



Conservation Newsletter



Spring Cleaning

It's that time of year again... time for spring cleaning! Have you ever stopped to think about where all of your trash ends up? Did you know that there are State Rules that mandate how we dispose of our unwanted belongings? It's true; now before you break out the cleaning supplies or even start to think about throwing your old TV in the trash, take a few minutes to read this newsletter. We are going to help you learn how to properly dispose of your household hazardous waste and other items that are not allowed to be thrown in the landfill.

The times are changing & as residents of Pipestone County, it is extremely important that we do our part in keeping our environment clean. In the words of Kermit the Frog, we all know that "It's not easy being Green," but just because it is not easy, does not mean that it is not possible.

In fact within the last few years Pipestone County has come a long way in making garbage disposal easier for County residents. We now have a new Household Hazardous Waste and Recycling Center that is open weekly to keep banned materials out of the landfill and also offer an Annual Clean-up event so that Rural Residents are able to get rid of their old un-wanted items, such as furniture, toilets, mattresses, carpet, grills, etc. instead of throwing them in a pit.

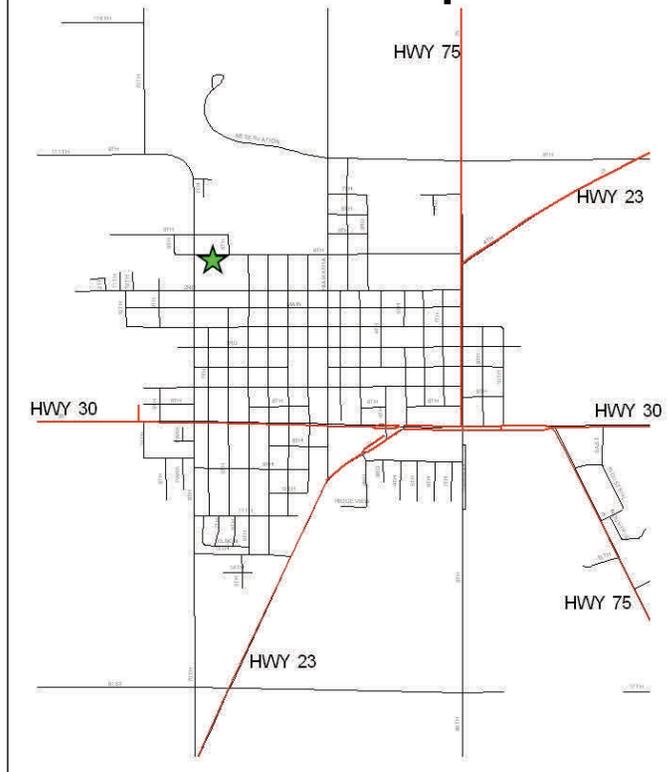
Recycling Center Now Open!

Almost everyday since we started our monthly Electronics and Appliance collections back in 2008, we have been getting calls from people that ask: *When are you open? What do you Take? and How much does it Cost?*

We are now excited to say that our new Recycling Center is now open and we now are able to accept not only Appliances and Electronics for free, but all of the following on a Weekly basis:

- Adhesives
- Aerosols
- Antifreeze
- Arts & Crafts Materials
- Bleach
- Brake Fluid
- Cleaning products
- Common household chemicals
- Cooking oil
- Fertilizer
- Fire Extinguishers
- Freon
- Gasoline/Kerosene
- Latex & Oil Paint
- Lead acid batteries (car batteries)
- Mercury
- Motor oil (in small quantities)
- Pesticides/Herbicides
- Photo Chemicals
- Christmas Lights
- Poisons
- Propane & Helium tanks
- Rechargeable batteries
- Sealants
- Solvents
- Wood care products
- Pool Chemicals
- Fluorescent bulbs & PCB Ballasts
- Triple Rinsed Pesticide Containers

718 4th St. N.W. Pipestone



**Recycling Center Open Every
Wednesday from 7am—1pm**

**Check out our Product Exchange Shelf; Free products available for re-use by the public. (Must be 18 or older)*

**Free Disposal for Pipestone County Residents. Businesses may be charged.*

Don't Break the Law...Think Twice Before you Burn or Bury



For nearly four decades it has been against the law for most Minnesotans to burn or bury household wastes. In 1969 there were enough clearly established environmental and health risks for the Minnesota Legislature to outlaw backyard garbage burning. Today there are even more reasons to stop burning our own trash.

First, our garbage has changed dramatically. Even a plain white piece of paper isn't so benign. It is treated with chemicals and bleaching agents. Ink isn't ink anymore; today's inks include lead, cadmium, chromium and other heavy metals. In the good old days our trash didn't include PVCs, plastics, vinyl's, heavy metals, chlorine and other chemicals.

Second, we know much more about the immediate and long term health effects associated with backyard garbage burning. Watering eyes, coughing and respiratory illnesses like asthma and emphysema are only the beginning. Nervous system, kidney and liver damage, as well as developmental and reproductive disorders are also linked to smoke from backyard burning. Just because the person feeding your burn barrel may not develop any health problems, doesn't mean that your family, friends, neighbors and others aren't affected. Cancer causing dioxins in smoke settle on soil, water and crops and enter the food chain. Once there, dioxins can spread far away from their original source and build up in the food we eat.

Third, we know much more about the environmental costs associated with backyard garbage burning. Burning your garbage outdoors not only increases wildlife health risks and contaminates air, soil and water; it is the leading cause of wildfires in Minnesota.

Back in 1969 lawmakers granted a farm waiver. Only households with farm generated waste & no garbage service available, as determined by their county board, were permitted to burn or bury waste items. However, only if "done in a nuisance free, pollution free, and aesthetic manner." Now days, we all know that it simply isn't possible to burn our own garbage in a pollution free manner. Minnesotans need to find a better way to deal with garbage. If you have Questions on how to properly dispose of your garbage, old structures, or other unwanted items, Please Contact us for Assistance!

Make Better Use of Your 'Marginal' Land

Will we see the Return of the Dirty 30's Dust Bowl? The parched prairies of the Midwest are facing a natural disaster not seen since the days of the 1930s. To recap, the Dust Bowl was a phenomenon that was caused by severe drought combined with intensive farming methods. Extensive deep plowing of the virgin topsoil of the Great Plains in the preceding decade had displaced the natural deep-rooted grasses that normally kept the soil in place and conserved moisture even during periods of drought and high winds.



With Corn and Soybean prices at an all-time high, producers are doing anything in their power to utilize every acre of their land. Many are taking land out of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), plowing up pastures, waterways & wet spots. Farming right next to the stream banks, and taking out acres of trees that were once used for windbreaks. Most farmers realize that there are "marginal" spots on the farm that need to be treated with more sensitivity. Ask yourself why did dad put that area into CRP in the first place, or why did grandpa seed that area to grass. Marginal land may include sloughs, wetlands, stream banks, steep end rows, and land too rocky or steep to be tilled. By finding a more conserving use for the marginal spots vs. intensive crop production, you could save the money that you are losing in input costs and save tons of precious top soil.

It comes apparent in the winter time, that when you can see your soil covering the snow in the road ditches that we have a problem. Our valuable topsoil is leaving our farms and we can do better. It's almost as if we are resorting back to the Dirty 30's when our nation's cropland was stripped down and our precious soil dried out and blew for miles.

All in all, we must stop averaging out our gains and take a good look at what each acre of land is doing for you. Specifically look at the wet spots, and steep or highly erodible land that you own or rent and ask yourself if it was really worth taking the time and money to plant there when a heavy rain could take those acres out of production.

After the tragedy in the 1930's many government programs were formed to help prevent the dirty 30's from ever happening again. We want you to know that most of those programs are still in place today and our staff is available to assist you. Between the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) we can help you help your land. We have access to funding and engineering staff to make your next conservation project a success! Call us or stop by today.

Rural Residents - Mark Your Calendars

Annual Rural Clean-up Day



Thursday, June 6th 2013

8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Collection Location: The Pipestone County Recycling Center

718 4th St. N.W. Pipestone, MN



This Collection will be Similar to the City Wide Clean-up Collections that are held within the County.

Pipestone County Rural Residents may bring in their Old / Unwanted Items for free disposal.

If you have Questions on what will be accepted, Please don't hesitate to give us a call! 507-825-6765

Drainage Water Management

Tile drainage has become popular in areas where soils have poor internal drainage because it helps to convert land that would otherwise be too wet to consistently farm into highly productive cropland. While the benefits of tile drainage are improved traffic ability and increased crop yields, the practice also delivers nitrates and phosphorus to stream systems which has a detrimental impact on water quality.

One strategy that can be used to reduce nitrates in tile drainage water is drainage water management. With drainage water management, water level control structures are included as a part of the tile drainage system, and these structures are used to manipulate water levels at different times during the year. The greatest nitrate removal benefits occur when water levels are maintained in the biologically active zone during the growing season where nitrates can be converted to nitrogen gas by denitrifying bacteria. A properly managed system can also increase crop yields by conserving water in the soil profile for crops to utilize.

When is drainage water management a good fit for a new or an existing tile drainage system? Generally drainage water management is unfeasible on land slopes greater than about one percent. It may be possible to retrofit existing tile installations with water level control structures depending on how the tile layout fits with the field topography. Tile systems utilizing drainage water management do not require closer tile spacing, but tile layout should be aligned with the field's contours as much as possible in order to provide the most complete coverage and consistent water levels across the field.

Funding is available through the EQIP program for water level control structures (NRCS Practice Standard 587) and for the annual management to control water levels (NRCS Practice Standard 554). Related EQIP practices that can be utilized to reduce nitrates in tile drainage effluent are denitrifying bioreactors (NRCS Practice Standard 747) and vegetated subsurface drain outlets, also referred to as saturated buffers (NRCS Practice Standard 739). For more information on any of these practices, contact your local NRCS field office.



Soil Health A Top Priority for Minnesota NRCS

Minnesota NRCS is on a Health Kick! Healthy soil that is. The 2012 cropping season saw unusual weather patterns in the state. Wind and rain erosion was common on unprotected cropland. The time could not be more right for Minnesota NRCS to begin a new era of conservation. Conservationists across the state will work not only to protect top soil but to enhance the quality and health of our state soil resources. This initiative is called Soil Health.

Soil Health utilizes the living components of the soil to conserve and improve the soil. Soil Health Management Systems include combinations of practices like conservation crop rotation, cover crops, no till, mulch tillage, and nutrient and pest management. These practices mimic nature as it existed before the land was tilled. They not only conserve topsoil, but build it, along with all the living organisms that are critical to healthy, functioning soil.

The foundation of Soil Health includes four main principles:

- Keep the soil covered as much as possible
- Disturb the soil as little as possible
- Keep plants growing throughout the year to feed the soil
- Diversify as much as possible using crop rotation and cover crops



Microorganisms in the soil do not like disturbance of any kind, which includes both physical and chemical. These microorganisms, which number about 8 billion in one teaspoon of Minnesota topsoil, work to enhance soil organic matter and make nutrients available to plants and crops. These beneficial activities are reduced with any disturbance to the microorganisms. Microorganisms make their home on plant roots. The microbes feed on sugars from the plant and the plant in turn feeds on nutrients made available by the microbes. They benefit each other in what is called a symbiotic relationship. Covering the soil with living plants like cover crops and dead plant residue protects the topsoil from the erosive effects of wind and rain. The cover also conserves soil moisture, increases organic matter, increases nutrient cycling, and protects microorganisms from fluctuations in soil temperature. Microbes have a desired range of temperature where they thrive at.

Minnesota NRCS is looking forward to working with you on implementing our Soil Health efforts. Over the next few months, NRCS and Soil and Water Conservation District Employees will be receiving Soil Health Training. We look forward to sharing our knowledge in the very near term.

Cover Crop Soil Health Initiative

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Minnesota is encouraging producers to sign up for a special cover crop initiative offered through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Instead of leaving fields bare, producers can enroll acres in the Soil Health (Cover Crop) Initiative to plant cover crops to reduce the probability of erosion, increase soil health, and provide cover and food for many wildlife species.



Producer interested in the initiative should be aware that they will have to plant a multi species mixture of cover crops for five years on the same acres.

Cover crops are grown between regular crop rotations such as corn, soybeans, and wheat. Examples of cover crops are cereal ryegrass, clover, oats, oil seed radishes, and barley. Cover crops are not intended as a harvestable crop, but are grown to enhance productivity. Benefits of cover crops include: improving soil structure by increasing soil organic matter and root penetration; protecting otherwise bare soil from wind and water erosion; using nitrogen left in the soil, preventing it from polluting waterways; and cycling nutrients back into the soil that will be available for future corn and soybean crops.

EQIP has other scenarios for cover crops including chemical kill, mechanical kill, legume nitrogen fixation, and organic. These scenarios are not a part of the Soil Health Initiative, but can be a valuable addition towards addressing cropland resource concerns.

Landowners interested in planting cover crops should visit the local NRCS office to find out more information on the best solution for their operation.

What The Heck Is A WASCOB?

No, it's not a new USDA "Going Green" initiative for using corn residue. WASCOB stands for Water and Sediment Control Basin, a structural sediment erosion control practice eligible for incentive payment under the USDA-NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). More on WASCOB's later ...

Structural conservation and upland land treatment practices go hand-in-hand when it comes to a comprehensive conservation farm plan. Structural practices are those that control water erosion using engineered solutions. Structural practices are mostly used in areas with steep fields and/or concentrated flow areas that are particularly vulnerable to excessive erosion by runoff. Some of the more common structural practices include:



Grassed Waterways – This engineering practice involves constructing a vegetated channel that conveys runoff without eroding the underlying soil. The size and shape of a grassed waterway is based on the amount of runoff that the waterway must carry, the slope of proposed waterway, and the underlying soil type.

Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCOB) – WASCOBs are a series of small embankments across concentrated flow paths on cropland that store then slowly release runoff through an underground outlet. As sediment laden runoff enters the basin, it is stored and sediment is settled out. The intakes that meter the water out are typically a plastic perforated stand pipe about 4 feet high. The embankments themselves can be designed to be farmed.

Terraces – Terraces are similar to WASCOB's except that they are not built across a single water course. A terrace embankment is built to intercept sheet flow across a field. Spacing between terraces is designed such that the sheet flow distance is broken up into non-erosive lengths. Sites that are suitable for terraces usually have long, continuous slopes that do not contain defined concentrated flow channels.

Grade Stabilization Structures – These types of structures are designed to convey runoff across a steep drop in a non-erosive manner. Typical applications include dropping runoff flows from field level down into a ditch with a pipe or an open rock chute. Larger applications such as controlling the advancement of a large ravine or gully up into a field usually involve long lengths of pipe to convey runoff flows down to a stable outlet.

Streambank Protection – Streambank protection is used to prevent soil loss caused by an erosive stream flows against a channel's bottom and banks. Typical applications include rock rip rap and vegetative treatment (bioengineering). As an alternative to completely lining a bank with rock, stream barbs or "J-hooks" may be used in certain circumstances.

To ensure a long life for structural practices, landowners are required to install land treatment measures upstream on highly erodible acres. Also, structural practices will play an important role in ensuring a stable soil resource for those acres that may be coming out of Conservation Reserve Program contracts back to cropland status. All these above practices and more are eligible under the EQIP program. Contact your local NRCS office for more information.

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«FIRST» «LAST»
«HNUM» «STREET»
«CITY», MN «ZIP»



***"To Promote Conservation of Natural Resources
through Education, Technical Assistance, & Stewardship."***

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Building Permits Required

Pipestone County would like to remind all residents that the Pipestone County Zoning ordinance requires a building permit to be obtained from the Conservation and Zoning Office prior to the Construction or Addition of any structure. This include Grain Bins, Barns, Shops, Machine sheds, Dwellings, Wind Turbines, and any other permanent structures or additions to existing structures.

A Building permit is needed to ensure your safety and compliance with regulations such as the Septic and Feedlot Ordinance as well as Local, State, and Federal Property & Road Setbacks and other regulation that may apply to a given structure.

If a building was constructed without a permit and found not in compliance Pipestone County may require it be removed. Please be sure to obtain your building permit prior to construction. After the fact Permits will be charged two times the permit fee.