

Drinking Water Ambient Monitoring Program

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

About the Drinking Water Ambient Monitoring Program

The Drinking Water Ambient Monitoring Program (DWAMP) aims to establish ongoing, permanent monitoring capacity for contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) and other priority contaminants in drinking water sources across the state. As individuals and industries use thousands of chemicals that can end up in water resources, this program will help us understand where these contaminants occur and at what levels. DWAMP will manage the sampling, laboratory analysis, and data analysis for this investigative work. The data analyses employed by the program may include mapping, modeling, and statistical analyses of sampling results. DWAMP is funded by the Clean Water Fund.

Overarching goals of the Drinking Water Ambient Monitoring Program

1. Address concerns about public health exposure to CECs
2. Support data-driven water resource management decisions by characterizing water quality conditions in drinking water sources



Ambient monitoring addresses gaps in our regulatory framework

The Safe Drinking Water Act establishes drinking water standards and testing requirements for approximately 100 contaminants of public health priority. Compliance monitoring is a key part of SDWA implementation in Minnesota and is critical to maintaining public trust in drinking water.

However, the list of chemicals with water quality standards – and for which compliance monitoring is done -- is small relative to the number of contaminants present in the environment. This program will investigate unregulated contaminants that are not routinely tested in public drinking water.

Additionally, data from this Program will be used to assess water quality concerns at an aquifer or watershed scale, rather than a system-by-system approach. Regional analyses of water quality data can yield tools and information that better help water resource professionals manage drinking water quality for public water system customers and private well users.

The Drinking Water Ambient Monitoring Program will coordinate with other State agency programs on CECs in water resources to best target, prioritize, and maximize its efforts. See [Anticipating threats to Minnesota waters \(PDF\) \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/initiatives/interagencycec.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/initiatives/interagencycec.pdf) for more information on these coordinated risk management activities. It will also coordinate with other MDH programs to identify private well testing needs to address health concerns, regional data gaps, and aquifer characterization.

Expected products and impacts

DWAMP will develop processes to identify and prioritize contaminants, sampling sites, and laboratory methodologies. The Program will coordinate with other Units and Sections across MDH as well as other state and local, and federal organizations engaged in monitoring activities.

DWAMP will develop regular reports to share information about progress, results, and ongoing opportunities and challenges for drinking water protection. Information will also be shared via existing reporting, such as the Clean Water Fund Performance Report. Maps, reports, results, tools, and information generated from this Program can also be shared and will be made available online. Data will be shared with partners to address shared concerns.

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