



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Launches Cost Share Grant Programs**

*Cash Grants Given for Projects That Protect Water Resources*

Deephaven, Minn. – As property owners make plans for their gardens and landscaping this spring, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) is lending a helping hand. It is kicking off a program that offers grants for projects that protect water resources by stabilizing shorelines and streambanks or utilizing stormwater best management practices (BMPs).

Polluted stormwater runoff is the biggest water quality problem in Minnesota and the country. In a natural environment, most rainwater soaks into the ground or is captured by trees or other plants. In developed areas, rainwater runs off roads, parking lots and rooftops, carrying dirt, fertilizer, pesticides and other harmful material into lakes, streams and wetlands.

"There is a real need to capture this runoff before it pollutes our valuable natural resources," said Aldis Kurmis, MCWD Cost Share Specialist. "We're hoping these new grants will be an incentive for people to take action right in their own backyard."

The MCWD's Cost Share programs help property owners make improvements that prevent this runoff from occurring. Eligible projects for Stormwater BMP Cost Share grants include raingardens, which infiltrate stormwater, and pervious pavement, which allows rain to pass through the material to a drainage system below. Eligible projects for Shoreline and Streambank Stabilization Cost Share grants include native plant borders. There are many benefits of using native plants along streambanks and shorelines. Their roots filter and absorb polluted runoff, they prevent erosion by anchoring the soil and they beautify the shoreline. Their natural height and density also discourage geese, which are attracted to turf adjacent to water.

"There are several options people can take to enhance their property and help the environment at the same time," Kurmis said. "Cost Share grants will be issued for up to 50% percent of a project's cost, within maximum funding limits, so we encourage property owners to check out the program."

Grants are available for improvements to private property including residential, business and private schools. Shoreline and Streambank Cost Share grants also are available to public entities. For more information, contact MCWD Cost Share Specialist Aldis Kurmis at 952-641-4523 or [akurmis@minnehahacreek.org](mailto:akurmis@minnehahacreek.org).

#### **Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**

*The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District covers approximately 181 square miles, including Minnehaha Creek, Lake Minnetonka, the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes and Minnehaha Falls. The District is charged by state law to protect, improve and manage water resources. It does so through scientific research and monitoring, public education, cost-share grant programs, permitting and collaborative efforts with the 27 cities, two townships and two counties (Hennepin and Carver) that are in the District. For more information, visit [www.minnehahacreek.org](http://www.minnehahacreek.org).*