

Step 1: Confirm you meet the eligibility criteria

Who can apply?

To apply for the Safe Drinking Water for Private Well Users Grant, you must own or be a tenant of the residence in Dakota County where the private well is located, or you are a legal representative of the property owner.

Note: if you are a tenant, you can apply for the grant; however, the property owner will still need to agree to the water treatment installation. Only the property owner can apply for well repair/replacement.

The water well must be the primary source of drinking water for the residence and the residence does not already have a water treatment device/system to treat the contaminant of concern.

Do you meet low-income cost-share criteria?

There is no financial requirement to apply for the Safe Drinking Water for Private Well Users Grant; however, cost-share amounts, and priority are dependent upon financial need as described in Table 1.

Financial need is determined by meeting “low-income” criteria as defined by the [USDA Rural Development \(https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/RD-DirectLimitMap.pdf\)](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/RD-DirectLimitMap.pdf) guidelines for the Minneapolis – St. Paul – Bloomington, Minnesota Metro Area. If you wish to apply for the low-income criteria grant to receive up-to 100 percent cost-share, you must provide a copy of your most recent Federal or Minnesota tax return for proof of income showing the adjusted gross income and total number of dependents for the household. Please block out/redact all social security numbers, bank account and routing numbers, names of minor dependents, and any dates of birth.

Check if your adjusted gross income meets USDA Rural Development criteria:

Table 2. USDA Rural Development Low-Income Criteria (as of 6/18/2025)*

No. of People in Household	Adjusted Gross Income USDA Rural Development Low Income \$
1-4 people	\$104,200
5+ people	\$137,550

**USDA Rural Development criteria is updated periodically, please check the website for the latest version. The County will use the version as of the date of the application to determine eligibility.*

Does your well meet contamination criteria?

Well water must exceed a Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) drinking water guideline to qualify for the grant. The water must be tested by a certified testing laboratory, and results must show well water exceeds the guideline of one or more identified contaminants. You must provide a copy of your well water results from a certified laboratory.

If you have participated in a Dakota County water testing program, we can help locate the laboratory results. Water test must have occurred after July 2024 to be considered valid as required by the MDH grant – please provide most recent water test result. County staff can work with you to obtain a new water test if needed.

Table 3. MDH Grant Drinking Water Guidelines

Contaminant	Drinking Water Guideline
Arsenic	2 µg/L (micrograms per liter)
Manganese	0.100 mg/L (milligrams per liter)
Nitrate	10 mg/L (milligrams per liter)
Coliform Bacteria	Any detection
Lead	Any detection

Step 2: Secure bids from licensed professionals

Determine whether well repair, reconstruction, or replacement or well water treatment is needed to address the contaminants listed in Table 3 that are present in your drinking water well at levels that exceed the drinking water guidelines. Outline the proposed method to address the issue under “Well Project Information” on the application.

Well Repair/Replacement or Well Disinfection:

Well repair/replacement is only eligible for wells with nitrate over the maximum contaminant level of 10 mg/L or persistent positive bacteria results. Consult a licensed well driller or pump installer. See [Licensed Well Contractors \(https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Permits/WellPermits/LicensedContractors/Pages/default.aspx\)](https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Permits/WellPermits/LicensedContractors/Pages/default.aspx). You must obtain a bid from two different well contractors. A Dakota County Well Inspector will help determine if well replacement is the recommended remedy.

Water Treatment:

The applicant and/or well owner will be responsible for coordinating with a state licensed water conditioning contractor for selection of the appropriate water treatment system equipment and for installation of the equipment. It is recommended that the water treatment device/system be certified by NSF, UL or WQA for the targeted contaminant(s) of concern. Manganese could be addressed by a plumbing change to direct softened water to the cold-water kitchen tap. Lead could be addressed by a point of use carbon filters (such as pitcher or faucet-mounted carbon filter).

The County has identified qualified water treatment professionals in the Dakota County area through a Request for Qualification process. If you choose to work with one of the pre-approved water treatment professionals from Attachment A, please submit one bid from the contractor of your choice. You may choose to work with a contractor not on the pre-approved list, see additional instructions in Attachment A.

If water professional is recommending pre-treatment filtration equipment as part of the bid, they must provide written reasoning and justification as to why that specific treatment needs additional pretreatment to be effective and what the pretreatment includes. If the proposed water treatment system includes a water softener, the softener should be high-efficiency and demand-initiated.

Step 3: Complete the grant application

Fill out the grant application, and provide all necessary documentation:

- 1) Signed Grant Application;
- 2) Well water test from a certified laboratory;
- 3) If applying to meet low-income criteria, include the first page of your most recent Federal or Minnesota income tax return for proof of adjusted gross income and total number of dependents for the household. (Please be sure to block out/redact all social security numbers, dates of birth, minor dependents names, bank account and routing numbers prior to submission); and
- 4) Bid(s) from licensed professional (well driller, plumber, water conditioning professional).

Mail or email completed application packet to:

Sarah Kamrath, Dakota County, 14955 Galaxie Ave, Apple Valley, MN 55124, or email to watertreatment@co.dakota.mn.us

Step 4: Dakota County Review and Application

The County will review the submitted grant application and confirm the applicant meets the grant criteria, that grant funds are still available and determine priority if there are not sufficient grant funds still available to award grants to all eligible applicants at any given point in time.

If well water test was completed prior to July 2024, County staff will coordinate with the applicant to retest well water to verify contaminant(s) still exceeds guidelines prior to the County awarding a grant.

The County will then send you a grant agreement for signature identifying the agreed upon water/well remediation. After you sign the grant agreement, you will receive a grant award letter. The grant agreement and award notice will be sent by mail or email, depending on what was provided on the application. The County may also contact you via phone or email to set a time to discuss the contract details.

Work completed before receiving the grant award letter will not be reimbursed.

B. Grant Award Approval, Treatment Installation, and Payment

Once you have been awarded the grant and the grant agreement is executed by all necessary parties, you may begin work with your selected contractor to repair/replace your well, or install your water treatment system equipment. All work must be completed within six months from the date of the grant agreement unless otherwise specified in the grant agreement. Payment must also be requested and approved prior to the end of the grant agreement.

Step 1: Hire licensed professional to complete work

The applicant and/or well owner shall contract with their selected licensed professional to complete the work specified in the grant agreement.

If a well owner is requesting funds for new well installation, any existing well used for drinking water on the property must be sealed by a MDH licensed well contractor and once well is fully sealed, the well owner's contractor must submit a Well and Boring Sealing Record to the MDH. The well owner must comply with all requirements; and the well must be repaired/reconstructed/replaced by a well contractor licensed in accordance with MN Statute Section 103I, MN Rules 4725, and Dakota County Ordinance 114. [Well Seal Grants](#) are available through Dakota County. It shall be the well owner's responsibility to make sure its contractor meets these requirements.

If an applicant is requesting funds for installation of a water treatment device, the water treatment device must be installed in accordance with State of Minnesota Plumbing Code (MN Rules, chapter 4714), by a water contractor licensed under chapter 326B or a plumber licensed under chapter 326B. Treatment devices must comply with MN Rules, on "Water Conditioning Equipment" (part 4714.0611); appropriate technology to address the contaminant must be used. The applicant may need to request a copy of the state-issued license for the contractor in order for work to be certified.

Step 2: Submit required forms showing completion

Before payment of grant funds is approved, you shall:

- 1) Submit all invoices. Invoices must be dated & itemized according to the equipment components and when work was performed (i.e., treatment system installation, dates/hours worked, and equipment utilized.)
- 2) Coordinate with County staff to collect a water sample after installation is complete.

Step 3: Dakota County Confirmation

To determine success of the Program and prior to the County's payment of the grant funds, a water sample may be collected by either the County or its representative to confirm the contaminant(s) of concern is below drinking water guidelines, and that any water treatment systems meet or exceed the device's published or otherwise expected reduction or that the well repair, reconstruction, or replacement has been completed in accordance with applicable law.

Step 4: Payment

Once it is verified the equipment is operating as intended (under Step 3), the County will pay the contractor or grantee directly for equipment and work completed as shown below:

- 1) If the grantee is receiving a 100 percent cost share grant, the County will pay the contractor directly.

- 2) If the grantee is receiving a 50 percent cost share grant, the grantee must pay the Contractor in full according to the invoice payment terms. The County will then reimburse the Grantee the applicable grant award amount.

The well owner is responsible for any work not approved in the grant agreement, and for any cost exceeding the applicable maximum amount shown in Table 1.

C. Monitor and Maintain Your System

Water system components should be properly maintained and routinely inspected by a licensed professional.

If you installed a point of use water treatment system, follow the specifications for the unit to properly replace any filters or contract with a licensed professional to perform routine maintenance. All water treatment units require regular maintenance to work properly. Maintenance can include changing filters, disinfecting the unit, backwashing, or cleaning out mineral build-up (scale). Water treatment units that are not properly maintained will lose their effectiveness over time. **In some cases, unmaintained units can make water quality worse and make you sick.**

In addition, follow the below to ensure you have healthy drinking water:

- 1) Collect a water sample from your well and have it tested annually for nitrate and coliform bacteria.
- 2) Maintain your well by ensuring it has a waterproof cap and that the well casing extends at least 1 foot above the surface of the ground.
- 3) Properly maintain septic systems and keep chemicals and other fertilizers away from your well.
- 4) Properly maintaining your well by consulting the [Well Owner's Handbook](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/wells/construction/handbook.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/wells/construction/handbook.pdf>)

D. Contact for Questions

Sarah Kamrath

Email: watertreatment@co.dakota.mn.us

Phone: 952-891-7549

Attachment A: Water Treatment Professionals

Pre-approved list of qualified water treatment professionals was identified through a Request for Qualification (RFQ) process to perform the type of work required for this application. If you choose to work with one of the below water treatment professionals, please submit one bid from the contractor of your choice in your application.

Water Treatment Professional	Contact Information	Pre-approved for the following contaminants
Ecowater Systems	Jesse Norman 651-267-3954 office phone 651-307-4470 cell phone jesse.norman73@gmail.com	Arsenic Manganese Nitrate
Mann’s Water Treatment	Terry Sieben Sieben Plumbing 651-343-6298 Siebenplumbing@live.com	Arsenic Manganese Nitrate

It is recommended that the water treatment device/system be certified by NSF, UL or WQA for the targeted contaminant(s) of concern..

Lead can be reduced with a filter certified to reduce lead that can be purchased from a retailer. For the bid, please submit information on the filter you are proposing to purchase.

Manganese could be addressed by a plumbing change to direct softened water to the cold-water kitchen tap.

If you choose to work with a contractor not on the pre-approved list - search for water treatment professionals in your telephone book, online, or at [Find Water Treatment Providers \(https://www.wqa.org/find-providers\)](https://www.wqa.org/find-providers). Make sure they are a licensed plumber or licensed water conditioning contractor by using the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry’s [License Lookup \(https://secure.doli.state.mn.us/lookup/licensing.aspx\)](https://secure.doli.state.mn.us/lookup/licensing.aspx). County staff will review the bids and confirm the proposed water treatment system addresses the contaminant of concern in a cost-efficient manner, and is consistent with recommendations provided in the [MDH Home Water Treatment Factsheet \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/factsheet/hometreatment.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/factsheet/hometreatment.pdf).

If water professional is recommending pre-treatment filtration equipment as part of the bid, they must provide written reasoning and justification as to why that specific treatment needs additional pretreatment to be effective and what the pretreatment includes. If the proposed water treatment system includes a water softener, the softener should be high-efficiency and demand-initiated.