**Title: Minnesota Aligns CWA-SDWA Program Activities for Water Quality and Drinking Water Benefits**

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**Departments/Programs Involved:** Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and EPA Region 5.

**Summary:** Efforts to coordinate Clean Water Act (CWA) and Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) activities in Minnesota are aimed at aligning separate programmatic workflows to achieve water quality benefits for drinking water supplies. CWA and SDWA programs operate out of separate state agencies in Minnesota. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has delegated authority from EPA to carry out CWA activities and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) similarly implements the SDWA. While the vast majority of public water systems in the state rely on groundwater, a couple of dozen of large communities, serving over a million people, use surface water.

**Actions:** Staff from MPCA and MDH organized a workshop in May 2015 to work towards the development of assessment methodologies for parameters of concern for public water systems. Resources of use for this work included the state and EPA CWA/SDWA Toolkit and webinars, an EPA grant to facilitate the workshop, and guidance/support from EPA Region 5 staff. Also helpful was learning from a similar facilitated workshop that Wisconsin held in October 2014.

The primary objective of the workshop was to identify parameters and an assessment methodology for drinking water beneficial uses. A key challenge faced by workshop participants was overcoming deficits in program knowledge. Staff from MPCA were not familiar with SDWA programs and staff from MDH were likewise ignorant of CWA operations. Much workshop time was spent understanding the separate regulatory focus of the two programs.

**Results:** Work products included the identification of approximately twelve water quality parameters of concern to public water systems, along with associated information about monitoring data, water quality standards, and public health priority. This work product was used by subsequent MPCA/MDH efforts to narrow the focus to nitrate, TOC, and *e. coli* for deeper analysis relative to the feasibility of creating a workable assessment methodology. The parameter that offers the best balance of available monitoring data, workable water quality standards, and public health relevance is *e. coli*. Further collaborative work in 2016 will attempt to formalize an assessment methodology for *e.coli*. Benefits of this work accrue to all public water systems using surface water in Minnesota, mainly with respect to managing or limiting the treatment burden. Additionally, by selecting a parameter with ample monitoring data and relevant water quality standards, CWA and SDWA managers will be able to test the concept of developing an assessment methodology for drinking water beneficial uses.

**Federal/State - policy/law/guidance/tools/funding sources:**

* Funding for Regional workshops from EPA Headquarters.
* State/EPA CWA-SDWA Toolkit:[Opportunities to Protect Drinking Water Sources and Advance Watershed Goals through the Clean Water Act](http://www.gwpc.org/sites/default/files/CWA-SDWA_11_10.pdf)