



CRWD rules becoming effective Dec. 1

Policies focus on flood reduction, improved water quality in Cedar River Watershed

AUSTIN, Minn. – Tuesday, November 22, 2011 – New rules and a permitting program directed at reducing future flooding and improving water quality will go into effect Dec. 1.

Officials with the Cedar River Watershed District then will start enforcing the new rules, which were approved unanimously in July by the CRWD Board of Managers following nearly two years of work.

CRWD's new rules cover areas related to stormwater, flood plains, water body alterations, erosion control and enforcement. They are intended to fill gaps in existing federal, state and local regulations – not duplicate existing regulations.

One objective of the CRWD's watershed management plan consists of rules focused on flood control and rate control that prevent current flood conditions from getting worse.

All watershed districts are required by state law to implement rules to accomplish their purpose.

"Our staff is ready to go with implementing the rules and permitting program," said Bev Nordby, CRWD administrator. "We are excited about the many positives the watershed will experience from these new policies."

Some areas that will require a CRWD permit include if you are cleaning a ditch (public or private) or altering or filling land below the projected 100-year high water elevation of a waterbody or detention area.

The CRWD board decided this summer to delay making the rules and permitting program effective until Dec. 1 due to the difficulty of implementing them in the middle of the construction season.

Following state statute, the CRWD has been performing the necessary steps to notify the public and certain agencies about the upcoming rules and permitting program. CRWD staff also has been conducting an educational campaign on the approved rules after doing a similar effort for the draft rules.

Copies of the rules are available at the Mower County Soil & Water Conservation District office in Austin and online at the CRWD's website – www.cedarriverwd.org. Brochures with a summary of the CRWD rules also are available at the SWCD office.

Who: Cedar River Watershed District.

What: New rules focused on keeping water quality and flooding from worsening are going into effect.

When: Dec. 1.

Where: Areas within the Cedar River Watershed District in Mower, Freeborn, Dodge and Steele counties.

Why: Formed in 2007 due to frequent major flooding, the CRWD is required by state law to implement rules to accomplish its goals: reduce flooding and improve water quality.

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