



RICE COUNTY

320 N.W. THIRD STREET
FARIBAULT, MN 55021

News Release

Rice County Awarded Clean Water Legacy Funds to Conduct Septic Inventory

July 15, 2008

Rice County is pleased to announce that we have been awarded grant funds from the State of Minnesota through the Clean Water Legacy Act to inventory septic systems in the county and identify any septic systems that pose an imminent health threat to the public. The project will begin in the Roberds Lake Watershed area and expand to other areas of the county as time and funds permit.

Minnesota Rules Chapter 7080 defines a septic system as an imminent health threat if it causes “ground surface or surface water discharges, or sewage back up into a dwelling or other establishment.” Septic discharge is a public health threat if there is direct contact, or it can contaminate groundwater.

The first step undertaken as part of the grant work plan is to review all septic system records on file within the Roberds Lake Watershed. All developed properties with systems that were installed prior to 2003 or systems that have not had a compliance inspection since 2003 will have a field visit conducted to evaluate whether or not the system poses an imminent health threat to the public.

Due to the vast area contained within the watershed, the project area will be divided into sections for performing site visits. Beginning July 2008, those septic systems that do not meet the exception will receive a postcard informing them when field staff will be in the area to conduct the evaluation. Follow-up action will be required only if the system has been determined to be an imminent public health threat. County staff will work with the homeowner on the process required to bring their system into compliance and provide information on loan and/or grant programs that may be available to the property owner for upgrading their septic system.

Further information on this grant project or on septic systems can be found on our website at www.co.rice.mn.us/planning or by contacting Rice County Environmental Health and Water Resource Management Divisions at 507-332-6113.

CONTACTS:

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