SDARWS
South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems

Quality On Tap!

October 2025 | Volume 21, Issue 2

WHERE DO ALL THE ROCKS COME FROM?

TOP 10 WAYS TO BE A GOOD SEPTIC OWNER

SMART METERS:
SAVING MONEY, CONSERVING WATER, AND PROTECTING YOUR COMMUNITY

Save the Date

ATC 2026
ANNUAL TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

JANUARY 13-15, 2026

Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center
Pierre, South Dakota

REGISTER ONLINE!
sdarws.com/atc.html

ASSOCIATION UPDATES

SDARWS South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems

Annual Technical Conference - January 13-15, 2026

Plans are underway for the 2026 Annual Technical Conference January 13-15 at the Ramkota Convention Center in Pierre, SD. Registration is available online at **sdarws.com/atc.**

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION ENDS DECEMBER 15, 2025!

MEMBER REGISTRATION

FULL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION: $350 (Early Bird) / $375 (after 12/15/25)

TUESDAY ONLY: $225 (Early Bird) / $250 (after 12/15/25)

WEDNESDAY ONLY: $275 (Early Bird) / $300 (after 12/15/25)

AWARDS BANQUET ONLY: $40

NON-ATTENDEE GUEST PASS: $50 *(NOTE: This pass is for guests of Registered Attendees only and grants access to the Exhibit Hall and meal functions. This pass is not valid for industry professionals or employees of water/wastewater systems, and no contact hours will be awarded.)*

ATC AWARD Submissions

There are only a few more short months before the snow flies, so that means it's time to get in your award nominations for the ATC! Application and information can be found on pages 13-14. The deadline to submit applications is October 30th, and it can be done by mailing in the form on page 14, or online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/ATCawards. If you have questions about the awards, please give the SDARWS Madison office a call at 605-556-7219.

Water Taste Test Contest

This year's Exhibit Hall will feature a public judging of the top three finalists in the SD Rural Water Taste Test. The winner chosen at this Taste Test will go on to represent South Dakota in the National Rural Water Taste Test held at the Rural Water Rally in Washington, DC in February of 2027. If your water system or municipality is interested in participating in the Taste Test, please make sure that you bring a quart-sized glass jar filled with water from your system to the Registration Desk by 2:00pm on Tuesday, January 13th.


JEREMIAH CORBIN
Executive Director


ROBYN BROTHERS
Business Manager


PAUL DORWART
Field Supervisor


JENNIFER BAME
Marketing


KEVIN CHRISTENSON
Source Water


KINDRA WIESE
Apprenticeship


STEVE ATTEMA
Training Specialist


MIKE MOELLER
Training Specialist


GAVIN GRAVERSON
Training Specialist


JIM VAVRA
Training Specialist


HANNAH KAST
Training Specialist


TIM DONOVAN
Training Specialist


JEFF FOSSUM
Training Specialist


ALLEN KOCMICH
Circuit Rider


DAVE DUBA
Circuit Rider


WYATT HIX
Circuit Rider


DANNY AYERS
Wastewater Tech.

SOUTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF RURAL WATER SYSTEMS • 203 W. Center Street • P.O. Box 287, Madison, SD 57042 • 605-556-7219 • email: info@sdarws.com • www.sdarws.com

ATC 2026 CONFERENCE INFO

REGISTRATION OPENS SEPTEMBER 15TH

Register online at **sdarws.com/ATC** by December 15 and save $25 off your registration.

HOTEL INFORMATION

DAYS INN – 605-224-0411
GOVERNOR'S INN – 605-224-4200
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS – 605-223-9045
BAYMONT INN & SUITES – 605-224-4140

January 13-15, 2026

PIERRE RAMKOTA HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER

sdarws.com/ATC

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

TUESDAY

EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
2:30 PM - 4:45 PM

AWARDS LUNCHEON
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

KEYNOTE
Jerrid Sebesta
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

KEYNOTE BREAKOUT
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

HALLWAY EXHIBITS
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

WEDNESDAY

ANNUAL MEETING
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS
8:00 AM - 11:45 AM
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

RURAL WATER CENTER ANNUAL MEETING
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

LEGISLATIVE PANEL
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

HALLWAY EXHIBITS
8:00 AM - 8:00 PM

EXHIBIT HALL & LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

THURSDAY

LEGISLATIVE OPEN FORUM & BREAKFAST
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

2026 KEYNOTE

JERRID SEBESTA

OPERATOR CERTIFICATION TRAINING AND EXAMS

Register for training classes online at: web.sdarws.com/events

Classes start at 8:00 AM Tuesday through Thursday. Classes end at approximately 4:30 PM on Tuesday and Wednesday, and noon on Thursday. One-day Workshops start at 8:00 AM and end at 4:30 PM.

Course Name	Location	Date
Intermediate Water Treatment	Cedar Shore Chamberlain	August 19-21, 2025
OpCert Exam	Cedar Shore Chamberlain	August 21 @ 1:00
Hands-On Fire Hydrant Repair	Willow Lake City Shop	August 27, 2025
Small Water Treatment	Zoom	September 23, 2025
Basic Wastewater Treatment	Rapid City Ramkota	October 7-9, 2025
Day of Water	Outdoor Campus Rapid City	September 30, 2025
Day of Water	Sioux Falls - Water Purification Plant	October 2, 2025
Basic Wastewater Treatment	Rapid City Ramkota	October 7-9, 2025
Hands-On Confined Space & Trench Safety	Big Sioux CWS - Egan, SD	October 7, 2025
OpCert Exam	Rapid City Ramkota	October 9 @ 1:00
Stabilization Pond Workshop	Outdoor Campus Rapid City	October 16, 2025
Stabilization Pond Workshop	Huron	October 21, 2025
Wastewater Treatment	Lake Norden, SD	October 22, 2025
Wastewater Collection	Spearfish Holiday Inn	November 4-6, 2025
OpCert Exam	Spearfish Holiday Inn	November 6 @ 1:00
Water Distribution	Rapid City Ramkota	December 2-4, 2025
OpCert Exam	Rapid City Ramkota	December 4 @ 1:00

EXAM INFORMATION

All exams cost $60.00 and must be taken "in-person." Any exam can be taken at an exam session. You can take more than one exam at an exam session; however, the exam session remains at three hours long.

All exam applications are due no later than two weeks prior to the exam date to DANR. Questions regarding exams can be directed to Tammie Hill with DANR at 605-773-3577.

DANR OPERATOR CERTIFICATION WEBSITE

danr.sd.gov/OfficeOfWater/OperatorCert/default.aspx

The Stabilization Pond class deals strictly with ponds/lagoons and is the best class for preparing to take the Small WW Exam. The Basic WW Treatment class deals with all types of wastewater treatment other than ponds/lagoons and is the best class for preparing to take the Class I WW Treatment exam. Small Systems that use ponds/lagoons for treatment can come into compliance with the Operator Certification Law by passing either the Small WW System exam or the Class I WW Treatment Exam.

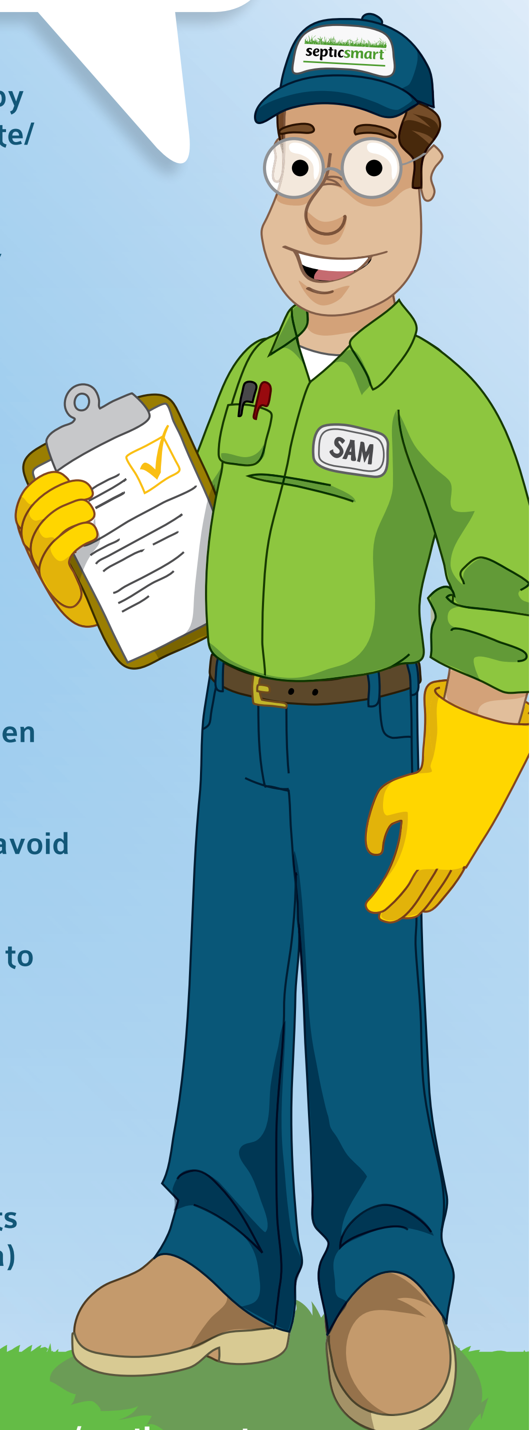
Water systems serving less than 500 individuals and using wells as its source can come into compliance by passing the Small Water Treatment exam. Larger systems must pass the Class I Water Treatment exam or higher depending on the facility classification.

TRAINING CLASSES

Certification Training Classes are conducted by the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems. **These classes are presented at no charge.** Certified Operators can obtain contact hours for attending all of the above classes.

For more information on certification training classes, please contact Tim Donovan with SDARWS at 605-270-4245 or email tdonovan@sdarws.com.

Top 10 Ways to Be a Good Septic Owner

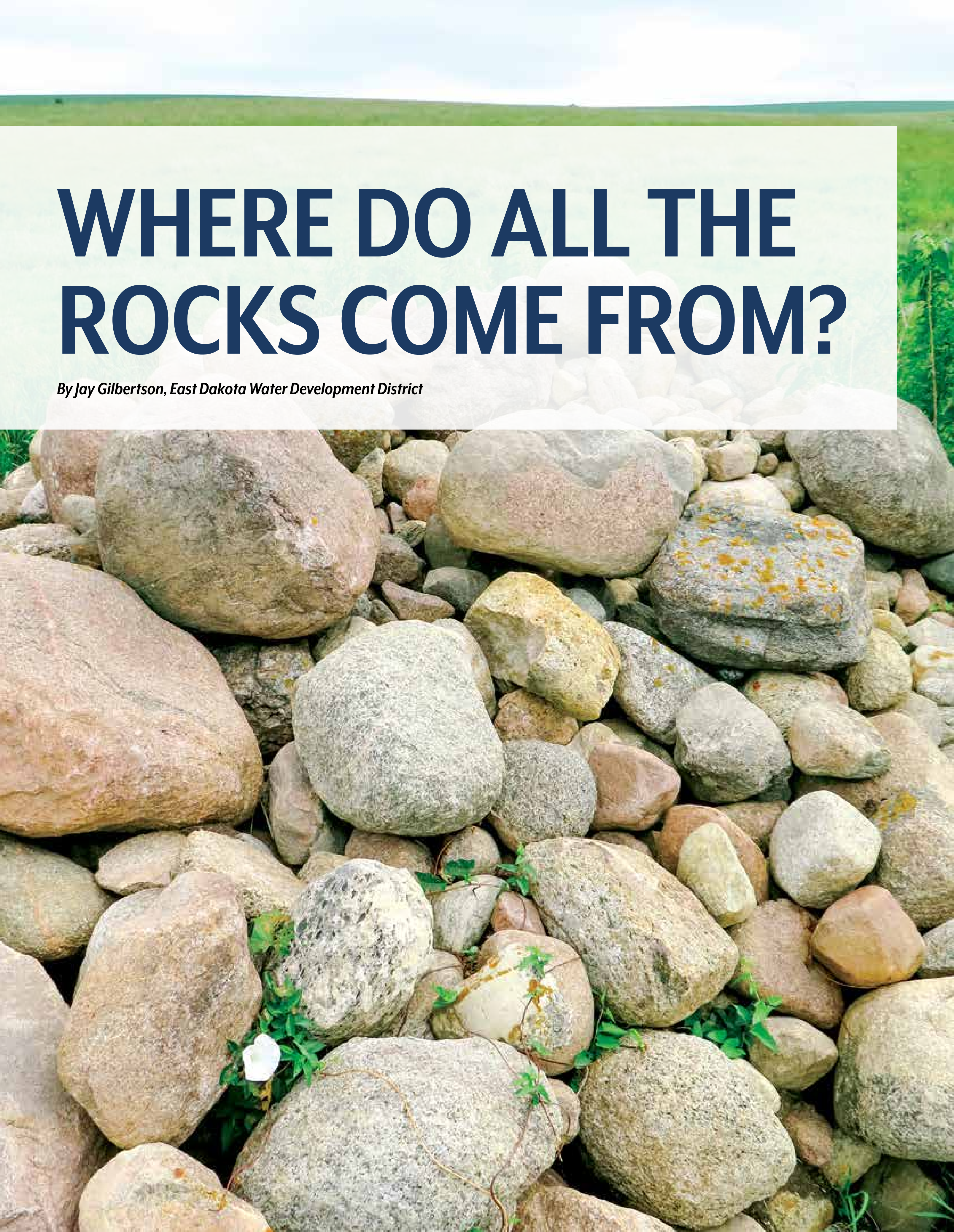


- Have your system inspected every three years by a qualified professional or according to your state/local health department's recommendations
- Have your septic tank pumped, when necessary, generally every three to five years
- Avoid pouring harsh products (e.g., oils, grease, chemicals, paint, medications) down the drain
- Discard non-degradable products in the trash (e.g., floss, disposable wipes, cat litter) instead of flushing them
- Keep cars and heavy vehicles parked away from the drainfield and tank
- Follow the system manufacturer's directions when using septic tank cleaners and additives
- Repair leaks and use water efficient fixtures to avoid overloading the system
- Maintain plants and vegetation near the system to ensure roots do not block drains
- Use soaps and detergents that are low-suds, biodegradable, and low- or phosphate-free
- Prevent system freezing during cold weather by inspecting and insulating vulnerable system parts (e.g., the inspection pipe and soil treatment area)

septicsmart
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

For more SepticSmart tips, visit **www.epa.gov/septicsmart**

EPA | EPA-832-F-16-010 | July 2016



WHERE DO ALL THE ROCKS COME FROM?

By Jay Gilbertson, East Dakota Water Development District

Piles of rocks are a common sight in and around farm fields all across eastern South Dakota. These piles represent the result of years, and sometimes generations, of effort to rid farm fields of stones and boulders so that plows can move more smoothly through the earth. Did you ever wonder where all these rocks came from?

The last significant geologic event to impact eastern South Dakota was the Great Ice Age, which began about two million years ago and ended(?) about 10,000 years ago. During that time, massive sheets of ice, called glaciers, advanced out of Canada and into this part of the world. Detailed studies of the materials left behind by the ice, collectively referred to as glacial drift, suggests that there may have been over a dozen distinct ice advances during this time.

Glaciers are extremely effective earth movers, and each ice advance dramatically rearranged the landscape it encountered. In the eastern Dakotas, the pre-glacial landscape was developed on comparatively soft rocks, like shale, marl (a type of limestone) and poorly-consolidated sandstones. The ice movement ground most of these rocks to fine particles, which are now the basis for the clay-rich soils of the region.

And yet there are numerous large rocks and boulders found today scattered across the countryside. The rocks that 'survive' transport by a glacier tend to be hard, crystalline varieties, like granite or quartzite. With a few notable exceptions, there are really no 'native' sources of actual hard rocks in eastern South Dakota. As such, pretty much all of the rocks and boulders found across the landscape were brought here from other places, like Canada (mostly) and northern Minnesota, by the various ice advances, and then left behind when the ice melted. The transported rocks may have traveled a few tens of miles, or in some instances, well over 1,000 miles before coming to a final resting spot. Geologists refer to rocks that have been transported in such a way as glacial erratics.

So, if someone finds a big rock out in the field, where did it come from? The quick and simple answer is, "up north." Determining exactly where a particular glacial erratic originated from can be difficult. The mineral composition and physical characteristics of rocks are highly variable, and as such a 'granite' from one region can look markedly different from a 'granite' from another. The ability to locate a point of origin usually requires that your rock 1) has relatively unique and readily identifiable characteristics and 2) geologists have previously identified a unique location where this particular rock type is found in place.

For example, the Sioux Quartzite, which is exposed at various places in southwestern Minnesota and southeastern South Dakota (including at the Falls of the Big Sioux River in Sioux Falls), is one such rock. Boulders of this distinctive pink rock are common in glacial deposits south of Interstate 90 in South Dakota, having been picked up by glaciers advancing across the region from the north. with some found in remnant glacial deposits as far away as northeast Kansas.

Another, more traveled example are rocks known as omars. Omars are derived from the Omarolluk Formation, part of a group of rocks limited to the Belcher Islands, which are located in the southeastern part of Hudson Bay. The rock is typically dark- to medium-gray in color, with a distinctive oval-shaped inclusion of lighter gray material The rock is a variety of sandstone (graywacke), and the lighter spots are calcareous concretions. If exposed to weathering, the light spots will wear away, leaving a rounded cavity in the stone. Omars are found all across the northern United States, from Michigan to Montana. Each example started out at the same place, and was subsequently moved, often in multiple steps, to it's final resting place.

So, the next time you see a rock laying out in a local field, or in a rock wall built from such stones, imagine the long and arduous journey it had to make to get here.

SMART METERS:

Saving Money, Conserving Water, and Protecting Your Community

In recent years, rural water systems across South Dakota have been making major investments in technology. But this technology isn't hidden away in a treatment plant or tucked inside an office – it's right where you might least expect it: in the water meter at your home.

Today's smart water meters are packed with advanced features that provide enormous benefits to both customers and utilities. By pairing these meters with software that interprets the data, water systems can save time, reduce costs, conserve water, and even prevent costly leaks before they spiral out of control.

Smart meters come in a wide range of models, from simple designs that measure basic usage to advanced meters that can detect leaks or abnormal patterns in real time. Many rural water systems in South Dakota use cellular networks to transmit meter data – working much like a safe and secure text message that can reach even the most remote locations. In more populated areas, utilities may rely on strategically placed radio antennas to gather and deliver the information. Smart meters meet strict safety standards and use secure, low-level radio signals – far lower than most common household electronics. They're not only safe, but they also deliver better service, transparency, and reliability for customers.

Regardless of the method, the data is invaluable. A smart meter can track gallons used, water temperature, flow volume, and even the time and duration of water use. While that may sound like a lot of detail for something as simple as filling a glass of water, it allows utilities to bill accurately without sending staff house to house. That efficiency saves countless hours and reduces costs – savings that ultimately benefit customers.

Perhaps one of the most exciting features of smart meters is leak detection. When unusual usage patterns are detected, utilities can notify a customer quickly – sometimes even before the customer realizes there's an issue. With a little investigative work, operators can often pinpoint the source of the leak, whether it's a dripping faucet, a running toilet, or a broken irrigation line.

Many systems also offer customer portals, where households can log in and monitor their own water use. This empowers customers to identify leaks early, track conservation efforts, and avoid the shock of an unexpectedly high bill.

Utilities also benefit from smarter planning. With access to real-time usage data, rural systems can better predict demand, prioritize upgrades, and make smarter investments for the future.

The newest generation of smart meters takes things a step further with acoustic leak detection technology. Don't worry – these meters aren't "listening" to conversations. Instead, they pick up on the distinct frequencies that leaks produce as water escapes into the ground. With the right software, utilities can locate leaks down to within a few feet.

This breakthrough is a game changer. While it's relatively easy to spot leaks after water passes through a customer's meter, leaks on the utility's side of the system are much harder to find. Acoustic-enabled smart meters give utilities the ability to stop water loss at its source, saving money, reducing wasted water, and protecting vital infrastructure.

Water is one of our most valuable resources, and rural water systems are committed to managing it wisely. By reducing water loss and improving efficiency, smart meters not only keep customer bills affordable but also ensure that rural water systems remain strong and sustainable for years to come.

Smart water meters save money, conserve water, and improve service, making them a win-win for customers, communities, and the environment.

Through the customer portal, smart meter users can view real-time water usage, track daily and monthly trends, set up leak alerts, and manage their accounts – all from their smartphone, tablet, or computer.

BIG SIOUX COMMUNITY WATER

For more than half a century, Big Sioux Community Water has been providing safe, reliable drinking water to Moody and Lake Counties, and portions of Brookings, Minnehaha, and Pipestone, MN. From its beginnings in the early 1970s to today's modern, expanding system, Big Sioux has been built on community vision, steady growth, and a commitment to delivering the best water possible.

The story began in 1972, when a steering committee met at Sioux Valley Energy in Colman to explore the idea of a rural water system. Two of those early leaders, Dan Carlson (now retired after 50 years) and Andy Groos (retired after 52 years), went on to serve decades on the Board of Directors. With support from DeWild Grant Reckert and Associates (DGR), a preliminary engineering report was developed and submitted to the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) for funding. With around 700 original sign-ups, the system delivered its first water in 1975. A well field was established east of Egan in the Big Sioux River valley, and three production wells were drilled. Remarkably, one of those original wells is still producing water today.

Big Sioux Community Water tower next to the Dakota Ethanol plant in Wentworth, SD

In the early years, treatment was simple – primarily disinfection and fluoridation – but it was still a major improvement over the private wells many families had relied on. Through the 1980s, the system grew steadily with new towers, wells, the first treatment plant at Brant Lake, and additional pipelines. By 1979, the system surpassed 1,000 members. The addition of SCADA monitoring in 1989 improved reliability, and by 1990, membership had reached 1,350. The construction of a lime softening treatment plant in 1994 raised water quality even higher and helped push membership past 2,000 by 2010.

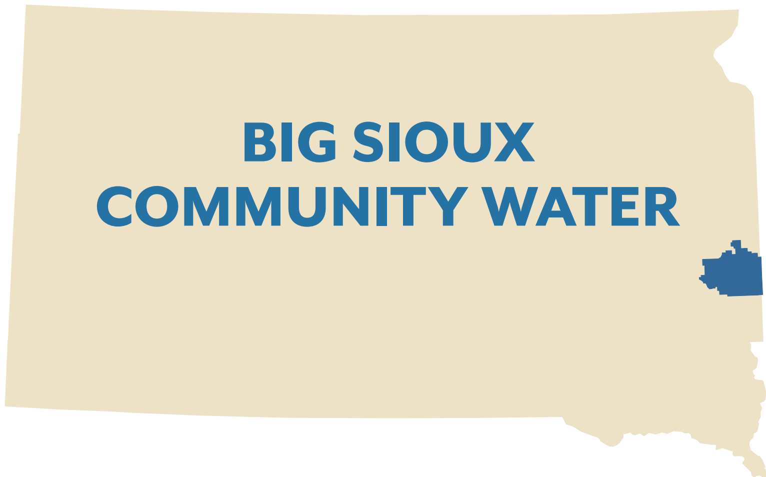
Growth also came through partnerships. In 2000, Big Sioux began supplying bulk water to Flandreau as well as more than 200 million gallons annually to Dakota Ethanol. Demand around Lake Madison and Lake Brant led to the construction of a smaller membrane treatment plant, which began operating in 2010. In 2017, a new pipeline connection with Minnehaha Community Water provided additional capacity and extended service to Madison and Chester. The results have been striking: in 1980, annual sales were about 150 million gallons; by 2021, they had grown to over one billion gallons.

Today, Big Sioux is part of the Shared Resources project, a major collaboration with Minnehaha Community Water Corporation. Together, the two systems are building a new eight million gallon-per-day water treatment plant near Trent, along with new wells, reservoirs, a booster station, and 15 miles of treated water pipeline. Backed by a $110 million funding package provided through the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) and federal ARPA funds, this project is designed to provide added capacity and reliability while keeping costs efficient through shared resources. It is one of the most significant rural water collaborations in South Dakota.

As the new year approaches, the Big Sioux Board of Directors and staff are looking ahead to growth and expansion in 2026 and beyond. Future upgrades and maintenance are top priorities, along with planning for added capacity to ensure uninterrupted, reliable service for all customers.

At the 47th Annual Meeting in 2019, longtime Director Andy

BIG SIOUX COMMUNITY WATER



Groos said, "Rural water is probably the most precious commodity we have on the farm, especially given the quality we enjoy." Retired Director Dan Carlson added, "Having quality rural water at my home gives me many of the advantages of city living while getting to enjoy the benefits of country living."

Now under the leadership of Manager Jodi Johanson, Big Sioux Community Water continues to carry forward that vision – protecting water resources, investing in infrastructure, and ensuring the best quality water for the communities it serves.

Big Sioux Community Water Headquarters in Egan, SD

Progress photo of the Shared Resources plant near Trent, SD

DIRECTORS:

Chairman – Dan Dannenbring

Vice Chairman – Vince Nelson

Secretary/Treasurer – Gaylen Backus

Director – Tom Hagedorn

Director – Reggie Gassman

Director – Kent Whipkey

Director – John Mousel

Director – Rick Olivier

Director – John McCorkle

STAFF:

General Manager – Jodi Johanson

Chief of Distribution – Chad Kneebone

Chief Plant Operator – Aric Olson

Small Systems Operator – Jeff Carruthers

Distribution Operator – Lucas Dailey

Distribution Operator – Taylor Bult

Bookkeeper – Kim Hansen

Office Manager – Lenhi Olson

STATISTICS:

Service Connections: 2,395

Miles of Pipeline: 900

Water Source: Wells – Big Sioux Aquifer, Skunk Creek Aquifer

Counties Served: Moody, Lake and portions of Brookings and Minnehaha; Pipestone, MN

Towns Served Individual: Rutland

Towns Served Bulk: Flandreau, Egan, Trent, Colman, Wentworth, Chester

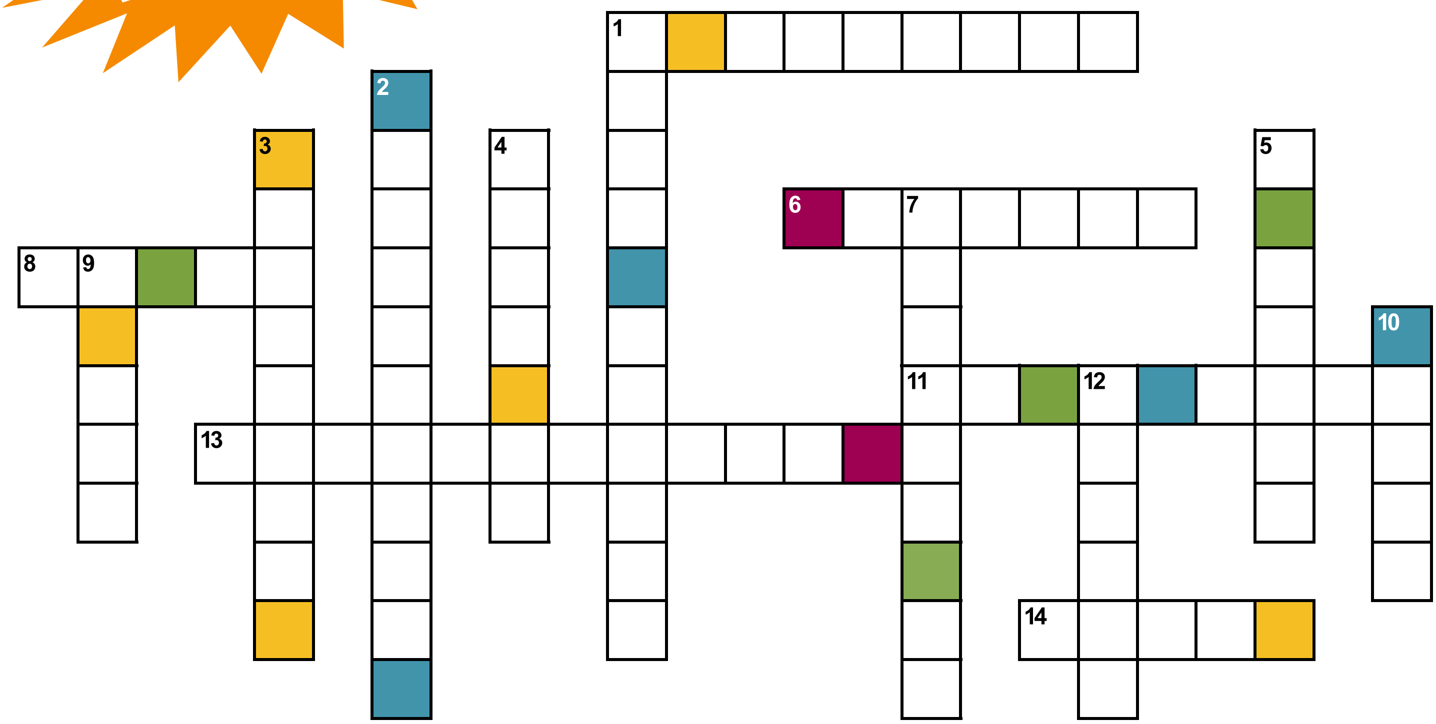
Contracted Management Water Systems: Egan, Wentworth, Chester

RURAL WATER CROSSWORD & WORD SCRAMBLE CONTEST

PIES

Enter to Win $100

SCRAMBLE ANSWER



Across

1. Sweet purple fruit-filled pie
6. Traditional Thanksgiving dessert
8. Classic American pie made with spiced fruit
11. Rich dessert pie for cocoa lovers
13. Tart citrus filling with a fluffy topping
14. Pie filled with custard and topped with whipped topping

Down

1. Custard pie with slices of yellow fruit
2. Creamy orange pie, often mistaken for pumpkin
3. Savory pie topped with mashed potatoes
4. Tart green citrus dessert from Florida
5. Tangy stalk used in spring pies
7. Traditional pie with spiced fruits and sometimes meat
9. Southern favorite made with nuts and corn syrup
10. Summer fruit pie popular in the South
12. Tart red fruit often paired with a lattice crust

RULES: Use the colored squares in the puzzle to solve the word scramble above. Call your Rural Water System (See page 2 for contact information) or **enter online at www.sdarws.com/crossword.html** with the correct phrase by October 15, 2025 to be entered into the $100 drawing.

Only one entry allowed per address/household. You must be a member of a participating rural water system to be eligible for the prize. Your information will only be used to notify the winner, and will not be shared or sold.

Congratulations to Idell Moritz from Sioux Rural Water who had the correct phrase of "Savor sunshine and smiles" for July 2025.

ATC 2026

AWARD NOMINATIONS

Do you know someone who is doing a great job? Goes above and beyond the call of duty? Has your water system achieved excellence this year – or has overcome some amazing challenges?

Give recognition where it is due by making an award nomination. Awards will be presented at the Awards Banquet. **Application deadline is October 30th.** Eligible nominees must be affiliated with a system member in good standing. The online form can be found at **www.surveymonkey.com/r/ATCawards,** or find the paper form on page 16.

WE ARE ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

Rural Water System of the Year: Recognition for a member system who puts forth exceptional efforts to properly manage, operate, and maintain their drinking water system.

Rural Water Manager of the Year: Recognition for a manager of a Rural Water System for outstanding performance in operating a Rural Water System.

Rural Water Office Person of the Year: Recognition for an administrative employee of a Rural Water System for outstanding performance in office management and procedures.

Rural Water System Operations Supervisor of the Year: Recognition for a State of South Dakota Certified Operator who is actively working a supervisory role for a Rural Water System, and has demonstrated outstanding leadership ability and/or accomplishments in drinking water.

Rural Water System Operations Specialist of the Year: Recognition for a State of South Dakota Certified Operator who is actively working for a Rural Water System with outstanding leadership ability and/or accomplishments in drinking water.

Municipal Water/Wastewater System of the Year: Recognizes a municipality who puts forth exceptional efforts to properly manage, operate, and maintain their drinking water and wastewater system.

Municipal Manager of the Year: Recognition for a municipal manager for outstanding performance in managing a municipality.

Municipal Office Person of the Year: Recognition for an administrative employee of a municipality (i.e. clerk, finance officer, etc.) for outstanding performance in office management and procedures.

Municipal Operations Specialist of the Year: Recognition for a State of South Dakota Certified Operator who is actively working for a municipality with outstanding leadership ability/accomplishments in water.

Spirit of Rural Water: This award is presented to an individual, business or group that goes above and beyond for a rural water system or rural water cause. South Dakota Rural Water wants to recognize exceptional rural water advocates that stand out from the pack because of their commitment to rural water issues and/or their passion for the job. Eligible candidates include rural and community water consumers, employees, directors, as well as lawmakers, businesses, or any person or group that puts forth a noble effort to advance rural water.

Donald B. Pospishil: This award honors the work of Don Pospishil, who dedicated many years of his life to helping small water systems across South Dakota. The Donald B. Pospishil Award is awarded to individuals who demonstrate leadership abilities in the water supply field, provide quality services to consumers, and exhibits professionalism and dedication while operating and maintaining a small water system.

ATC 2026 AWARD NOMINATIONS

This form is also available online at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/ATCawards

Name of Nominee____ Title_______________________________________

Employer ____ Years with System _________

Name of person making nomination ____

Address____

City____ State _______ Zipcode _____________

Please Indicate Award:

- ☐ **Rural Water System of the Year**
- ☐ **Rural Water Manager of the Year**
- ☐ **Rural Water Office Person of the Year**
- ☐ **Rural Water Operations Supervisor of the Year**
- ☐ **Rural Water Operations Specialist of the Year**
- ☐ **Municipal Water/Wastewater System of the Year**
- ☐ **Municipal Manager of the Year**
- ☐ **Municipal Office Person of the Year**
- ☐ **Municipal Operations Specialist of the Year**
- ☐ **Spirit of Rural Water**
- ☐ **Donald B. Pospishil**

Supporting Information: Please provide a narrative for why this nominee deserves the award. (Outstanding accomplishments, contributions to system and state association, certifications, awards, exemplary work on legislative Issues, leadership, civic activities, etc.) Feel free to add additional pages if needed.

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

Deadline to apply is October 30th.

Please complete this entry form and mail to:
SDARWS | Attn: Paul | PO Box 287 | Madison, SD 57042
or scan and email to atc@sdarws.com

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JEREMIAH CORBIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD: UPDATES FROM SDARWS

As we move toward the fall season, I want to share a few highlights from what has been a productive and energizing summer for our association and our members.

Welcoming New Staff: Kindra Wiese and Tim Donovan

We're pleased to welcome two new members to the SDARWS team:

Kindra Wiese has joined us as Apprentice Coordinator, bringing over 20 years of experience as an educator – mostly in seventh-grade math. Her background in education and her fresh perspective have already added value to our workforce development efforts, and we're excited to have her on board.

Kindra Wiese

Tim Donovan is our new Technical Assistance Training Specialist, with a primary focus on certification training. Tim brings years of hands-on industry experience, especially in the area of chemical applications in water treatment. His knowledge will be a significant asset to systems across the state.

Tim Donovan

Missouri River Stakeholder Meetings Set for Fall

This fall, SDARWS will co-host a series of Missouri River Stakeholder Meetings in partnership with North Dakota's Missouri River Joint Water Board and the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources. These meetings will be held in several communities along the river and will focus on water allocation, beneficial use, infrastructure, agriculture, and economic development. Each session will feature panel discussions representing both South Dakota and North Dakota perspectives. These meetings will provide a valuable forum to engage the public and reaffirm South Dakota's role in shaping regional water policy.

Celebrating a Record-Breaking Golf Tournament

We're very excited to report that our Rural Water Open Golf Tournament, held on July 22, was a tremendous success! We set a new record for both attendance and funds raised, with 62 teams participating. Our new format—half of the teams teeing off in the morning and half in the afternoon – helped keep things running smoothly and allowed everyone to enjoy a great day on the course.

Congratulations to Team Munson, who took home the overall championship with a mind-boggling 22 under par!

Thanks to Mulligan sales, the sweet spot licorice rope advantage, and our on-the-green competitions, we raised $6,986 for WaterPAC – a vital advocacy fund that helps ensure rural water has a strong voice at the state and federal level.

Rural Development Leadership and Feedback

This summer also brought a leadership change at USDA Rural Development with the appointment of Lorraine Polak as South Dakota's new State Director. Lorraine brings a strong background in rural policy and housing, and we look forward to collaborating with her on water project support and funding programs.

We've also gathered feedback from member systems regarding their experiences with RD program delivery. This input will guide our ongoing advocacy for better access, streamlined processes, and stronger support for rural water infrastructure.

Looking Ahead

Our budget committee met earlier this month to begin preparing for 2026, and we're looking forward to presenting a plan that reflects both sustainability and fairness to our membership. With the Class A dues structure now finalized, and new programs gaining traction, we're in a strong position moving forward.

Thank you to our members, staff, and partners for making this summer one of progress and momentum. I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events and stakeholder meetings this fall as we continue working together to protect and strengthen South Dakota's water systems.

SDARWS
South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems
P.O. Box 287
Madison, SD 57042
www.sdarws.com
605-556-7219

WATER MATTERS

LONE ROCK

About 8 miles, as the crow flies, southeast of Flandreau, and just a mile from the Minnesota border, sits Lone Rock, the largest glacial erratic yet identified in South Dakota. With a diameter of over 25 feet, and standing roughly 20 feet above the prairie surface, this rock has been a local landmark for ages. As testimony to its uniqueness, a local church, cemetery and the township in which it resides all bear its name.

Lone Rock is a block of pink granite, carried to the area by glaciers many tens of thousands of years ago. Although it's exact point of origin is unknown, the nearest rocks of similar composition are found in the valley of the Minnesota River, some 90 miles to the northeast. Here, ancient crystalline rocks, ranging in age from 1.5 to 3.5 billion years, are exposed, and could have been the source of Lone Rock. Another large glacial erratic, the Three Maidens at Pipestone National Monument, has a similar composition and likely a comparable origin story.

The rock sits in a pasture near the corner of 487th Avenue and 235th Street. This is private property, so visitors are encouraged to admire the feature from afar. But don't worry, it's big enough to be seen from the road. The Lone Rock Lutheran Church and the Lone Rock Cemetery are located less than a mile west of the intersection.

BACK PAGE CONTENT PROVIDED BY:

EAST DAKOTA WATER DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

132B Airport Avenue
Brookings, SD 57006
605-688-6741
eastdakota.org