



# YELLOW MEDICINE SWCD NEWSLETTER

www.yellowmedicineswcd.org

Clarkfield, MN 56223

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## FAQ on Minnesota's New Buffer Law

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### Our Mission Statement

Provide technical, financial, and educational support to the public for the purpose of conserving and protecting soil, water, & other natural resources

Equal Opportunity  
Provider &  
Employer

#### Do buffers really do anything?

For decades, buffers or filter strips have been installed to successfully reduce sediment and nutrients getting to streams. Buffers improve water quality, habitat, and recreation.

#### Where do I have to put buffers?

In Summer of 2016, the MNDNR will release official maps to the public and SWCDs across the state. When these maps come out we can give you official word on where you are required to buffer waters next to your land. If you are interested in buffering any waters on your land, the SWCD can assist you with that at any time.

#### What do I have to plant on the buffer?

The statute says "a perennially vegetated root" must be on the buffer area. Alfalfa is allowed specifically in the law. No invasive species may be present on the buffer. Existing grass, shrub, or forest cover is acceptable.

#### When do I have to have a buffer on my land?

On November 1, 2017 waters that require a 30 foot minimum and a 50 foot average per parcel will need to be buffered. On November 1, 2018 public drainage ditches that only require 16 ½ feet will need to be buffered.

#### Where can I learn more?

If you would like to know more about the new buffer law and find out how it applies to you, you can check out [www.mndnr.gov/buffers](http://www.mndnr.gov/buffers) or [www.bwsr.state.mn.us/buffers](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/buffers) or contact Tyler Knutson at the Yellow Medicine SWCD at 320-669-4442 x 3 or by e-mail at [tyler.knutson@mn.nacdn.net](mailto:tyler.knutson@mn.nacdn.net)



## Water Quality Certification expands to farms across Minnesota

*Yellow Medicine SWCD now accepting applicants*

Clarkfield, MN – Farmers across Minnesota are now taking advantage of a state program that celebrates and ensures protection of the state's water resources. With the help of a five-year, \$9 million award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and legislation enacted earlier this year, the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) is formally transitioning from four pilot areas to being available to any agricultural producer statewide.

Minnesota's Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program was designed by an advisory committee of independent stakeholders and implemented by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) in partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, and local public, private and non-profit partners.

The program is a voluntary opportunity for farmers and agricultural landowners to take the lead in implementing conservation practices that protect our water. Farmers and landowners who implement and maintain approved farm management practices are certified and in turn obtain regulatory certainty for a period of 10 years. The MAWQCP certifies farmers and landowners for managing their land in a way that protects water quality through a whole-farm assessment that evaluates many agricultural characteristics that affect water resources. Producers interested in becoming certified also receive priority status for technical and financial assistance through local, state, and federal programs. The MAWQCP puts producers together with local professionals and the new on-line field assessment tool to determine where risks to water quality exist on their farm, and empowers them to fix those risks when they're found, at the same time avoiding the expense, time and trouble of applying half-measures or implementing misplaced actions.

Anyone interested in learning more about MAWQCP, the assessment process, or becoming certified should contact Tyler Knutson at the Yellow Medicine SWCD at 320-669-4442 x 3 or e-mail at: [tyler.knutson@mn.nacdn.net](mailto:tyler.knutson@mn.nacdn.net).

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## POSTAL PATRON



# STOP AQUATIC INVADERS



**CLEAN**

**DRAIN**

**DRY**

**DISPOSE**

When boating and recreating in Minnesota clean all recreational equipment. It's the LAW.

### ALWAYS:

1. **CLEAN** - all zebra mussels, aquatic plants and other prohibited species from watercraft, trailers, and water related equipment before leaving the water access or shoreland.
2. **DRAIN** - water related equipment (boat, ballast tanks, portable bait containers, motor) or drain bilge, livewell or bait wells by removing drain plugs before leaving a water access or shoreline property. **KEEP DRAIN PLUGS** out while transporting watercraft.
3. **DRY** - anything that comes in contact with water.
4. **DISPOSE** - of unwanted bait, including minnows, leaches and worms in the trash. It is illegal to release bait into a waterbody or release aquatic animals from one waterbody to another. If you want to keep your bait, you must refill the bait container with bottled or tap water.

**STOPPING AQUATIC INVADERS IS UP TO YOU!**

For more information go to: [www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquatic](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquatic)