



DANE COUNTY

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Introducing The Dane County Water Partnership

Column By: Dane County Executive Joe Parisi

For many, summer is synonymous with a day spent on one of Dane County's beautiful lakes. Our lakes are a big contributor to the high quality of life we enjoy. To stay that way, the lakes need our protection.

That's why last month I launched a new initiative called the Dane County Water Partnership – a five-year plan to help dramatically reduce pollution levels in our lakes.

A key part of my initiative is a historic partnership with Dane County's farmers. Beginning this summer, 25 farm families will implement practices such as building roofs over animal feeding areas, planting grass by farmland ditches, and digging out those ditches to remove decades worth of soil and sediment with a high concentration of phosphorus pollution.

These simple steps will help slow the flow of storm water run off on agriculture lands, reducing the amount of phosphorus pollutants that enter our lakes, leading to unsightly algae. This partnership with our farmers is made possible by a \$2 million grant Dane County received from the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

Our Water Partnership also includes additional initiatives that will build on the county's previous efforts to directly reduce the amount of phosphorus in area lakes. One project that will have significant impact is the continued modification of phosphorus pollutant pipelines. Under our plan, five pipelines will be modified each year within the Yahara Watershed that includes lakes Monona, Mendota, Wingra, Waubesa, and Kegonsa.

These pipelines directly contribute to increased lake water levels following heavy rains, and water from these outfalls often contains leaves, grass clippings, and other phosphorus filled debris that enter the lakes.

More information on this and other Water Partnership initiatives can be found online at www.countyofdane.com/exec.