



220 Center Ave.
PO Box 81
Curtis, NE 69025

Phone: 800-873-5613
Fax: 308-367-4285
Email: rlawson@mnrnd.org

Middle Republican Natural Resources District

*Information and
Education*

NEWS RELEASE
For immediate release
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No Violations in Middle Republican NRD

Curtis, NE -- Recent irrigation violations were found in the Upper Republican NRD (URNRD) and caused some concern from irrigators in our District. Those wells that are located in our District and owned by the URNRD violator were inspected by the Middle Republican NRD staff and were found to be in compliance. As in the Upper Republican NRD case, some wells within our District were also unearthed for thorough inspection.

It has always been and will always be the policy of the MRNRD that all violators will be dealt with to the fullest extent of the powers that LB962 granted us. Violations have been and will be dealt with when they are found. However, most infractions in our District are minor or unintentional and are treated as such with a "notice" to correct the infraction such as a broken meter. More often than not, irrigators contact our office first when they discover a problem with their flow meter. Our staff reads every flow meter every year and reviews any meter readings that are suspicious by checking energy records to see if they are correct. During our chemigation inspections each year we are able to observe meters again and ensure that they are functioning correctly. Our office has received many phone calls about possible violations in the District since the announcement of the violation in the URNRD. Staff have followed up on these calls and investigated these complaints appropriately.

The reader can find a portion of the district's authorities in section 46-746 of the Nebraska statutes. These statutes are referred to as the Ground Water Management and Protection Act and are incorporated into our rules and regulations. These regulations are available on our website at www.mnrnd.org or by request by contacting our office.

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District Addresses Property Tax Refund

Curtis, NE -- The District 2008 property tax, issued to fund a \$9 million bond fund, was found unconstitutional by the Nebraska Superior Court last year. These funds were raised to buy surface water to keep Nebraska in compliance with the Republican River Compact. A year ago, the board took action to determine how, or if, a refund of the property tax portion of that effort could be refunded to the patrons. Currently, state law does not provide a legal means for providing a return of property taxes found unconstitutional. In seeking direction, the Republican River basin NRD's requested an opinion from the Red Willow district court. The court's action left it unclear as to how the Districts should proceed. At last month's meeting, the board discussed a levy reduction to return the property taxes collected in 2008. This levy reduction will be incorporated into this year's budget and will result in "zero" property taxes being collected this year by the MRNRD. The Middle Republican NRD board meetings are held monthly, are open to the public and are advertised in all the local papers and announced on our website www.mnrnd.org. We encourage concerned citizens to attend these public meetings.

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Roger Lawson
Middle republican Natural Resources District
(800) 873-5613