



MINNESOTA WATER WELL ASSOCIATION

Representing Minnesota's Water Well Drilling Industry

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March 25, 2025

Subject: Senate File 2669 – Request for amendment

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

The MWWA is the organization that represent the water well industry and the customers they serve. Some of the fee increase proposals in SF2669 directly impact our industry and water well owners. As we analyzed the data, we found a few notable things. It appears that single family households pay an outsized share for the services they use from the MDH. The well notification fee for a single-family home is the same as what it costs for a public water supply well even though the categorical effort is vastly different. Also, there appear to be areas where people or entities should be paying fees but are not.

We took a hard look at these issues and the fee proposals; we have the following recommendations:

- **Increase fees for Public Water Supply wells to \$10,000 per well**
 - Public water supply wells have grossly under contributed to the operation of the Well Management Section(WMS) of the MDH. Last year, these wells only contributed a little more than \$6,000 in fees for 23 wells. Due to the complexity of installing this type of well, it is not possible to pay for the departmental resources necessary to review construction plans and manage the construction of these wells. A raise in this type of fee would fully fund the resources necessary to manage these complex and sensitive constructions.
- **Increase fees for non-community water supply wells to \$650 per well**
 - For similar reasons stated in the previous section, these constructions require much more time and attention and should pay a higher fee.
- **Make state agencies pay for well maintenance permits**
 - State agencies should not be exempt from paying fees for services they use. To the extent possible, please make federal, state, local governments as well as rural water systems pay fees consistent with how other entities pay well maintenance fees.
- **Remove exclusion for well permit fees for borings deeper than 15' but less than 25'**
 - The MDH decided almost a decade ago to regulate all borings deeper than 15'. This exclusion should be removed and companies engaged in this work should make proper notifications and pay the appropriate fees.
- **Include Mineral Exploration Borings as borings that require a sealing notification and fee**
 - Consistent with the above section, exploratory boring companies should file well sealing notifications and pay the associated fee. Any boring deeper than 15' should be subject to the same rules, regulations and fees.

Our organization does fundamentally believe that the WMS needs to be properly funded. Over 70% of Minnesotans rely on the Water Well Industry and the Department of Health to provide safe drinking water sources. Over 20% of Minnesotans exclusively rely on us in the form of household wells. The work that we do together is fundamentally important to a healthy and productive society. If the aforementioned modifications are made to SF2669, we would be in support of the measures that affect the well management section of the MDH.

Included with this letter, please find WMS budgetary numbers, operating costs, fee proposals, questions the Minnesota Water Well Association sent to the MDH regarding this topic and the response from the MDH regarding those questions. This information is all pertinent to drawing the proper conclusions about the budget, expenses and fees that should modified to properly fund the Well Management Section of the MDH.

We would be more than willing to discuss, provide additional background or answer any other questions about this issue. Please reach out to me at any time, we would enjoy discussing the matter in more depth.

Sincerely,



David Schulenberg
Executive Director