



TRIPP COUNTY WATER USER DISTRICT

Quality On Tap!

July 2026 | Volume 22, Issue 1

**WATER
DISTRIBUTION:
THEN AND NOW**

**WORKING
TOGETHER FOR
CLEAN WATER**

**FIRST WATER
APPRENTICESHIP
COHORT**

IN THIS ISSUE:

**DANR RECOGNIZES
TCWUD FOR
DRINKING WATER
EXCELLENCE**

***RECIPE PAGE:
GRAPE SALAD & EASY
SUMMERTIME SALAD***

**CONSUMER
CONFIDENCE
REPORT**

SEE PAGES 14-15 FOR MORE INFO

FROM THE MANAGER

Lisa Stiehl, General Manager
Tripp County Water User District



We'd like to extend a warm welcome to our new customers and hope you enjoy the information in this issue of *Quality on Tap* – and in future editions. Published quarterly, the magazine is the District's way of keeping our customers informed about system updates and events. For added convenience, an electronic version is also available on our website.

Tripp County Water User District has been recognized by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources with the Secretary's Award for Drinking Water Excellence. This recognizes the system and the system's operations specialists who have demonstrated excellence in water system management and maintenance.

We continue to work with our customers who still need to complete their Lead Service Line inventory. If you haven't completed the survey or submitted a photo of your private water line, please call our office, and we will assist you in completing this task. We will need to schedule time with some customers to review their service line, as their photos could not be verified by DANR.

In the last few issues of *Quality on Tap*, we have noted that a rate increase will take effect next year. After much discussion and analysis, the TCWUD Board of Directors has approved a 6% rate increase for all Tripp County Water User District Consumers, effective January 1, 2027, due to increasing operating costs. The new rates will go into effect on January 1, 2027, and will be reflected on your February 2027 billing. The rate increase will be effective on the monthly minimums and the water consumption. Our last rate increase was in January 2024, and the new increase aligns with our standard every-3-year increase.

We will start emailing bills at the end of June to customers who have requested this service. If you have not requested an emailed bill, your bill process will not change. We are hopeful that this process will help our customers receive their bills more promptly and make the process smoother after dealing with the challenges we have faced over the last year.

Our ARPA projects, the Lead Line Survey work, and adding new customer taps, along with the normal day-to-day work, continue to keep the staff extremely busy. The replacement of one of our Main storage reservoirs is complete and the tank is in service.

In closing, we want to congratulate all the graduates and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors. We want to recognize Asia VanDerWerff, the recipient of the Jorgensen Family Scholarship, and Parker Mathis, the recipient of the Wagner Family Scholarship.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Craig Covey, President
Louis Kehn, Vice-President
Roger Kingsbury, Treasurer
Steve Wonnberg, Secretary
Bryan Jorgensen
Dan Forgey
Richard Rubel
Jason Bartels
Brandon York

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Monday thru Friday

CONTACT US

1052 West 1st Street
Winner, SD 57580

Telephone: 605-842-2755

Fax: 605-842-1621


Toll-Free: 1-888-228-0738

www.trippcountywater.com

Email address: tcwud@gwtc.net

STAFF

Lisa Stiehl, General Manager
Jason Orel, Operations Manager
Craig Brown, Water Operator
Michael "Bud" Jacobsen, Water Operator
Trevor Herman, Water Operator
Chris Bartels, Water Operator
Joey Cole, Water Operator
Connie Shippy, Billing Clerk
Michelle Langenbau, Office Manager
Sherry Best, Part Time Office

 **STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION:** In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

TRIPP COUNTY MEMBERSHIP CORNER



Holiday Hours

The Tripp County Water User District office will be closed on the following dates:

- JUNE 19 - JUNETEENTH
- JULY 4 - INDEPENDENCE DAY
- SEPTEMBER 1 - LABOR DAY

If you have an emergency, Please call the office at 605-842-2755
or toll free at 1-888-228-0738.




Water Bill Payment Options

Just a reminder – we offer our members automatic bank deduction, which we process payments once a month around the 10th. We also provide other payment options on our website at trippcountywater.com.

You can pay your bill with a credit card, debit card or out of your bank account 24 hours a day. It is easy, convenient and no more worries about late fees.

NOTICE: TCWUD No Longer accepts cash in our drop box. If you prefer to pay your bill with cash, please do so inside our office. Thank you.

We want to introduce and welcome Michelle Langenbau, who was hired as our new Office Manager at the end of March. Please help us welcome her and introduce yourself when stopping in the office. She is a great asset to our staff.



Tripp County Water User District is requesting if you have changed your landline, cell phone, address or email since becoming a member, to please reach out to us and make sure we have your current information.

This will make it easier to contact our members directly for water outages, scheduled maintenance or any other related services. To those customers who requested email billing, we will be starting to email bills in 2026, so please let us know if you are interested in that option.

Please fill out the area below. Thank you!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Account Number (If known): _____

I am interested in email bills: YES NO



Easy Summertime Salad

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 container Cool Whip
- 1 package Vanilla Instant Pudding
- 1 can Crushed Pineapple (drained)
- 1 can Mandarin Oranges (drained)
- 1/2 package Fudge Striped Cookies (crushed)

DIRECTIONS:

Mix all together and chill.

Share your favorite recipe with us by mail or email! If it gets printed, you'll be entered into a year-end prize drawing!

Tripp County Water User District
1052 W 1st Street Winner, SD 57580
(email) tcwud@gwtc.net



Grape Salad

- 8 ounces Cream Cheese softened
- 1 cup Sour Cream
- 1/3 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1 tsp Pure Vanilla Extract
- 2 pounds Seedless Red Grapes
- 2 pounds Seedless Green Grapes
- 1/2 cup Light Brown Sugar
- 1 1/2 cups Chopped Pecans divided

DIRECTIONS: In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese until smooth. Add the sour cream, white sugar, and vanilla, and mix until well combined. Fold in the grapes and 1 cup of pecans, then transfer the mixture to a serving dish. Sprinkle the brown sugar evenly over the top, followed by the remaining pecans. Chill for 1 hour, or until ready to serve.



VISION STATEMENT

Improving the quality of life, one person at a time.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide quality water to the patrons of Tripp County Water User District.

WATER DISTRIBUTION: Then and Now

Water has always been essential to human life. From the earliest civilizations to modern communities, people have relied on systems to collect, transport, and protect clean water. The story of water distribution is closely tied to the development of human civilization itself.

Historians believe the first major advancements in water systems began nearly 10,000 years ago as people shifted from hunting and gathering to farming and permanent settlements. Early civilizations in regions such as present-day Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Persia, Greece, and Rome developed creative ways to move water from distant sources to growing communities. Ancient Persians constructed underground tunnels called qanats to transport water from mountain aquifers to dry plains for irrigation and domestic use. These systems were lined with stone and waterproofed materials to improve durability and reduce water loss.

The Greeks and Romans later expanded on these ideas, introducing more advanced piping and aqueduct systems. The Romans, in particular, became known for their engineering skill. Their aqueducts carried water over long distances using gravity, supplying cities, baths, and public fountains with dependable water service. Roman engineers standardized the use of lead and clay pipes and built impressive systems that remained functional for centuries. Many remnants of these aqueducts still stand today as symbols of early innovation in public water infrastructure.

During the medieval period, water systems in Europe became simpler and more localized. Communities relied on wells, springs, cisterns, and wooden pipes to provide drinking water. By the 17th century, improvements in pumping technology allowed water companies to move water into reservoirs and eventually pipe it directly into homes. The development of cast-iron pipe in the 1800s marked another major advancement, creating stronger and longer-lasting water mains for growing cities.

In North America, early settlers initially depended on rivers, lakes, springs, and shallow wells for water. The first public waterworks in the United States was established in Boston in 1652 for firefighting and domestic use. Early systems often used hollowed-out wooden logs as water mains. These wooden pipes were joined together and sealed with tar to transport water through communities.

Philadelphia became a leader in water system innovation during the early 1800s. In 1801, the city introduced large steam engines for municipal water conveyance, and in 1804 it became the first city in the world to widely adopt cast-iron

pipe for water mains. Other cities quickly followed, replacing aging wooden systems with more durable iron infrastructure. Over time, improvements in pipe joints, steel pipe manufacturing, and eventually ductile iron pipe dramatically improved reliability and flexibility within distribution systems.

Today's water distribution systems use a wide range of materials, including ductile iron, steel, concrete, copper, and various plastics. Modern technology has also transformed how systems are operated and maintained. Leak detection equipment, automated controls, GPS mapping, pressure monitoring, and advanced treatment processes help utilities deliver safe and reliable drinking water more efficiently than ever before.

Although materials and technologies have changed over thousands of years, the mission remains the same — providing communities with safe, dependable water. From ancient stone channels to today's sophisticated distribution networks, the evolution of water systems reflects humanity's ongoing commitment to protecting one of our most valuable resources.



WORKING TOGETHER FOR CLEAN WATER

Protecting water resources has always been important in South Dakota, but today it is becoming increasingly clear that protecting water also means building strong partnerships. Across the state, a growing volunteer water-quality sampling effort is doing exactly that by bringing together state agencies, community organizations, educators, and local volunteers around one common goal: protecting the lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater resources that South Dakotans depend on every day.

Led by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (SD DANR), the volunteer water quality sampling program continues to grow through partnerships with the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS), the Pierre Rotary Club, the Madison Rotary Club, the South Dakota Discovery Center, along with several lake associations and local community groups throughout the state. While each organization brings a different perspective to the effort, together they are creating a program built around science, education, and community involvement.

South Dakota's water resources are incredibly diverse. Rural water systems, municipal supplies, prairie lakes, rivers, reservoirs, and groundwater aquifers all play an essential role in supporting communities, agriculture, recreation, and economic growth. Monitoring those resources across such a large state is no small task, which is why the volunteer component has become such a valuable part of the program.

Through the leadership of SD DANR, volunteers are trained to collect water samples using standardized procedures that ensure consistency and accuracy. Sampling locations

may include lakes, rivers, reservoirs, or other designated sites where long-term monitoring can help track changes in water conditions. The collected samples are then analyzed for indicators such as nutrient levels, bacteria, and turbidity, as well as other measurements that help paint a clearer picture of watershed health throughout the state.

While public water systems already conduct routine compliance testing, the volunteer program adds another layer of monitoring and creates something equally important: public awareness and community ownership. Instead of water quality monitoring happening quietly behind the scenes, local citizens become directly involved in understanding and protecting the water around them.

That community connection is where organizations like SDARWS and the Rotary Clubs play such an important role. SDARWS helps coordinate training, communication, and statewide support efforts while connecting water professionals and local volunteers. With longstanding relationships across South Dakota communities, the organization helps bridge the gap between technical water management and community engagement.

The Pierre Rotary Club and Madison Rotary Club have embraced the effort as an extension of their commitment to service. Rotary members participate in sampling events, help promote awareness locally, and encourage community involvement in protecting nearby water resources. Their participation brings energy and visibility to the program while reinforcing the idea that water protection is not solely the responsibility of agencies or utilities – it is something entire communities can take part in.





The South Dakota Discovery Center adds another important piece through educational outreach and funding support. By making water science more accessible and engaging, the Discovery Center connects students, families, and communities to the broader importance of watershed protection. Their involvement helps ensure the program reaches beyond data collection and becomes an opportunity for learning and long-term stewardship.

Lake associations and local volunteer groups have also become valuable partners in the effort. Many of these groups have a deep personal connection to the lakes and watersheds they help monitor. Their local knowledge, observations, and commitment to protecting the places they live and recreate provide an important grassroots perspective that strengthens the overall program.

One of the most rewarding parts of the project has been watching volunteers gain a deeper appreciation for water quality and watershed health. Many participants begin with little technical background, but quickly develop an understanding of how water is monitored, why trends matter, and how small changes in a watershed can affect entire communities downstream. That knowledge naturally spreads beyond the sampling events themselves as volunteers share what they have learned with neighbors, schools, and community organizations.

The program also helps strengthen relationships between agencies and the public. By involving citizens directly in the process, transparency increases and trust grows. Communities gain a better understanding of the work being done to protect local water resources, while agencies

benefit from stronger local engagement and support.

At the same time, the data collected through the program serves a meaningful purpose. Tracking water quality trends over time helps support watershed planning, resource management, and long-term protection efforts across South Dakota. Identifying concerns early can help communities and agencies respond proactively before larger issues develop.

As participation continues to expand, organizers hope to grow the program into even more communities across the state. Additional sampling locations, expanded educational outreach, and increased volunteer involvement all remain part of the long-term vision. More importantly, the partnerships being built today are helping create a stronger culture of water stewardship for the future.

What makes the program unique is not simply the science behind it, but the people involved in making it happen. State agencies provide technical expertise and oversight. Organizations like SDARWS help coordinate efforts statewide. Educational partners expand outreach opportunities. Rotary Clubs, lake associations, and local volunteers contribute the community pride and energy that keep the program moving forward.

Together, they are building more than a water sampling network. They are building a shared understanding that protecting South Dakota's water resources is everyone's role. Through collaboration, education, and volunteer involvement, communities across the state are helping ensure that clean, reliable water remains one of South Dakota's greatest strengths for generations to come.



SDARWS LAUNCHES FIRST APPRENTICESHIP COHORT

The first Apprenticeship Cohort for the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) officially began on February 1, 2026. Six apprentices are making history as they begin their careers in the water industry, learning alongside experienced mentors from water systems across South Dakota.

During the program, apprentices will complete a minimum of 288 hours of Related Technical Instruction (RTI) along with 4,000 hours of On-the-Job Training (OJT). Mentors play a critical role by sharing their expertise, guiding apprentices through daily operations, and evaluating their progress throughout the program.

This partnership provides new employees with valuable firsthand knowledge about the water industry – learning both best practices and lessons from experience. Ultimately, the program helps ensure that safe, reliable, and high-quality water continues to be delivered to communities

across the state.

Apprentice John Halverson shared his experience so far:

“Through the apprenticeship program, I have learned the importance of having a good mentor. My mentor and I have created a great working relationship. Scott has taught me valuable information ranging from simple task etiquette to how to properly perform tasks and manage our water treatment facility. I’m really looking forward to how this apprenticeship program will continue to teach me valuable skills for my career.”

KNOW SOMEONE WHO'D LIKE TO BE AN APPRENTICE?

SDARWS is currently recruiting apprentices, employers, and mentors for the Fall 2026 Apprenticeship Cohort, which is scheduled to begin October 1, 2026.

For more information or to get involved, contact Kindra at kindra@sdarws.com or 605-501-9208.



MEET THE FIRST GROUP OF APPRENTICES



City of Woonsocket
Colten Trabing, Apprentice
Rich Jensen, Mentor

My contribution to my community would be the best thing so far (about the apprenticeship program). I have learned so much so far in the water field. My biggest thing I've been learning on the job is finding curb stops and having that image in my mind. Physically doing stuff and learning as I go is the best training for me.



TM Rural Water District
Anthony Hanisch, Apprentice
Jason Krumbach, Mentor

I like how it is self-paced. You can watch the lessons whenever you have time.



City of Baltic
Paul Osthus, Apprentice
Ryan Fods, Mentor

I think the best part is the understanding of how important it is to make sure our water is safe and what actually goes into making that a reality. One thing I have learned from my mentor is how to test our water once a month and make sure all the proper documentation is filled out. The hands on training is definitely the best part.



South Lincoln RWS
John Halverson, Apprentice
Scott Cameron, Mentor

My mentor has taught me to take value in the work that I do and to provide the best customer service I possible can.



Tripp County WUD
Joey Cole, Apprentice
Bud Jacobsen, Mentor

I've really learned a lot from my mentor. The thing that I feel has and will help the most is trying to locate water lines and finding external resources to help locate them. The training I find the most helpful is when Tim comes down to Winner because you can have actual conversations with knowledgeable people – helps aid the learning process.



TM Rural Water District
Jack Even, Apprentice
Greg Simmermon, Mentor



RANDALL COMMUNITY WATER DISTRICT

On January 17, 1972, an organizational meeting of the twenty-one member Steering Committee was held in Lake Andes. Randall Community Water District (RCWD) became the new water district for Charles Mix County. Initial funds were given in the form of a loan from the State Planning Agency.

A motion was passed at the December 19, 1972 meeting to begin the Randall Community Water District project. The district boundaries were to include all of Charles Mix County, a portion of Douglas County south of Highway 44, and parts of Aurora, Bon Homme, Brule and Hutchinson Counties as needed upon sign-up. The engineering firms of Bartlett & West, and Foster Van Gundy and Associates were hired to complete the design of the Randall Community Water District project.

A resolution was passed on April 4, 1974, with the purpose of forming a rural water district to provide and distribute water

to rural homes, pastures, and cities in Charles Mix and surrounding counties. The project was divided into three phases. Water for the first phase was purchased from the city of Lake Andes. Once operational, Phase I of the project served 148 rural customers.

The government site of the former radar station near Pickstown was obtained to build storage with adequate elevation to ensure proper water pressure, and a site near the city of Pickstown was secured for a pumping facility for Phase II of the RCWD project. Phase II would supply water to the southern portion of Charles Mix County and portions of surrounding counties.

June 1975 brought approval to negotiate for the purchase of land south of Platte as the location of the Phase III Treatment plant. This plant would serve Platte and the surrounding areas in northern Charles Mix, Douglas, Aurora and Brule Counties. The total original cost of RCWD was \$9,350,000.

RANDALL COMMUNITY WATER DISTRICT

A resolution was signed in October to obtain water from Lake Francis Case and enter into an agreement with the US Department of the Army Corps of Engineers to purchase water for the purpose of treatment and distribution to its customers.

Over the years Randall has grown from 148 to approximately 3,100 rural customers, including 15 bulk users. The water system now has two intake structures, two water treatment plants, and fifteen storage facilities (tanks). Water sales for 2025 totaled 1 billion gallons.

As the need for potable water has expanded, so has the district. In an effort to maintain its service to all customers, lines have been extended to the north and east to serve Davison Rural Water System, Aurora-Brule Rural Water System, and the City of Mitchell. Three new transmission tanks have been constructed and both treatment plants have been upgraded; the most current upgrade was completed on the Platte Treatment Plant which now utilizes a state-of-the-art membrane filtering system.

Providing quality, affordable drinking water to rural customers and communities remains the goal of the Board of Directors and staff of Randall Community Water District.



Quality On Tap!

DIRECTORS:

Dave Meyerink – President
Chris Slaba – Vice President
Vance Qualm – Secretary
John Carda – Treasurer
Mike Kuhlman – Director
Tom Travis – Director
Joel Lau – Director
Randy Kott – Director
Trent Beltman – Director

STAFF:

Scott Pick – General Manager
Ricky Bergin – Chief Operations Officer
Megan Bergin – Chief Financial Officer
Mollie Petrik – Billing Clerk
Rebecca Qualm – Inventory
Jason Kafka – Easement/Sensus
Terry Koupal – Plant Operator/Electrician
Gavin Westendorf – Plant Operator
Jason Wright – Plant Operator
Jordan Kocer – Plant Operator/Electrician
Corbin Dean – Plant Operator/Electrician
Daniel Hjelm – Plant Operator/IT/GPS
Mason Wright – Operator Distribution
Corey DeBey – Operator Distribution
Grant Petrik – Operator Distribution/Electrician
Tyler Swanson – Operator Distribution
Cody Svatos – Operator Distribution
Heath Hahlbeck – Operator Distribution
Dawson Lensing – Operator Distribution
Jared Swanson – Operator Distribution/Electrician
Aaron Swanson – Operator Distribution
John Ziegler – Line Locate
Jacob Wenzlaff – Operator Distribution

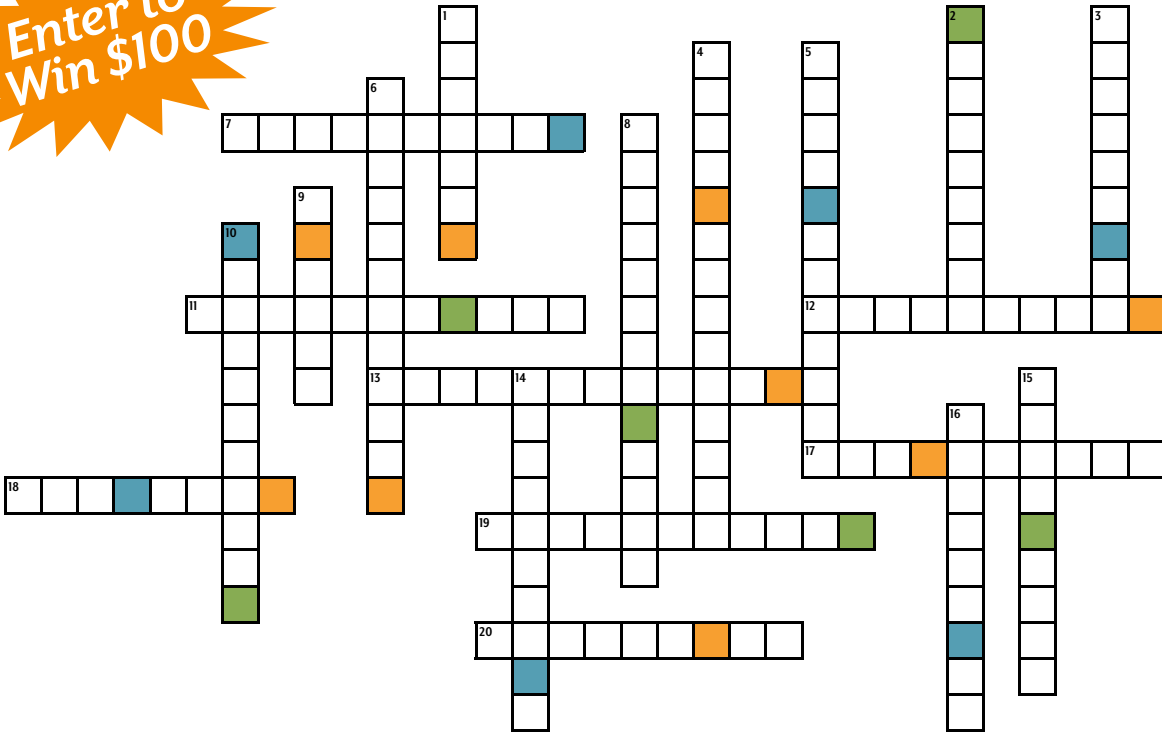
STATISTICS:

Hookups – 3,167
Miles of Pipeline – 1,860
Water Source – Missouri River
Counties Served – Charles Mix and portions of Aurora, Bon Homme, Brule, Douglas, Hutchinson
Towns Served Individual – Dante, Harrison, New Holland, Ravinia
Towns Served Bulk – Armour, Aurora-Brule RWS, Corsica, Davison RWS, Delmont, Fort Randall Casino, Geddes, Greenwood, Lake Andes, Marty, North Wagner Housing, Pickstown, Platte, Wagner, YST Truck Plaza

RURAL WATER CROSSWORD & WORD SCRAMBLE CONTEST

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE PARKS

Enter to
Win \$100



- ANGOSTURA
- BEAR BUTTE
- CUSTER
- FARM ISLAND
- GOOD EARTH
- HARTFORD BEACH
- LAKE HERMAN
- LAKE VERMILLION
- LEWIS AND CLARK
- NEWTON HILLS
- OAKWOOD LAKES
- PALISADES
- PELICAN LAKE
- RICHMOND LAKE
- ROY LAKE
- SHADEHILL
- SHEPS CANYON
- SICA HOLLOW
- SNAKE CREEK
- WEST BEND

SCRAMBLE ANSWER



ACROSS

7. Popular Pierre-area camping and boating destination
11. Heavily wooded park with excellent hiking and horseback riding trails near Canton
12. Popular camping and fishing destination near Madison - home of Herman Luce.
13. Missouri River destination named after famous explorers
17. Mysterious wooded ravine known for Native American legends
18. Missouri River recreation spot near Fort Pierre

19. Quiet northeastern park known for fishing and birdwatching near Watertown
20. Sacred mountain site located near Sturgis

DOWN

1. Northeastern South Dakota park popular with anglers and campers near Lake City
2. Park preserving one of the oldest known Native American village sites in the region
3. Reservoir park near Hot Springs popular for water sports
4. Southeastern South Dakota park popular for boating and swimming, named for the river it borders
5. Park known for fishing lakes and rolling

6. prairie scenery near Brookings
6. Aberdeen-area park with hiking trails and water activities
8. Lakeside park located on Big Stone Lake near Minnesota border
9. Famous for its free-roaming buffalo herd and scenic Needles Highway
10. Rugged canyon area offering scenic hiking and wildlife viewing near Hot Springs
14. Lakeside campground on Lake Francis Case near Platte
15. Known for its dramatic pink quartzite cliffs along Split Rock Creek
16. Reservoir destination in western South Dakota known for boating and fishing



RULES: Use the colored squares in the puzzle to solve the word scramble above. Call your Rural Water System (See page 2 for contact information), **scan the QR code**, or **submit online at www.sdarws.com/crossword** with the correct phrase by July 15, 2026 to be entered into the \$100 drawing.

Only one entry allowed per address/household. You must be a member of a participating rural water system to be eligible for the prize. Your information will only be used to notify the winner, and will not be shared or sold.

Congratulations to Laura Tolzin from Kingbrook Rural Water who had the correct phrase of "all people need hope" for April 2026.

DANR Recognizes Tripp County Water User District for Drinking Water Excellence

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) has announced that the Tripp County Water User District public water system and the system's certified operators have been awarded a Secretary's Award for Drinking Water Excellence. The award is for outstanding water system operations and environmental compliance with the state drinking water standards for the past ten years.

"Access to safe and reliable water sources is essential to keeping our families safe and our economy growing," said DANR Secretary Hunter Roberts. "This award is a testament to the hard work and dedication of South Dakota's drinking water system operators and their efforts to ensure their customers have access to clean drinking water."

To qualify for the Drinking Water Certificate of Achievement Award, public water systems and their system



operations specialists had to meet all of the compliance monitoring and reporting requirements, drinking water standards, and certification requirements for 2025. TCWUD's Operations Specialists are Jason Orel, Craig Brown, Michael "Bud" Jacobsen, Trevor Herman, Chris Bartels, and Joey Cole.



TCWUD's Operations Specialists pictured from left to right are: Trevor Herman, Craig Brown, Chris Bartels, Joey Cole, Jason Orel, Bud Jacobsen



TRIPP COUNTY
WATER USER DISTRICT

Tripp County Water User District Annual Water Quality Report

January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025

Secretary's Award

The Tripp County Water User District has supplied ten consecutive years of safe drinking water to the public it serves and has been awarded the Secretary's Award for Drinking Water Excellence by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources. This report is a snapshot of the quality of the water that we provided last year. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state standards. We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies.

Water Source

We serve more than 4,860 customers an average of 2,105,000 gallons of water per day. Our water is groundwater that we produce from local wells. The state has performed an assessment of our source water and they have determined that the relative susceptibility rating for the Tripp County Water User District public water supply system is medium.

For more information about your water and information on opportunities to participate in public meetings, call 605-842-2755 and ask for Lisa Stiehl.

Additional Information

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- **Pesticides and herbicides**, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.
- **Organic chemical contaminants**, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
- **Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791.



Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants can be obtained by calling the Environment Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Tripp County Water User District public water supply system is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in

plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Detected Contaminants

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the 2025 calendar year. The presence of these contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done January 1 – December 31, 2025. The state requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of the data, though representative of the water quality, is more than one year old.

2025 Table of Detected Contaminants For Tripp Co. Water User District (EPA ID 0520)

Substance	90% Level	Test Sites > Action Level	Date Tested	Highest Level Allowed (AL)	Ideal Goal	Units	Major Source of Contaminant
Copper	0.3	0	08/26/24	AL=1.3	0	ppm	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives.
Lead	2	0	08/26/24	AL=15	0	ppb	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.

Substance	Highest Level Detected	Range	Date Tested	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Units	Major Source of Contaminant
Arsenic	3.00	3.00 - 3.00	08/04/21	10	0	ppb	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes.
Barium	0.0818	0.0818 - 0.0738	08/04/21	2	2	ppm	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride	0.78	0.3 - 0.78	04/07/25	4	<4	ppm	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.
Nitrate (as Nitrogen)	4.1		10/07/25	10	10	ppm	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits.
Selenium	1.00	1.00 - 0.85	08/04/21	50	50	ppb	Discharge from petroleum and metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from mines.
Total trihalomethanes (RAA)	7.74		09/16/25	80	0	ppb	By-product of drinking water chlorination. Results are reported as a running annual average of test results.

Please direct questions regarding this information to Jason Orel, Operators Manager with the Tripp County Water User District public water system at 605-842-2755.

Terms & Abbreviations Used in Tables

Action Level (AL) — the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. For Lead and Copper, 90% of the samples must be below the AL.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) — The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) — The

level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Running Annual Average (RAA) — Compliance is calculated using the running annual average of samples from designated monitoring locations.

Units

ppb — parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (ug/l)

ppm — parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)



Tripp County Water User District
 1052 West 1st Street
 Winner, SD 57580
 trippcountywater.com
 605-842-2755

PRSR STD
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 FARGO, ND
 PERMIT # 684



WATER MATTERS

WATER QUALITY STANDARDS



Water bodies can be used for purposes such as recreation (e.g. swimming and boating), scenic enjoyment and fishing, and are the home to many aquatic organisms. To protect human health and aquatic life in these waters, water quality standards (WQS) are established. WQS are provisions of state, tribal or federal law that describe the desired condition of a water body and the means by which that condition will be protected or achieved. Further, WQS form a legal basis for controlling pollutants entering these waters.

Standards are typically defined in terms of an acceptable concentration or level of a particular chemical, physical or biologic parameter. For example, in South Dakota, for waters designated as drinking water supplies, the concentration of nitrate (NO₃⁻) can not exceed 10 milligrams per liter (mg/L). Waters designated as cold-water fisheries (trout streams), water temperature can not exceed 65°(F). If swimming (Immersion Recreation in government speak) is the goal, levels of Escherichia coli (E. coli) bacteria in excess of 235 colonies per 100 milliliters of sample are considered problematic.

It is important to understand that while WQS have been established for most water bodies in the State, compliance with the WQS does not mean that the water is completely free of any possible contaminants. The established standards most often reflect the best scientific estimate of when the potential risk to human health, etc., is no longer statistically acceptable. Although the water might be considered 'safe' from a regulatory standpoint, contaminants may be, and most likely are, still present.

When presenting water quality information, the results of a particular water quality test are often expressed as either pass or fail. A nitrate reading of 9.0 mg/L would be considered 'acceptable,' as it is below the 10 mg/L WQS. However, background nitrate levels in South Dakota waters rarely exceed



1-2 mg/L, so the 9.0 reading is strongly suggestive of a problem that ought to be addressed, even if it technically meets the WQS.

There is nothing magical about WQS. That is, compliance does not translate to zero risk."Similarly, violation of WQS does not mean that interaction will result in certain harm. It is important to know not only what is in your water, but also what this really means.



What are South Dakota's water quality standards? They can be found in Chapter 74:51:01 of the Administrative Rules of South Dakota. Scan the QR Code to learn more.

BACK PAGE CONTENT PROVIDED BY:



132B Airport Avenue
 Brookings, SD 57006
 605-688-6741
 eastdakota.org