



Minnesota governance on water management and drainage

September 2013

Water management plans and implementation		
<p>Counties – 87 in Minnesota</p> <p>(Boundary - political lines with elected officials)</p> <p>1985</p>	<p>Soil and Water Conservation Districts – 91 in Minnesota</p> <p>(Boundary – generally on county lines with elected officials)</p> <p>1937</p>	<p>Watershed Districts – 46 in Minnesota</p> <p>(Boundary - hydrologic areas / county officials appointing board members)</p> <p>1955</p>
<p>MN Statute 103 B</p>	<p>MN Statute 103 C</p>	<p>MN Statute 103 D</p>
<p>County water plan developed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and zoning dept. • Some have an Environmental Services Dept. <p>County plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments of the resource. • Goals and objectives. • Implementation actions. • Measureable outcomes. • Lots of public input and task force participation. • Local adaption by the county commissioners (local government unit driven). • State approved plan. 	<p>SWCD develop annual and comprehensive plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many SWCDs adopt county water plans as their overall plan (by resolution). • Counties may delegate the writing of their plan to the SWCD (County adopts it, but both implement the plan). • SWCD work mainly to install Best Management Practices (BMP) on private lands. 	<p>WD formed by petition for various reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake water quality management. • Drainage management. • Flood control. • Storm water quality management. <p>WD plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrologic data. • Specific projects planned. • Purpose of the WD. • Problems requiring action. • Effectiveness of WD rules and permits. <p>WD plans developed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource staff of WD. • Consulting firms (environment or engineering).

Drainage		
Counties	Soil and Water Conservation Districts	Watershed Districts
MN Statute 103 E		MN Statute 103 D MN Statute 103 E
<p>County Government serves as the drainage authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowners petition to county government. • County reviews the proposal. • Counties assess benefits and who pays how much. • County serves as the fiscal manager for construction / maintenance and improvements. • Each ditch / tile system has its own funds paid by the landowners. • County rules may govern the size of private lines and overall quantity management. 	<p>May help in design and installation of best management practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side inlets. • Buffers along ditches. • Wetland restorations or surge ponds. • Conservation drainage practices. • May help implement drainage law through county or WD authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new and improved public systems are under WD administration. • Counties may transfer their ditch systems to the WD for future administration. • WD rules may govern size of private lines and overall quantity management.

Resources available on Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources website:

1. SWCD handbook
2. WD handbook
3. MN Drainage manual
4. County Comprehension plan guidelines