



Frequently Asked Questions #7

Agricultural Standards



Why does the VRWJPO care about nutrient and pesticide management?

Nutrients and pesticides that run off treated fields or infiltrate into groundwater often end up in surface water (lakes, rivers, streams, or wetlands) or impact groundwater quality.

What VRWJPO standards apply to agriculture?

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Agricultural Standards are voluntary at this time. The Agriculture Standards are based on two primary initiatives:

- Requiring a Stewardship Management Plan for a landowner to be eligible for cost share dollars sponsored by the VRWJPO; and
- Implementation of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)'s Minnesota Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan of 2015 and Pesticide Management Plan of 2005.

This strategy focuses on promoting new or updated voluntary best management practices (BMPs) and working with partners including the MDA.

The Vermillion River Watershed encompasses an area of approximately 335 square miles, including portions of two counties and all or portions of 20 cities, towns, and townships. The main stem of the river begins in southeastern Scott County in New Market Township flowing east through central Dakota County, passing over a waterfall in the City of Hastings, and then discharging to the Mississippi River both through a northerly flowing outlet near the City of Hastings as well as through a southerly flowing outlet near the City of Red Wing, Minnesota.

Will the MDA and VRWJPO approach remain voluntary?

A regulatory approach may be taken, if the implementation of voluntary BMPs is ineffective and BMPs are not widely adopted given a reasonable timeframe

Where can I find the current Standards?

The standards are in Appendix B of the Watershed Plan on the Vermillion River Watershed website: www.vermillionriverwatershed.org, under "Plans/Reports."

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