

## Fiscal Year 2011 SSTS Imminent Health Threat Abatement Grant

The Minnesota Clean Water Fund is one of four funds from the Minnesota Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. The purpose of the fund is to protect and restore streams, rivers, lakes and groundwater.

As part of a competitive grant application process, Stearns County was awarded \$420,285.00 to fund 47 Septic System Treatment System upgrades. These upgrades are for systems that are failing and the households qualify as low income. The grant is effective from 10/26/2010 to 12/31/2012. All of the funds will go towards the cost of the upgrades; there are no administrative cost reimbursements. The upgrade work will be done by septic system contractors.

As of the end of 2011, forty-one sewage systems have been upgraded so that they now are in compliance with State Rule. There are 6 systems left to be upgraded. Of the \$420,285 awarded, \$354,146.17 has been spent.

These upgrades will help to prevent bacteria and other pathogens from entering the drinking water supplies of any household in proximity to the sewage treatment system. Some of these systems were discharging directly into surface waters, which are vulnerable to nuisance algae blooms due to phosphorus. The upgrades will lessen the amount of phosphorus entering the lakes and streams of Stearns County.

The contact for further information about this grant is Hank Schreifels (320-656-3613).