

**IMPORTANT NEWS** from Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations

# E-Newsletter January 2021



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# OTC AIS Task Force 2020 Program Summary

The Otter Tail County Invasive Species Prevention Report for 2020 has been published.

The 17 page report was prepared by Spencer McGrew, Aquatic Invasive Specialist, OTC AIS Task Force.

Highlights of the report include:

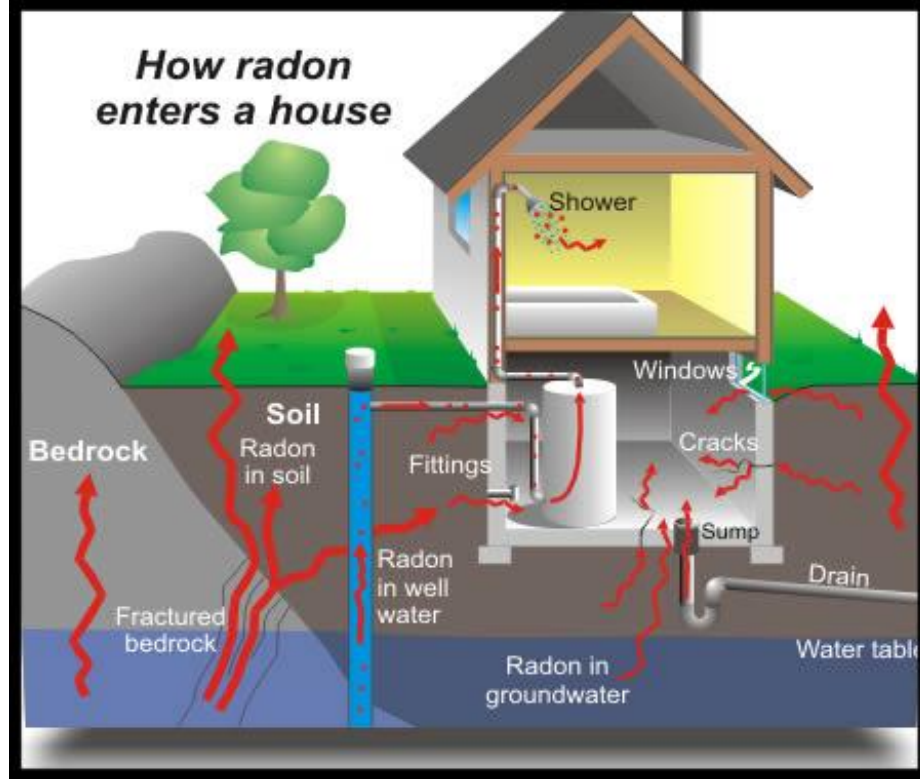
- 24 Watercraft Inspectors logged 12,213 Watercraft Inspection hours at 100 Public Water Accesses totaling 14,372 inspections.
- A decontamination unit was placed at Otter Tail Lake Sportsman's Public Water Access
- As part of the Sheriff's Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program 27 sworn officers maintained the training required to enforce aquatic invasive species laws.
- Otter Tail County has 15 I-LID cameras under management. 38,150 videos were reviewed and 7,416 watercraft were counted.
- The Train the Teachers to Train the Kids Program puts Aquatic Invasive Species curriculum into 15 classrooms across 11 school districts.
- Otter Tail County continued to support an Aquatic Invasive Species Awareness billboard with Douglas and Grant Counties.

## [Snapshot of Accomplishments](#)

## [Program Summary](#)

## [Spencer McGrew, AIS Specialist](#)

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## Free Radon Kits Available

Free radon kits are available in the Land & Resource department at the [Government Services Center in Fergus Falls, MN](#) and [Public Health Department in New York Mills](#).

### What is Radon?

Radon is a colorless, odorless radioactive gas that seeps up from the earth. When inhaled, it gives off radioactive particles that can damage the cells that line the lung.

Long term exposure to radon can lead to lung cancer. In fact, over 21,000 lung cancer deaths in the US each year are from radon, making it a serious health concern for all Minnesotans.

[OTC Radon Page](#)

[Am I At Risk Of Radon Poisoning?](#)

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[Dan Bucholz, Wayne Johnson,](#)  
[Kurt Mortenson, Betty Murphy, & Leland \(Lee\) Rogness.](#)

## **New Otter Tail County Board Members Sworn In**

*Pelican Press Area News | Published on January 6, 2021 at 8:50am CST | Author: Tom Hintgen*

The five-person Otter Tail County Board of Commissioners has two new members who were sworn in during the first meeting of the new year on Tuesday, Jan. 5.

Dan Bucholz of rural Perham replaces the retired Doug Huebsch in District No. 1 which includes 13 townships and the communities of Perham, Dent, New York Mills and Richville.

Kurt Mortenson of rural Underwood replaces the retired John Lindquist in District No. 3 that includes 17 townships, the southeastern portion of Fergus Falls and the communities of Battle Lake, Dalton, Underwood and Rothsay.

Commissioner Lee Rogness of Fergus Falls, who was reelected in 2020, was named county board chairperson for 2021. Assuming the vice chair position for 2021 is Commissioner Betty Murphy of Maine Township.

The fifth county commissioner is Wayne Johnson of Pelican Rapids. He and Murphy will be up for reelection in 2022. County commissioners are elected to four-year terms.

Otter Tail County, with 62 townships, is larger in size than the state of Rhode Island and paved roads total 1,062 miles.

“We oversee a budget of close to \$125 million,” Chairman Rogness said. “We make every effort to spend county tax dollars wisely while at the same time providing necessary services to county residents.”

The five-person county board makes decisions relating to county finances, public health, military veterans assistance, highway maintenance, land and

resource management, solid waste, human services, emergency management and other services.

Close to two-thirds of the county budget includes financial assistance from the state of Minnesota and the federal government.

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## **SSTS Financial Assistance Grant Funds Available**

Otter Tail County has received grants to provide homeowners with financial assistance to replace non-compliant septic systems. subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) Financial Assistance is in the form of grants and/or a zero interest loan.

9 grants were awarded in 2020 to low-income residents to replace non-compliant septic systems.

31 interest-free loans totaling \$528,101.75 were awarded

Other good news: over 4 tons of “suspended solids” or poo per year will not enter our waterways.

For more information:

**[SSTS Financial Assistance – Grant](#)**

**[SSTS Financial Assistance – Loan](#)**

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## **Walz Sets 1 M Acre Goal For Water Quality Program**

<https://www.inforum.com/business/agriculture/6824738-Walz-sets-1-million-acre-goal-for-water-quality-program>

The governor announced the goal for the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program, to be reached by the end of 2022, in a video message. Walz said through the program, landowners have the opportunity to "ensure our lakes, rivers and drinking water are protected for future generations."

**[MORE](#)**

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**DNR's 2020 Fish Stocking Successful,**

## Despite Challenges

Anglers can look forward to positive results from fish stocking that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources conducted in 2020, despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the vast majority of fish in Minnesota waters are the result of natural reproduction in healthy habitats, stocking can provide angling opportunities where they might not otherwise exist.

[MORE](#)

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## As Ice Fishing Gets Easier Can Fish Withstand The Onslaught?

Written By: [Mike McFeely](#) | Jan 2nd 2021

As another season is underway in the Upper Midwest, let the discussions begin anew of how the latest gizmo or fancy creature comfort is making the once frigid pursuit of hardwater angling too easy

FARGO — Henry Drewes remembers when his former boss at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources told stories about when the Lowrance "Little Green Box" sonar first became popular in the 1960s. There was talk about how the new technology, as rudimentary as it seems today, was going to ruin fishing by making it too easy.

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### **Featured Posts - January 2021**

- [Balancing Road Safety And Salt](#)
- [DNR Infested Waters List](#)
- [Lake Stewardship](#)

[www.lakeadmin.org](http://www.lakeadmin.org)

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### **OTC AIS Task Force Minutes**

- [January 11, 2021](#) draft
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### **OTC Board Of Commissioner Minutes**

- [December 9, 2020](#)
  - [December 15, 2020](#)
  - [January 5, 2021](#)
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### **Instant Access Links**

- [Newsletter Article Index](#)- Visually scan article titles from all OTC COLA E-Newsletters from 2018.
- [Water Quality Analysis Reports \(2020 samples\)](#) (includes 2020 samples) - Individual reports for 64 OTC COLA Lakes
- [Water Quality Analysis Reports \(2019 samples\)](#) (includes 2019 samples) - Includes available data for 102 OTC non-COLA Lakes
- [Lake Property Owner Directories \(2018\)](#)- Directories by Street and Name for 100 OTC Lakes
- [Interactive Access to OTC GIS](#)- Find addresses, navigate the OTC County map
- [OTC COLA Brochure](#)- View and/or download the OTC COLA Brochure
- **We want to hear from you!** - Go [HERE](#) to give OTC COLA



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[John Kruse](#), OTC COLA Administrative Assistant