

**Press Release - Minnesota Rural Water Association**

**March 28, 2024**

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**Minnesota Rural Water Association (MRWA) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) present the Small Public Water Supply System Source Water Protection Award to City of Vergas.**

**The MRWA/MDH Source Water Protection Award** is given annually at the MRWA Technical Conference to recognize the importance and value of source water protection efforts in Minnesota and to recognize individuals, public water systems, and organizations that have shown long-term commitment, initiative, leadership, sharing of successes, and initiation or participation in activities which resulted in the protection or improvement of their source water.



Minnesota Rural Water Association and the Minnesota Department of Health are excited to announce that the 2024 Dave Nieman Source Water Protection Award in the small system category goes to the City of Vergas.

The City of Vergas is a small town located in Otter Tail County. Vergas is primarily known for its summer recreation and lake life however they should also be known for good drinking water. The City has had an approved wellhead plan since 2019 and the primary focus of their plan is to educate residents on the importance of properly managing private wells.

The City has had a very effective campaign to educate private well owners in the area on the importance of properly managing their wells via the city's website, regular newsletters and by installing a glass display case which holds wellhead protection educational materials in

a prominent location in town.

The City has also applied for and been awarded numerous grants via MDH to seal over 20 private wells in town and install the necessary wiring to connect a generator to power the water plant and city wells in the case of an extended power outage.

Congratulations to the city of Vergas for winning the Small Public Water Supply System Source Water Protection Award.

*Photo from left to right: Mike DuFrane, Utilities Superintendent, City of Vergas and Minnesota Rural Water Association Chairman Tom Dowdle.*