

Notable State Documents 2008

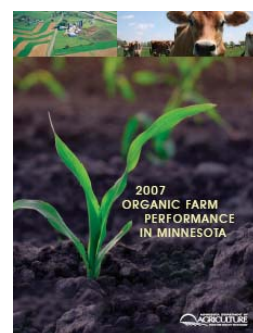
This annual list, nominated by librarians from the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library and other government documents librarians, recognizes only a few of many interesting publications from Minnesota state agencies in the past year. It is intended to demonstrate the breadth of topics covered by government documents and to alert librarians to titles of value to citizens and researchers.

Agriculture

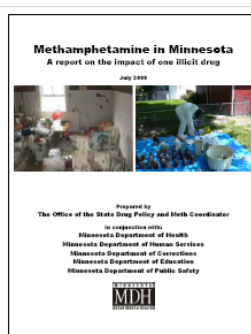
Organic Farm Performance in Minnesota. Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080672.pdf>

Until now, according to this report, there has only been anecdotal information about organic farm performance and profitability. The Organic Farm Business Management (FBM) Project changed all that by summarizing Minnesota organic farm performance data from 2006 and 2007.

Related report: ***Directory of Minnesota Organic Farms.*** Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080476.pdf>



Crime and Drugs



Methamphetamine in Minnesota: a Report on the Impact of One Illicit Drug. Office of the State Drug Policy and Meth Coordinator, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080575.pdf>

What is meth? Who uses meth in Minnesota? How do these numbers compare to other states? Have anti-methamphetamine laws had an impact? Find the answers in this comprehensive report.

Minnesota Impaired Driving Facts 2006. Office of Traffic Safety, Minnesota Department of Public Safety, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080412.pdf>

This comprehensive annual report provides a statistical picture of impaired drivers and alcohol-related crashes in Minnesota. The report includes current and historical data on crashes and information on the gender, age, and alcohol concentration of drivers.

Criminal Records and Employment in Minnesota. Collateral Sanctions Committee, 2008.
<http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080082.pdf>

While the criminal justice system makes distinctions between types of crime and threat to society, criminal background check systems often don't. A person with a single misdemeanor conviction may face the same employment sanctions as someone with serious felony convictions. Even a minor criminal record can make it difficult for someone to rent an apartment, obtain a job, or get a required occupational license. Without a home or job, they are likelier to commit new crimes. This report offers policy recommendations for helping people reclaim their lives after minor brushes with the law.

Related report: ***DHS Background Studies, Disqualifications, and Set-Asides.*** Collateral Sanctions Committee, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080267.pdf>

This report examines the effects of Minnesota's law on those seeking employment in occupations licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. It concludes that though well-intentioned, these changes may have had negative unintended consequences that have unfairly damaged good, qualified workers.

Environmental Health

Three recent reports give valuable background on hazardous materials in the news. Required by the Legislature, they outline the issues related to the dangers of these toxic chemicals and may lead to policy changes.

Decabromodiphenyl ether (Deca-BDE): a Report to the Minnesota Legislature. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080111.pdf>

Endocrine Disrupting Compounds: A Report to the Minnesota Legislature. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080064.pdf>

Health Risk Limits for Perfluorchemicals: Final Report. Minnesota Department of Health, 2008.
<http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080080.pdf>

Education

Minnesota School Finance: a Guide for Legislators. Research Department, Minnesota House of Representatives, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080709.pdf>

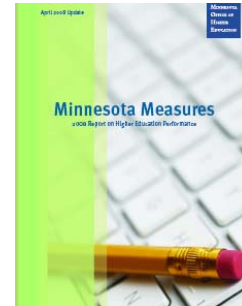
Minnesota's school funding system can be quite challenging to understand. This helpful annual guide describes the various state programs that fund public elementary and secondary schools, and includes finance data as well as some historical background.

Minnesota Measures: 2008 Report on Higher Education Performance.

Minnesota Office of Higher Education, 2008.

<http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080524.pdf>

This annual report is part of a statewide effort to assess the performance, effectiveness and productivity of Minnesota's higher education sector. It includes statistics for individual public and private institutions, and selected comparisons to other states and nations.



Employment

Minority Workers in Minnesota: Today and Tomorrow. Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080463.pdf>

The Legislature requested this analysis of ways to promote employment opportunities for minorities. It includes a mix of background, statistics, and recommendations.

Dislocated Worker Program. (website) Department of Employment and Economic Development.

<http://www.deed.state.mn.us/dw/>

DEED's website focuses both on the needs of dislocated employees and the employers who may be undergoing layoffs. Employees in an unfortunate layoff position can find fact sheets, referral agencies, and even a video about how the Dislocated Worker Program can help them find new jobs.

Energy Conservation

Rising energy costs and the weakened economy are renewing interest in energy conservation. These two reports created by Minnesota government agencies provide information on this important topic.

Best Practices Review: Reducing Energy Costs in Local Government. Government Information Division, Office of the State Auditor, State of Minnesota, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080563.pdf>

This report describes successful energy use reduction programs implemented by local governments in Minnesota. The recommendations on how to reduce energy costs are applicable to a broader audience.

Energy Savings Report: State of Minnesota: State Government, University of Minnesota, and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. Prepared for the Minnesota Department of Commerce; Prepared by The Center for Science, Technology and Public Policy; Alexandra Mallett, Dane McFarlane, and Steve Kelley, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080345.pdf>

This report identifies barriers, costs, and benefits related to implementing energy conservation measures in Minnesota state government buildings. It also delineates specific policy recommendations.

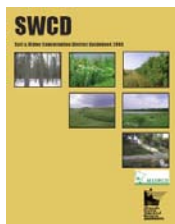
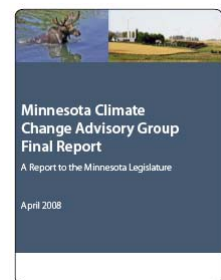
Environment

2007 Solid Waste Policy Report. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080292.pdf>

Policy recommendations for handling various types of solid waste, such as telephone directories and beverage containers are outlined. Detailed county statistics on waste management programs are provided, including recycling rates, financing, and problem materials collection.

Minnesota Climate Change Advisory Group Final Report: A Report to the Minnesota Legislature, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080478/Report.pdf>

This comprehensive overview examines current and projected greenhouse gas emissions in Minnesota by various economic sectors including residential, industrial, energy industries, transportation, and agricultural; policy options for emission reduction are presented.



Soil and Water Conservation District Guidebook 2008. Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources, 2008. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080508.pdf>

A plain title downplays the value of this reference book filled with statistics, maps, photos, and descriptions of interesting water-related programs around the state. Before-and-after photos clearly illustrate the value of many of the projects.

Forests

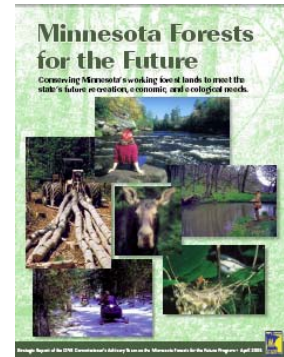
All About Minnesota's Forests and Trees: A Primer. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, 2008.

<http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080827.pdf>

This broad but detailed primer would be great for high school students.

Minnesota's Forests for the Future: Conserving Minnesota's Working Forest Lands to Meet the State's Future Recreation, Economic, and Ecological Needs. Department of Natural Resources, Commissioner's Advisory Team on the Minnesota Forests for the Future Program, 2008.

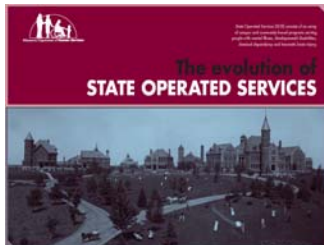
<http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080623.pdf>



Minnesota History

Archaeology in Minnesota: Annual Report of the State Archaeologist. Office of the State Archaeologist, 2007. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/mandated/080208.pdf>

The Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) is charged with sponsoring, conducting and directing research into the prehistoric and historic archaeology of Minnesota. This report summarizes the activities of the office for the fiscal year including a list of “formal authentications” of archaeological sites in Minnesota.



The Evolution of State Operated Services, Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2007. <http://archive.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2008/other/080246.pdf>

Historical photographs compliment this timeline of Human Services' campus and community-based programs from the time when they had such names as “Sanatorium for Consumptives” and “Asylum for the Insane” to the present.

Web Portals of Interest

Minnesota Health Care: A Guide to Health Care Quality and Cost in Minnesota. (website) The Governor's Health Care Cabinet. www.minnesotahealthinfo.org

This easily-navigated portal is a useful starting point for information on specific health conditions arthritis, such as arthritis or diabetes, or for choosing an appropriate nursing home.

Self-Help Center. Minnesota Judicial Branch. (website) www.mncourts.gov/selfhelp

The online Self-Help Center is a great tool for people who need to handle a legal problem in a Minnesota District Court. It provides background on various legal issues and any required legal forms.

A wiki for Minnesotans: Placeography

Placeography. Minnesota Historical Society. (website) www.placeography.org

Anyone can add to this great new website. Placeography is a wiki where people can share the history of and stories about a house, building, farmstead, public land, neighborhood or any place to which they have personal connections.

Track New State Documents Throughout the Year

Newly Acquired State Government Reports (Newdocs) is an electronic list produced biweekly by the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library (LRL). It lists the newest reports received by LRL, and is intended to help librarians know about new documents or new editions of documents they might want to acquire for their collections. You can check the constantly-updated list online or subscribe to the list for ongoing notification at:
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/listserv.asp>

Just In: New and Notable Books and Reports is published monthly, and includes recently cataloged materials in the LRL. Materials included in "Just In" have been cataloged by LRL staff, and the catalog data is available for use by other libraries. Libraries may be especially interested in adding cataloging for electronic documents to their own catalogs. (Note: Subscribers to the Newdocs electronic list noted above are also notified when new issues of "Just In" are posted.)
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/resource/justin.asp?issue=10/1/2008>

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