



# Upper Loup Scoop

April 2009

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Darwin Frey

### At large

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## Chemigation & Permit Training



Chemigation is a viable practice. Chemigation is the term commonly used to describe the application of agrichemicals. (i.e. fertilizer-including livestock waste, insecticides, herbicides and fungicides) through an irrigation distribution system. Some of the advantages of chemigation are:

- Prescription fertilizer application
- The practice allows spoon-feeding of crops close to periods of peak nitrogen demand
- The crop roots and leaves will absorb the fertilizer immediately, reducing potential nitrogen losses due to leaching or runoff.
- Easy chemical activation
- Most chemicals are activated by water in the irrigation system
- Economical and effective
- Reduced chemical use and precision applications offer the opportunity for production savings

There are potential risks to our natural resources and public safety when using chemigation therefore, all chemigation systems must be fitted with the proper safety valves and equipment. This equipment must be inspected by the Upper Loup NRD (ULNRD) prior to use to assure functionality and compliance.

If you are considering chemigation, the operator must first obtain a permit from the ULNRD. Chemigation renewal permit cost is \$10 and must be submitted to the ULNRD. An irrigation system that has not been renewed prior to the June 1 deadline cannot apply chemicals through the system until a new permit is obtained. New chemigation permit cost is \$30 and the applicant cannot use the system until it passes a mandatory inspection. To pass inspection the mainline check valve must not have any sort of leak when there is water in the system. This prevents a chemical solution from seeping back down the well and into the groundwater. Operators must also have proper chemigation training to certify that they are prepared to apply chemicals through the irrigation system. The next training course will be held at the Cherry County Extension office April 14th at 1:30 p.m. CT. For more information contact the Cherry County Extension office at 402-376-1850.



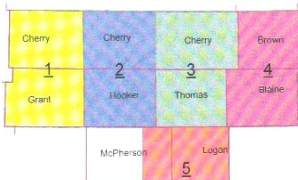
## Cost-Share Available for Soil Testing

The soil test is an excellent measure of soil fertility. It is an inexpensive way of maintaining good plant health and maximum crop productivity. Soil fertility fluctuates throughout the growing season each year—the quantity and availability of mineral nutrients are altered by the addition of fertilizers, manure, compost, mulch and lime or sulfur, in addition to leaching. Furthermore, large quantities of mineral nutrients are removed from soils as a result of plant growth and development and the harvesting of crops. The soil test will determine the current fertility status. It also provides the necessary information needed to maintain optimum fertility year after year.

The soil test takes the guesswork out of fertilization and is extremely cost effective. It not only eliminates the waste of money spent on unnecessary fertilizers, but also eliminates over-usage of fertilizers and prevention of leaching through the sandy soils and into the groundwater, thus helping protect the environment.

The ULNRD understands the importance of soil testing and offers a cost-share program to help landowners defray part of the costs associated with testing.

For more information or to obtain a cost-share application, you can contact the office at 308-645-2250 or visit our website [www.upperloupnrd.org](http://www.upperloupnrd.org).



## Hazard Mitigation Plan 92% Complete

The all-hazard plan is a community guided document that identifies vulnerability to natural disasters (tornados, hail, wind, drought, wildfires, thunderstorms, blizzards, etc.) and assesses the potential losses associated with each hazard, The plan also identifies critical facilities and projects to decrease the threat from identified hazards.

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District submitted its final draft to the Nebraska Emergency Management Association (NEMA) and NRD participants for final review. After final comments, the plan will be then submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

There are NOW eligible grant dollars available for all participating entities in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. These funds are for any projects that the participants have identified previously in their plan.

One community in the District has already taken advantage of this great opportunity. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Upper Loup NRD office at 308-645-2250.



## Water Quality Grant

Working under a grant from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, the NRD is focusing on testing more registered domestic and irrigation wells. To date, 43 registered domestic wells and 90 unregistered domestic wells have been tested. To meet our grant goal of 98 registered wells, 55 more registered domestic wells must be tested. The ULNRD has tested 38 irrigation wells and is in need of testing 160 more to meet the grant goal. The service is free of charge and you will be notified of the results.

There are several tests to help determine the health and safety of drinking water. Two of the most common tests performed are for bacteria and nitrates. Coliform bacteria test indicate the presence of microorganisms in the water that are potentially harmful to human health. Nitrate is also a common contaminant found mainly in groundwater. High nitrate concentration can be particularly dangerous to babies under six months since nitrate interferes with the ability of blood to carry oxygen.

If you would like this service please contact our office by calling 308-645-2250 or email the [ulnrd@upperloupnrd.org](mailto:ulnrd@upperloupnrd.org). To register a domestic well, contact the Department of Natural Resources at [www.dnr.state.ne.us](http://www.dnr.state.ne.us)

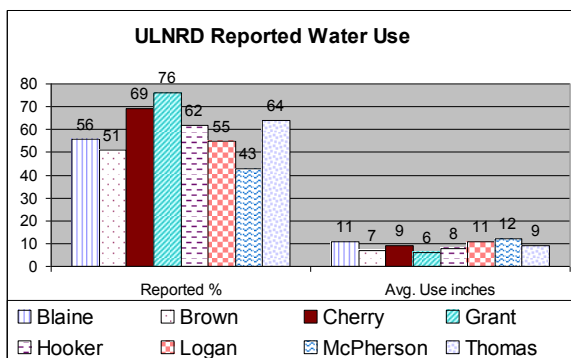


## Groundwater Monitoring Well

The Upper Loup NRD's collaborative project with the Nebraska Environmental Trust, United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the UNL Conservation Survey Division has been approved for its 2nd year of funding. In 2008, three wells had been drilled, one in each of the following counties: Logan, Thomas and McPherson. Data recorders have been placed in each of these wells, as well as, an additional monitor in an existing well in the highly irrigated county of Logan. The next drilling locations are in the discussion process. An educational outreach is being planned with the 9th grade classes of the District's high schools. This has been a very exciting new project and we look forward to it in the fall.



## Irrigation Water Use Report



Water use reporting is essential to the management of this vital resource. Annual reporting of water use is important to protect stakeholder interests, adopting actions in times of water emergencies, and providing data for effective farm management. To protect the farmer's in any litigation related to the state's right to water use in a given basin, existing uses must be able to be quantified. Knowing water use also allows a wider range of options for dealing with any future drought-related water emergencies.

If you have not returned your water use reports please mail them at your earliest convenience, or if you need another form, please contact our office at 308-645-2250. **Thank you** to those producers that have already responded!

## Recycle Cell Phones, Ink and Laser Cartridges



The Upper Loup NRD is participating in the Think Recycle program, which gathers old print cartridges and cell phones then sends them in for recycling. There are two collection boxes for your convenience, one is located in Mullen at the Nebraska Land Bank (next to the ATM) and the other is at Ewoldt's grocery store in Thedford.

Over 300 million empty printer cartridges are generated in North America every year, or 900,000,000 pounds of waste that can potentially end up in a land fill. The Think Recycle program has been responsible for the diversion of more than one million cartridges from landfills.

Greentec, the company behind Think Recycle, collects, processes and recycles the cartridges and cell phones, diverting the electronic waste from the landfill sites. Please help the ULNRD with these efforts and recycle your old cell phones and ink cartridges in the collection boxes provided. For more information call the Upper Loup NRD office at 308-645-2250.

The ULNRD has gopher bait on hand for purchase by those individuals that have a current pesticide applicators license. The District also has a gopher machine available for rent. If interested please contact the office for information at 308-645-2250.



## Boater Safety

The Upper Loup NRD will host a boating safety course on Thursday May 21, 2009, permitting the minimum number of six registrants is met. Registration due date is May 14. Scott Eveland, Boating Safety Officer for the Nebraska Game and Parks commission, will be the instructor for the class.

The Nebraska Boater Safety course is required of all power operators under the age of 18 (including operators of personal watercraft—Jet ski, SeaDoo, Waverunner, etc.) The minimum age to operate a boat is 14. The class covers everything from equipment requirements to safe boat operation, accident prevention and is a great course for both new and experienced boaters. Boat owners who complete the class may qualify for insurance discounts.

Parents are encouraged to attend with their children and boaters of all ages are welcome. The six-hour class is from 9:00 am CT until 3:30 pm CT on Thursday May 21. There is a \$5 fee to cover lunch expenses that will be provided onsite by the ULNRD. The class will be held at the Upper Loup NRD office in Thedford. To register for the class, contact the ULNRD office at 308-645-2250 or for additional information, contact Boating Safety Officer Eveland at 308-289-0017. For information on Nebraska boating laws and other scheduled classes, please visit: [www.OutdoorNebraska.org/boating](http://www.OutdoorNebraska.org/boating)

## NRD to Give Presentations for Arbor and Earth Day at Elementary Schools

The Upper Loup NRD will again be visiting the elementary schools in the District to celebrate Arbor and Earth Day. The ULNRD will donate trees to all 3rd-6th grades and reusable shopping bags to all 1st-2nd grades.

The ULNRD provides classroom presentations to students K-12, any group or organization on a variety of topics including pollution, water, trees, wildlife, land treatment, geocaching or other environmental and conservation issues. If you would like the ULNRD to present to your group, please contact the office at 308-645-2250.

## New Pocket Guides Available

### Available pocket guides

- Trees
- Nebraska Birds
- Animal Tracks
- Wilderness Survival
- Edible Wild Plants

Do you need help identifying animal tracks that you find in the sand or Nebraska Birds? Can you identify trees and edible plants? How about surviving in the wilderness? The Upper Loup NRD now has available five new handy pocket guides that can assist you in your efforts. Pockets

guides are available at the Upper Loup NRD office in Thedford for a cost of \$6.00 per guide. If you have any questions please stop in the office or call 309-645-2250.

### Dripial Pursuit.

#### Test your water knowledge:

1. What doesn't mix with boating?
2. Name a sport that uses two forms of water.
3. Does water refract or reflect light waves?
4. What is an outgoing tide?
5. Name the device used to locate items under the water.
6. A curve bend in a river is also known as what?
7. How thick is the ice on the Arctic Ocean?

Answers found on page 4

Upper Loup NRD  
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Thedford, NE 69166  
Phone: 308-645-2250  
Fax: 308-645-2308

**We are on the web!**  
[www.upperloupnrd.org](http://www.upperloupnrd.org)

### Calendar of Events

#### April

- 9 ULNRD Board Meeting—  
Thedford
- 22 Earth Day
- 24 Arbor Day

#### May

- 14 ULNRD Board Meeting—  
Thedford
- 21 Boater Safety Class
- 25 Holiday—Office Closed

#### June

- 11 ULNRD Board Meeting—  
Thedford

## TO: POSTAL CUSTOMER

New scientific evidence reverses preliminary decision regarding the Lower Platte Basin being declared fully appropriated. More on this topic in the next edition of the Upper Loup Scoop Newsletter.

#### Dripial Pursuit Answers:

1. Alcohol and Drugs
2. Skiing and Sailing
3. Refract
4. Ebb
5. SONAR
6. Meander
7. 7-10 Feet

### Upper Loup Staff

Anna Baum .....General Manager  
Jack Brummet...Resources Technician  
Kyle Yrkoski....Resources Technician  
Leslie Reiser.....Administrative Secretary  
Denise Vinton...Information & Education  
Cleo Jacobs... Thedford Field Office Sec.

### Attention Tree Planters

Trees are still available for hand-plants as long as Bessey Nursery has stock—often through the month of April. If you need machine-plants, sign up now and be the first on the list for the spring of 2010. For more information contact Kyle at the Upper Loup NRD at 308-645-2250.

### In The Works...

- Rules and Regulations for areas in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) designation change area
- Recycling trailers for communities in the district
- Reviewing NSWCP cost-share practices
- 09-10 budget
- Gearing up for tree planting
- Education outreach with the USGS for 9th grade students
- Outdoor education classrooms for high schools in the district