West River/Lyman-Jones
Rural Water Systems Inc.

Quality On Tap!

January 2026 | Volume 21, Issue 3

2025 ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Page 14

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS:

FOUR – $750 SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Application Deadline February 15, 2026.
See page 15 for more information.

PROTECTING SOUTH DAKOTA'S GROUNDWATER

HOW CYBER THREATS AFFECT RURAL WATER SYSTEMS

2025 SOUTH DAKOTA RURAL WATER HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

MANAGER'S REPORT

Jake Fitzgerald
Manager, West River/Lyman-Jones RWS

2025 RECAP

- **PIPELINE IMPROVEMENTS: TANK DEMOLITION:** The old 227,000-gallon ground storage reservoir near Creighton was safely demolished on June 9, 2025. The tank was cut into sections and taken to a steel recycling center.
- **NEW USER ADDITIONS:** The WR/LJ operations team installed 45 new user connections, which included several miles of new pipeline.
- **PIPELINE REPAIRS:** The WR/LJ field crew quickly responded to and repaired 51 pipeline leaks throughout the system. WR/LJ operates and maintains over 3,500 miles of pipeline.
- **LEAD SERVICE LINE INVENTORY (LSLI):** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires all water systems nationwide to verify the pipeline material entering the residences they serve. The field staff identified service line materials at 850 residential locations in 2025. We have 500 more to verify to fully complete the inventory requirement.
- **WATER QUALITY REGULATORY COMPLIANCE:** The WR/LJ certified water treatment operators continue to do a great job keeping our system compliant with all federal and state water quality regulations.

2026 PLANNING

- **ELBON SERVICE AREA IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS:** The Elbon Service Area includes the large rural area between the City of Philip and the Cheyenne River. Water demand in this area has grown exponentially over the past several years due to increased agricultural needs. To plan for long-term sustainability in this area, WR/LJ plans to construct a new water tower with a capacity of 500,000 gallons, 15 miles north of Philip. In addition, we are preparing to install 7 miles of 8-inch pipeline and a pump station in the northeastern part of Haakon County to deliver up to 300 gallons per minute from our existing pipeline in the Four Corners area.

Visit us online at: **www.wrlj.com**

West River/ Lyman-Jones Rural Water Systems, Inc.
MNI WICONI WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Richard L. Doud, Midland – Vice President
Dodie Garrity, Hayes – Sec./Treas.
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Quint Garnos, Presho
Marion Matt, Philip
Jiggs O'Connell, Creighton

MURDO PROJECT OFFICE

307 Main Street
PO Box 407
Murdo, SD 57559

Jake Fitzgerald.....Manager
Amy Kittelson.....Office Manager
Kati Venard .....Billing Secretary
Brandon Kinsley.....O & M Foreman
Ed Venard..... O & M
Steve Baker..... O & M
Brian Flynn..... O & M

Ph: 605-669-2931 or 1-800-851-2349
E-Mail Address:
wrlj_ruralwater@goldenwest.net

PHILIP FIELD OFFICE

PO Box 144
Philip, SD 57567

Mike Vetter .....O & M Foreman
Eddie Dartt..... O & M
John Kramer..... O & M
Nick Konst ..... O & M

FREE SERVICE

WR/LJ provides two free trips each calendar year to shut off/ turn on water at locations that will not be in use for a period of time. Please give advance notice by calling the main office in Murdo a couple days prior, so our field staff can make arrangements.

In observance of the following holidays, WR/LJ Rural Water offices will be closed on the following days:

December 25, 2025 – Christmas Day

January 1, 2026 – New Year's Day

January 19, 2026 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 16, 2026 – Presidents' Day

In case of an emergency,
please call the Murdo area at 530-0932
or the Philip area at 530-1136 for assistance.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

1. **Online Payment:** Go to www.wrlj.com (accepts Visa, MasterCard, Discover and Electronic Check)
2. **Pay-By-Phone:** Call 1-855-325-8898 to use our automated bill payment option.
3. **Pay-By-Phone:** Call 1-800-851-2349 and a WR/LJ customer representative will take your payment information over the phone.
4. **Electronic Direct Payment:** Your payment is automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month.
5. **US Mail:** Mail payment along with the bottom portion of your bill.
6. **Pay-in-Person:** During regular business hours you may bring your payment to our office.
7. **24-Hour Drop Box:** Available at the Murdo office near the main entrance.

For forms or more information on these payment options, please call 1-800-851-2349.

Visit us online at: **www.wrlj.com**

IS YOUR CONTACT INFO UP TO DATE?

If you have changed your landline, cell phone, or email address, please let us know. This will make it easier to contact members directly for water outages and high flow alerts.

Please email wrlj_ruralwater@goldenwest.net, call 800-851-2349 or fill out the form below and mail it to PO Box 407, Murdo, SD 57559. Thank you!

Name: _____ Account Number _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Authorization for Direct Payment Via ACH to West River Lyman Jones Rural Water System

We are pleased to be able to offer you a popular service-the Direct Payment Plan. Now you can have your payment made automatically from your checking or savings account. And you won't have to change your present banking relationship to take advantage of this service.

The Direct Payment Plan will help you in several ways.

- It saves time-fewer checks to write.
- Helps meet your commitment in a convenient and timely manner-even if you are on vacation or out of town.
- No lost or misplaced statements, your payment is always on time-it helps maintain good credit.
- It saves postage.
- It is easy to sign up for, easy to cancel.
- No late charges.

Here's how the Direct Payment Plan works: You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. Then, just sit back and relax. Your payments will be made automatically on the specified day. And proof of payment will appear on your statement.

The authority you give to charge your account will remain in effect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization. If the amount of your payment changes, we will notify you at least 10 days before payment date.

The Direct Payment Plan is dependable, flexible, convenient and easy. To take advantage of this service, complete the attached authorization form and return it to us.

STAPLE VOIDED CHECK HERE

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT VIA ACH

Please fill out this form in its entirety.

Check one: ☐ Begin Payment ☐ Change Information

I authorize the West River Lyman Jones Rural Water System to initiate entries to electronically debit my account and, if necessary, to electronically credit my account to correct erroneous debits.

☐ checking account ☐ savings account (select one)

at the depository financial instituition named below. I agree that ACH transactions I authorize comply with all United States and applicable law.

Financial Institution

Branch

City State Zip Code

Name(s) on Account (Please Print)

Signature

Date

TRANSIT ROUTING NUMBER

:I ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ I:

ACCOUNT NUMBER INFORMATION

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

On _____ I authorized West River Lyman Jones Rural Water System
Date
PO Box 407
Murdo, SD 57559-0407
Phone: (605)669-2931

to initiate entries to my checking/savings account and have agreed to the terms listed on the authorization. I may revoke my authorization with you at any time by contacting the information above.

Amount of debit, or method of determining amount of debit: _____

Start date of debit: _____ (select one) ☐ Single Debit Entry ☐ Recurring Debit Entry

Frequency of Debit: _____

RETAIN A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS

NOW IS THE TIME TO WINTERIZE!

A quick step outside – and a simple glance at the calendar – is all it takes to remember what's coming. South Dakota winters are unavoidable, and for most of us, just part of life on the Plains. But taking a little time now to properly winterize your home – especially your pipes – can save you time, money, and a whole lot of stress once the cold settles in.

A broken pipe can cause significant water loss and major damage. A hole as small as 1/8 inch can leak an astonishing 296,000 gallons of water over a three-month period – roughly 3,200 gallons every day. That's about the same amount of water one person typically uses in a month. To put it in perspective, that much water can fill an 850-square-foot basement with six inches of water in just 24 hours. Fortunately, there are several simple steps you can take now to protect your home and keep your pipes from freezing this winter.

Insulate your pipes

Burst pipes are every homeowner's worst nightmare. Focus on pipes in unheated areas – like crawl spaces, basements, and attics. Wrap them with pre-molded foam sleeves or fiberglass insulation from your local hardware store. You can also use heat tape, which is an electrical cable designed to emit heat along your pipes. Always choose UL-approved heat tape and install it according to the manufacturer's instructions to avoid fire hazards. Be sure to inspect old heat tape regularly – it can fail after years of use.

Know where your master shut-off and service line valves are

In an emergency, seconds matter. If your water meter is in your basement, the master shut-off valve should be nearby. Your service line valve – which turns off water to your entire property – should be clearly marked. Make sure every adult in your home knows where these valves are located.

Inspect your meter pit

Add straw or other insulating material to help protect the meter and surrounding pipes. Mark the location of the pit so it isn't damaged by snowplows or equipment. If anything looks damaged, contact your rural water system to take a look.

Disconnect outside hoses and faucets

Detach and drain all outside hoses. If your outdoor faucet isn't self-draining, consider installing an interior shut-off valve and drain. Don't forget your in-ground sprinkler system – it needs to be properly blown out before freezing weather arrives.

Seal outside openings and cracks

Cold air slipping into your home can cause pipes to freeze. Check exterior walls, foundations, sill plates, doors, windows, and basement access points for gaps. Seal them with caulk, foam, or fiberglass insulation. Make sure basement windows and access doors are closed tightly and sealed for the season.

OTHER WINTERIZING TIPS

- **Clean your gutters! Gutters clogged with leaves and debris can form ice dams, which can cause water to seep into your house and cause damage. Also check to make sure your downspouts are carrying water away from your home's foundation to further prevent flooding or water damage.**
- **If you are going to be away from your home for a long period of time, have your rural water system shut off your water.**
- **Keep sink cabinet doors open during cold spells or winter power outages to allow warm air to circulate around the pipes.**
- **Trim trees to prevent snow and ice from weighing them down and causing breakage – possibly damaging your home or vehicles.**

PROTECTING SOUTH DAKOTA'S GROUNDWATER

How Wellhead Delineation Zones Are Designed and Why They Matter

By Kevin Christenson, Source Water Protection Specialist – South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems

In South Dakota, protecting public drinking water starts long before it reaches the tap. The effort begins deep underground, in the aquifers that supply homes, farms, and communities across the state. To keep those sources safe, South Dakota uses a proven strategy known as wellhead and aquifer protection – an approach that focuses on preventing contamination before it happens by identifying and managing the areas of land that contribute water to public supply wells.

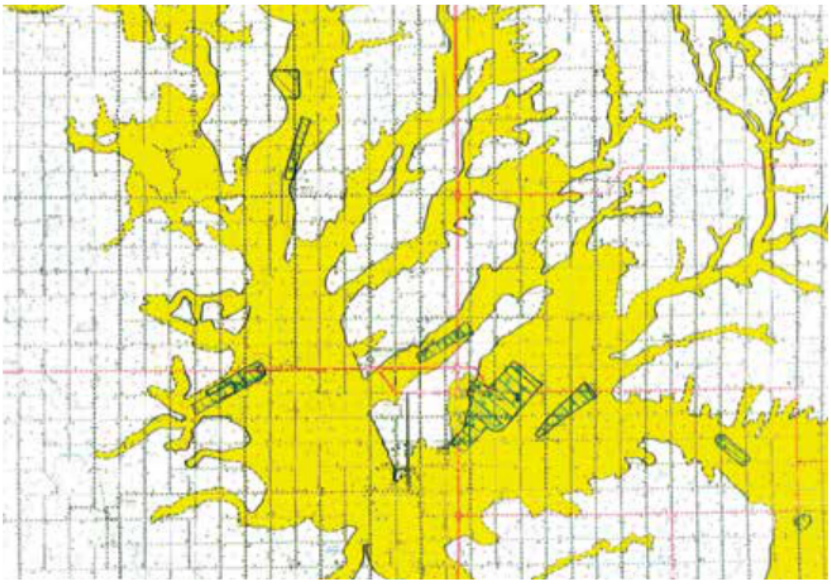
At the heart of this effort are two critical protection areas – Zone A and Zone B – which are carefully mapped and monitored. These zones are based on how groundwater flows beneath the surface and how long it takes water, and any potential contaminants it may carry, to travel through the aquifer and reach the well. This concept, known as time of travel, plays a central role in how South Dakota protects its drinking water at the source.

Time-of-travel refers to the estimated amount of time it takes groundwater to flow from a specific point in the aquifer to the wellhead. It's influenced by the characteristics of the aquifer, including soil or rock porosity, the slope of the water table, and the volume of water pumped from the well. Using this information, hydrogeologists create detailed models that simulate groundwater movement and help identify which areas contribute water to the well over specific periods – typically ten years. These studies form the scientific basis for delineating South Dakota's two primary aquifer protection zones.

In South Dakota, the terms "Zone A" and "Zone B" are used locally by counties and municipalities to describe aquifer protection zones, not weather or agricultural regions. The specific boundaries and rules for each zone are established through local zoning ordinances and are based on the risk of groundwater contamination.

Zone A represents the most sensitive area surrounding a public water supply well or wellfield. Often referred to as the critical impact zone, capture zone, or wellhead protection area, it encompasses the land where water drains directly into the aquifer that supplies the well. This zone often represents a 10-year time-of-travel boundary, meaning it is the area from which groundwater could reach the well within ten years. Because contaminants introduced in this area can migrate quickly into the water supply, Zone A is managed with the strictest protections. High-risk activities – such as chemical storage, fuel tanks, intensive livestock operations, or waste disposal sites – are typically prohibited or tightly regulated. Protecting this zone gives communities a vital buffer, allowing time to detect and respond to potential contamination before it reaches the well.

Zone B encompasses the remainder of the mapped shallow or surficial aquifer that extends beyond Zone A. While groundwater in this zone takes longer to reach a well, it remains a vital resource for both public systems and private wells. Regulations in Zone B are generally less restrictive but still emphasize prevention and best management practices. Activities may be permitted if they adhere to standards such as secondary containment for fuel or chemical tanks, careful application of fertilizers and pesticides, and responsible land-use planning to minimize contamination risks. Because Zone B often includes a mix of residential, agricultural, industrial, and undeveloped land, management focuses on cooperation, education, and monitoring rather than outright prohibition.



Brookings County Groundwater Protection Zone Map

Several South Dakota counties have adopted local ordinances that define and manage these protection zones. In Brookings County, the zoning ordinance designates Zone A as the wellhead protection area and Zone B as the remainder of the mapped aquifer. Clay County uses a similar two-zone overlay district for groundwater protection. In the Black Hills region, hydrologically sensitive areas are designated as Zone A for comprehensive contaminant inventories, while Zone B includes the broader watershed assessment area. These local policies ensure that land-use decisions – from new construction to agricultural practices – consider their potential impact on groundwater quality.

> Groundwater contamination is difficult – and often impossible – to clean up. Prevention is our strongest protection.

Delineating Zones A and B typically begins with a detailed hydrogeologic study. Scientists gather data on well construction, pumping rates, aquifer structure, soil types, and groundwater flow. With this information, computer models simulate how water moves underground and estimate the boundaries of the ten-year time-of-travel zone. In South Dakota, community and non-transient non-community public water systems are encouraged to complete these delineations. The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) recommends either a ten-year time-of-travel boundary or a one-mile radius – whichever is greater – especially for unconfined or semi-confined aquifers.

Maps showing these delineations typically feature a central well surrounded by two color-coded zones. Zone A, often depicted in red, forms a smaller, high-risk area around the well, while Zone B, typically shown in blue, extends outward in accordance with the natural flow of groundwater. These maps are valuable tools for land-use planning, emergency preparedness, and public education. For example, delineations from the Big Sioux Aquifer region help local governments and water operators make informed decisions based on actual groundwater behavior.

Groundwater contamination can be extremely difficult and expensive to clean up. In some cases, it's irreversible. That's why South Dakota's focus on prevention is so important. By managing what happens on the land above and around wells, communities can greatly reduce the likelihood of pollutants reaching the aquifer in the first place.

Aquifer protection zones are more than lines on a map – they are practical, science-based safeguards for public health. They ensure that decisions regarding development, agriculture, and industry consider their impact on drinking water. With these zones in place, South Dakota communities are better equipped to protect one of their most valuable resources – clean, safe groundwater for generations to come.

PROTECTING OUR WATER IN A DIGITAL WORLD:

How Cyber Threats Affect Rural Water Systems

Most of us turn on the tap each day without thinking about the technology behind the scenes. But today's water systems rely on more than pumps, pipes, and tanks. Much of the work that keeps water flowing safely into our homes is controlled by computers and automated systems. This modern technology makes operations more efficient, but it can also expose rural water systems to cyberattacks.

Although cyber threats may seem far away or affect only big cities, the truth is that small and rural systems can be just as vulnerable. Understanding the risk helps all of us appreciate the work our local water systems do to keep our communities protected.

How Hackers Can Target Water Systems

Many water and wastewater utilities use digital controls to run equipment, monitor treatment, and manage distribution. If any of these systems are connected to the internet without proper safeguards, cybercriminals may be able to see or change how they work.

A Cyber Intruder Could Attempt To:

- Shut down pumps or valves
- Change chemical feed settings
- Disable alarms that warn operators of problems
- Interrupt the treatment process
- Force staff to switch to slower, hands-on manual operations

Even minor disruptions can affect water quality, pressure, and system reliability. While water systems work hard to prevent these situations, the growing use of technology means the risks must be taken seriously.

Why Rural Systems Face Unique Challenges

Rural water systems provide safe, reliable water with fewer staff and smaller budgets. That same lean structure can make cybersecurity harder to manage. Challenges may include:

- Older equipment not designed with cybersecurity in mind
- Limited staff time for monitoring or training

- Budget limitations for upgrades and protective software
- Increased use of remote access for operators who cover large service areas

Despite these hurdles, rural systems across South Dakota are taking proactive steps to strengthen their defenses. Training, new policies, and state or federal support all play a role in keeping our water safe.

What Water Systems Are Doing to Protect You

Local water systems are working behind the scenes to defend against cyber threats. Some of the most important steps include:

- **Separating Networks:** They are physically and logically separating the critical operational technology network—the computers that control pumps and valves—from the standard information technology network (like office email and billing systems). This helps stop an intruder who gets into the office system from accessing the treatment controls.
- Requiring Multi-Factor Authentication: This is a critical second layer of defense. In addition to strong passwords, users must provide a second, verified code (often from a phone app) to log into critical systems or for remote access.
- Disconnecting unnecessary internet-exposed devices
- Requiring strong passwords and secure remote-access tools
- Keeping software and equipment updated
- Monitoring system activity for suspicious changes
- Training staff to recognize email scams or unusual activity
- Preparing backup plans in case digital systems temporarily go offline

These efforts help ensure that water service remains safe and reliable, even in the face of evolving threats.

What You Can Do as a Consumer

While your water system handles the technical side, residents can also play a part:

- Stay informed when your utility shares updates
- Support system investments in technology and security
- Be cautious of online scams pretending to be your water provider
- Ask your local water board or manager how they are approaching cybersecurity

Awareness and support from the community help strengthen the overall resilience of your local water provider.

Help is Available

— Cybersecurity Support from Dakota State University

Some rural water systems in South Dakota may benefit from SecureSD, a statewide cybersecurity support program funded through the Attorney General's office and operated through Dakota State University in Madison.

What SecureSD Offers:

- Free or low-cost cybersecurity assessments
- Reviews of internet-exposed equipment and controls
- Training for operators and staff
- Help improving firewall settings and secure remote-access tools
- Assistance developing incident-response plans

SecureSD is designed to help small communities, public infrastructure, and local governments strengthen their cybersecurity — and this includes rural water systems that may not have in-house IT staff.

Why This Matters:

Programs like SecureSD give rural water systems access to expert help, allowing them to upgrade protections, improve safety, and reduce risks without overwhelming their budgets.

2025 SOUTH DAKOTA RURAL WATER HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

On November 19, 2025, three individuals were inducted into the South Dakota Rural Water Hall of Fame during a ceremony at the Ramkota Hotel in Pierre, South Dakota. This year's honorees — Morris Kurle, Larry Wasland, and Dan Carlson — were recognized for their outstanding leadership, dedication, and lasting contributions to the state's rural water community.

The South Dakota Rural Water Hall of Fame was established in 2024 to honor the visionaries and pioneers who transformed the rural water industry in South Dakota. Recognizing the humble beginnings of rural water systems – ideas born around kitchen tables and brought to life through hard work and determination – the Hall of Fame celebrates the individuals who have been instrumental in making clean, reliable water available to rural communities. These honorees played a crucial role in developing, growing, and sustaining rural water systems that now reach the state, providing essential services that improve quality of life and support agricultural and economic activities.

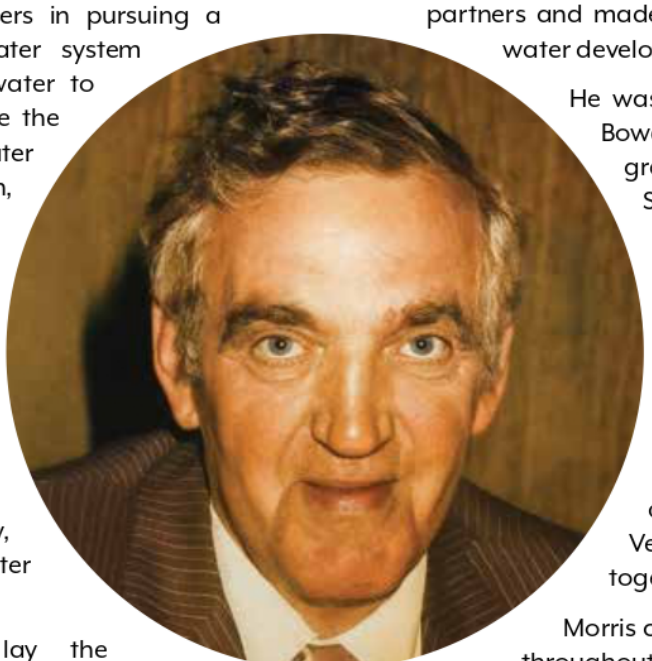
Located at the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems headquarters in Madison, SD, the Hall of Fame serves as both a historical record and a source of inspiration. It is a place where visitors can learn about the dedication and perseverance of rural water leaders who faced countless challenges, from funding and infrastructure issues to logistical hurdles in sparsely populated areas. By housing the Hall of Fame at its office, the Association ensures that the stories of these rural water champions remain accessible to future generations of water industry professionals, community leaders, and the public.

The creation of the Hall of Fame reflects South Dakota's commitment to honoring its past while looking toward the future of water access in rural communities. As rural water systems have grown to support health, agriculture, and local economies, the Hall of Fame ensures that the contributions of these industry pioneers are celebrated and remembered. The inductees into the Hall of Fame represent the enduring spirit of South Dakota's rural water movement. This movement has turned a shared vision for clean water into a reality that benefits communities across the state.

If you would like to learn more about the past South Dakota Rural Water Hall of Fame inductees – please visit sdarws.com/hof.

Morris Kurle

In the mid-1970s, as small communities and farms across northern South Dakota faced severe water shortages, Morris Kurle joined local leaders in pursuing a bold vision. This regional water system would deliver Missouri River water to rural areas. In 1978, he became the first chairman of the WEB Water Development Association, guiding the fledgling project through years of planning, coordination, and advocacy. Under his leadership, WEB Water overcame countless challenges to secure federal authorization and funding, ultimately becoming the first Bureau of Reclamation funded water project in the country, and one of the largest rural water systems in the state.

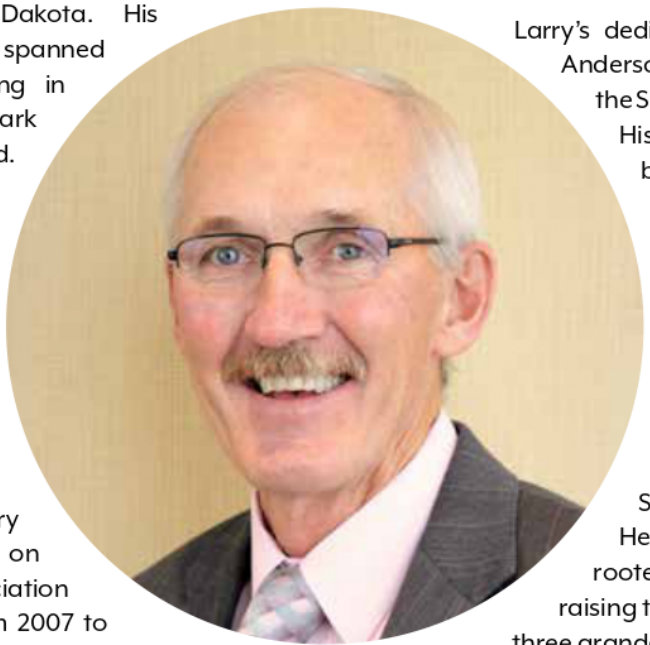


Morris' leadership helped lay the foundation for an organization that today provides water to thousands of homes, farms, and towns across northeast South Dakota. His steady guidance, professionalism, and belief in cooperation inspired confidence among local, state, and federal partners and made WEB Water a model for rural water development nationwide.

He was born on October 23, 1926, in Bowdle, South Dakota. After graduating from Bowdle High School in 1944, Morris attended South Dakota State University, majoring in engineering, before serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. After returning home, he joined his family's business, J. Kurle and Sons, in Bowdle, where he worked for nearly 50 years before retiring at age 85. He married Patricia Venoy Schumacher in 1951, and together they raised two children.

Morris continued to support rural water throughout his life, remaining an advocate for collaboration and innovation in community water systems. He passed away on October 15, 2021, leaving behind a stronger, better South Dakota.

LARRY WASLAND



A lifelong farmer and rancher, Larry dedicated his life to strengthening rural South Dakota. His commitment to rural water spanned nearly four decades, beginning in 1984 when he joined the Clark Rural Water System Board. Over the years, he served as Treasurer and as the system's representative to the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS), where his leadership helped guide the state's growing network of water providers.

Elected Vice President of the SDARWS Board in 2004, Larry later represented South Dakota on the National Rural Water Association (NRWA) Board of Directors from 2007 to 2023. At the national level, he was a steadfast advocate for clean drinking water, sound policy, and strong rural infrastructure – ensuring South Dakota's voice was heard in Washington, D.C.

Larry's dedication earned him the Carroll Anderson Memorial Award in 2009 and the Spirit of Rural Water Award in 2022. His tireless service and unwavering belief in the importance of rural water left an enduring impact on communities across the state and nation.

Born on June 30, 1948, in Watertown, South Dakota, Larry grew up on the family farm near Wallace and pursued an agricultural education at South Dakota State University. He and his wife, Lorene, built a life rooted in family and community – raising two children and later welcoming three grandchildren.

Larry passed away on May 17, 2025, leaving behind a lifetime of dedication and service to rural South Dakota.

Dan Carlson

Born in Le Mars, Iowa, and raised in Paullina, Dan Carlson built a lifelong legacy of leadership and dedication to South Dakota's rural water industry. After attending Morningside College in pre-engineering, Dan transferred to South Dakota State University, where he majored in Civil Engineering before switching to Ag Engineering, specializing in Mechanized Agriculture, graduating in January 1966. While at SDSU, he met his wife, Sharon; the two married in August 1965 and later welcomed two children, Brett and Michelle, along with four grandchildren.

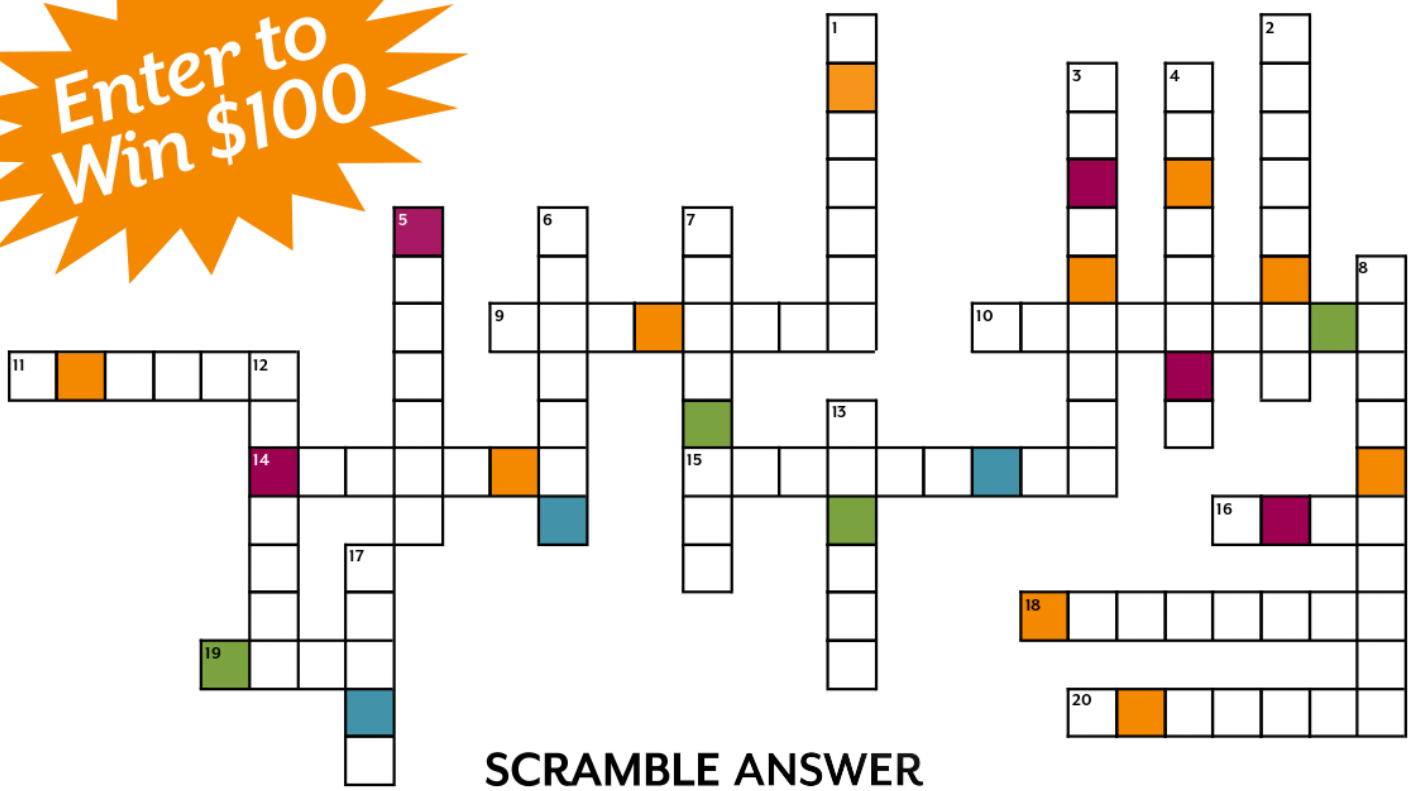
Following graduation, Dan and Sharon moved to Lake Madison, where he began working in the Engineering Department at Sioux Valley Energy. It was there that Dan attended an organizational meeting led by Loren Paulsen about the Big Sioux Water Project. When Dan inquired about extending service to Lake Madison – four miles beyond the proposed boundary – Paulsen agreed but noted they also needed a director. Dan stepped up, beginning what would become an extraordinary 50-year tenure on the Big Sioux Community Water System Board, serving as its president for many years.

Dan's leadership extended statewide through his service on the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) Board of Directors. Elected Vice President in 2007 and President in 2008, he guided the Association for seven years, overseeing tremendous growth, including facility expansions, financial stability, new safety and emergency response programs, and strengthened legislative advocacy. His dedication was recognized through numerous honors, including the 2008 Carroll Anderson Memorial Award and the Spirit of Rural Water Award in both 2016 and 2022. Dan Carlson's commitment to rural water and his community continues to inspire all who follow in his footsteps.

RURAL WATER CROSSWORD & WORD SCRAMBLE CONTEST

LEGISLATIVE TERMS

Enter to Win $100



SCRAMBLE ANSWER

Across

9. Official schedule of bills to be considered
10. Smaller group that studies bills in detail
11. Meeting of members of the same party or group
14. To formally end a legislative meeting
15. Current officeholder running for reelection
16. Proposed law under consideration
18. Person who tries to influence legislation
19. Governor or president's rejection of a bill
20. Legislator who introduces a bill

Down

1. One of the houses in a legislature
2. More than half of a group's members
3. Formal change or addition to a bill or law
4. What a legislature does to nullify a veto
5. Official period when the legislature meets
6. Public meeting to gather information on a bill
7. Party or group with fewer members
8. Elected member of a lawmaking body
12. Law that has been formally passed
13. Minimum number of members needed to do business
17. Main chamber where full legislature meets

RULES: Use the colored squares in the puzzle to solve the word scramble above. Call your Rural Water System (See page 2 for contact information) or **enter online at www.sdarws.com/crossword.html** with the correct phrase by October 15, 2025 to be entered into the $100 drawing.

Only one entry allowed per address/household. You must be a member of a participating rural water system to be eligible for the prize. Your information will only be used to notify the winner, and will not be shared or sold.

Congratulations to Beverly Paulsen from Clark Rural Water who had the correct phrase of "Smiles spoon up hope " for October 2025.

COMMON CUSTOMER QUESTIONS

Q: Why is my water milky or have bubbles?

A: When there is a water leak and repair is made to the leak site, air gets into the line and causes the cloudiness and bubbles. If you notice cloudiness in your water, we recommend calling your water provider to see if they had a break in your area. In most cases if the customer runs some water and lets it sit, the water will clear up. There are some cases your provider may need to come and flush the line to remove the air and restore your water back to normal.

Q:Why is my pressure lower than normal?

A: We recommend checking faucets, valves and toilets to make sure nothing is leaking or running. Also check outside hydrants and around the yard to make sure no water is coming up from the ground. If you live on a farm, consider how many livestock tanks are being filled at the same time, especially on a hot day.

Do you have a water softener? If so, put it in the bypass mode and see if your pressure improves. If is does improve, then call to have your water softener serviced.

Q: Is there a way to turn my water pressure up or down?

A: Yes, there is a pressure regulating valve in your meter pit. Your water provider can adjust the pressure to your home from there.

Q:Why is my water cloudy?

A: This is from air being pushed through the line. This occasionally happens after fixing a leak and the water being turned off. Your water is still safe to drink.

Q.How can I check my toilet to see if it is leaking?

A: If you cannot hear or see any water running in your toilet, simply place 15-30 drops of food coloring into the toilet tank – enough to visibly change the color of the water, and then wait 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, check the color of the water in your toilet bowl. If any dye has made it into your toilet bowl, then there's a leak at the flapper or a crack in the overflow tube, and a fix is required.

36TH ANNUAL MEETING

West River/Lyman-Jones Rural Water Systems, Inc. held its 36th annual membership meeting on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at the Murdo shop building in Murdo, SD. Registration began at 4:00 pm (CT).

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance. Board President Dave Fuoss called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm (CT) and declared a quorum present.

Manager Fitzgerald read the annual meeting notice and official proof of mailing statement that was published in the October 2025 issue of *Quality on Tap* newsletter. He then introduced WR/LJ board of directors, staff and consultants.

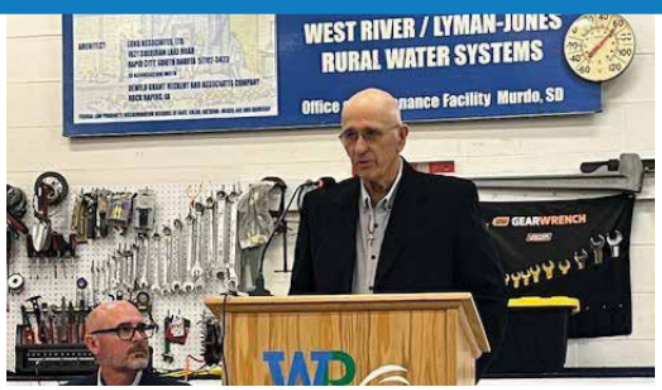
In his report, Manager Fitzgerald mentioned that WR/LJ maintains 3,500 miles of pipeline, operates 16 reservoirs, 4 wells, and 17 pump stations. He explained that WR/LJ gets 80%-85% of our water from the Mni Wiconi Water Treatment Plant in Ft. Pierre and the other 15%-20% comes from 4 wells located in the Creighton, Quinn, and Wall areas.

He informed the members of a rate study evaluating current water rates, reviewed the lead service line inventory, and provided details of two water storage upgrades at the Creighton Reservoir and Elbon Tower. He also mentioned that the engineering team for the Western Dakota Regional Water System have expanded upon the conceptual water transmission system and began conceptual layouts for a distribution system. They have also started work on developing the conceptual water treatment system.

Manager Fitzgerald thanked the Oglala Sioux Rural Water Supply System and the Bureau of Reclamation for securing funding for an additional 5.8 million gallons of storage on the Mni Wiconi south core system. "These storage improvements projects will increase operational flexibility and redundancy to effectively reduce risks and system vulnerability during future leak repairs and times of high usage," said Fitzgerald.

Attorney Jessica Hegge presented her legal report and stated West River/Lyman Jones has no pending lawsuits against them and they are legally sound. She then announced that three incumbent directors were appointed to three-year terms: David Fuoss – Zone 3A, Jiggs O'Connell – Zone 4, and Marion Matt – Zone 5.

Drawings for door prizes were held at the end of the meeting.

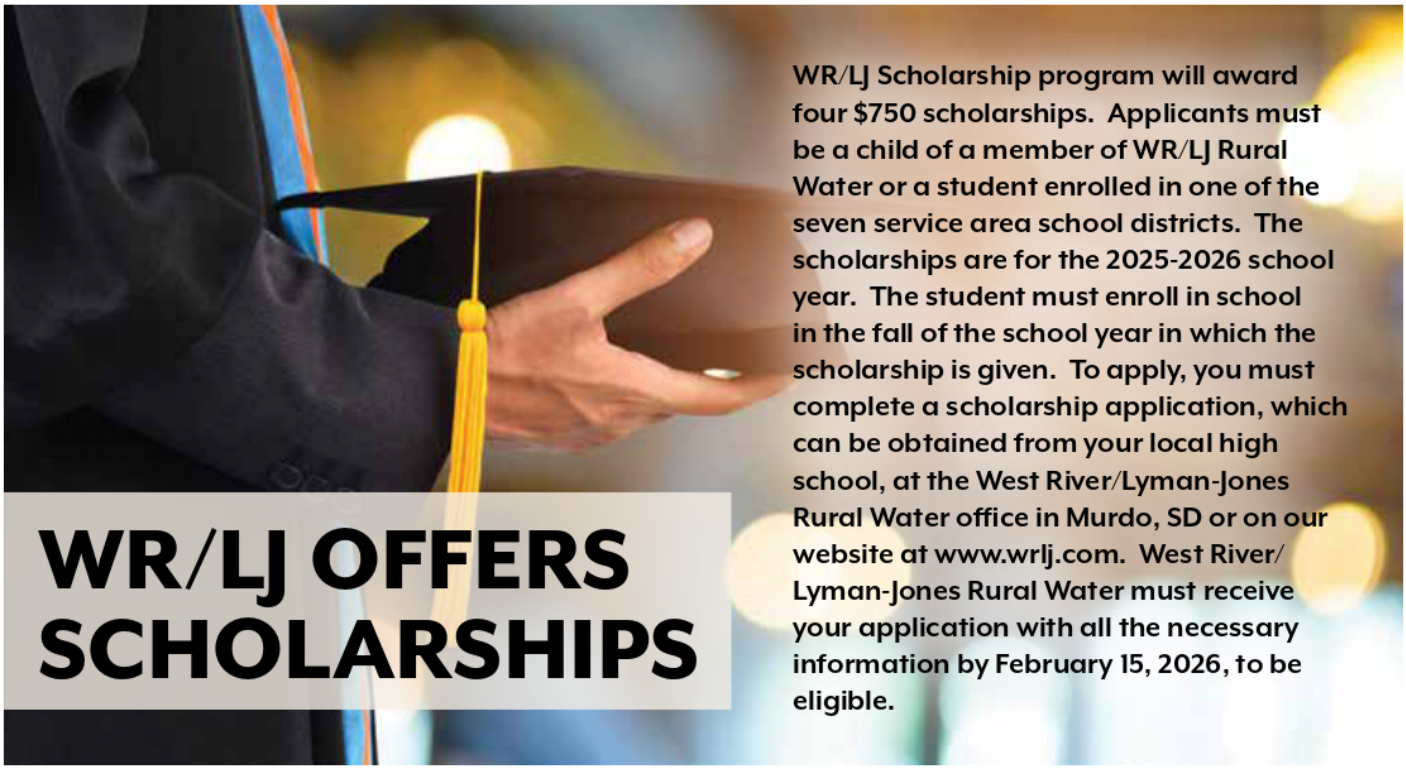


President Dave Fuoss welcomed the crowd to Murdo.

Norman Bower was the winner of the Flexzilla Garden Hose.

Jim Terwilliger was the winner of beef certificates and his wife Shelli won the Zero Gravity Lounger.

Marcie Schmidt won the 43" Flat Screen TV.



WR/LJ OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS

WR/LJ Scholarship program will award four $750 scholarships. Applicants must be a child of a member of WR/LJ Rural Water or a student enrolled in one of the seven service area school districts. The scholarships are for the 2025-2026 school year. The student must enroll in school in the fall of the school year in which the scholarship is given. To apply, you must complete a scholarship application, which can be obtained from your local high school, at the West River/Lyman-Jones Rural Water office in Murdo, SD or on our website at www.wrlj.com. West River/ Lyman-Jones Rural Water must receive your application with all the necessary information by February 15, 2026, to be eligible.

REMINDER: ACCESS TO WR/LJ WATER METER PITS IS NOT PERMITTED

Metering equipment in several locations has been damaged due to unauthorized persons getting into meter pits and tampering with the equipment. When lids are removed and not replaced properly, the sensitive equipment within the meter pit will freeze and break. Additionally, lids that are not replaced properly will allow animals, such as rodents and snakes, to enter causing damage to the equipment.

Meter pits are the sole property of WR/LJ, even though meter pits are located on private property. Only WR/LJ employees may access meter pits. It is WR/LJ's responsibility to maintain and repair the meter pit and equipment inside. The cost of damages or loss to WR/LJ's meter pits and equipment due to tampering will be passed on to the water user.

Water users should furnish and maintain a private shut-off valve on the user's side of the meter. If water must be turned on or off at the meter, please contact the WR/LJ office in Murdo at 605-669-2931.

THANK YOU

What a surprise when my name was drawn for the nice tv at your very interesting annual meeting. Thanks so much!

– Marcie Schmidt

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WATER MATTERS

WHAT IF?

You often hear folks talk about, "hoping for the best, but planning for the worst." This old adage can be applied to a broad range of activities and issues, and provides the foundation for pretty much all forms of insurance (medical, life, property, crop, etc..). Nobody wants bad things to happen, but it doesn't hurt to be prepared.

So, how does this apply to water? If you are receiving this publication, you are likely provided water from a public water supply (PWS), be it a rural water system or a municipality. A common goal of all PWSs is to deliver to their customers a quality product in a consistent and reliable manner. By and large, this goal is met on a day-to-day basis, and if there are unexpected interruptions to service, they are of short duration and limited extent.

But what would happen if your PWS was unable to provide service for an extended period of time? Are you prepared to get along without being able to just turn on the tap for water? For most domestic users, bottled water might suffice for drinking and cooking, but getting enough water for general sanitation (bathing and cleaning) might be tougher. These may require going to locations where water service has not been disrupted.

Another water supply 'hiccup' could come from the PWS not being able to meet increasing demand. The amount of water that can be distributed and delivered is limited by the pumps, pipes and tanks that make up the system. Often as not, the system was built with the largest capacity the PWS could afford, but once that level of service is met, upgrades and/or expansion are the only way to deliver more water. If a customer suddenly might desire more water, say during a period of drought, there are no guarantees that the PWS will be able to deliver. The same applies to regions within a PWS coverage area where totally new customers may wish to gain service. Just because someone wants water at particular location doesn't mean that it will be available.

If your home, farm or business are dependent on water, and we all pretty much are, having a plan for What If...? isn't a bad idea. Consider what you might do if your primary supply was not available for a day or two. As noted earlier, your PWS strives to provide dependable service, but sometimes bad things happen. Are you prepared?

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