

Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)

There are 97 soil and water conservation districts making a difference in your community. No matter how big or small, each of the 102 counties has the services of a SWCD. From educating homeowners on practical utilization of water to helping rural landowners save soil and improve water quality; it takes everyone working together to protect our soil and water! Without these vital resources our communities cannot thrive!



Thank You

SWCDs are an important link to deliver federal source funds that directly benefit the local and state economy. The economic benefit that SWCDs provide is far greater than the amount of money that is appropriated for their use by the General Assembly. Thank you for supporting funding levels for the SWCDs for FY2014.



SENATOR RECEIVES LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD AT AISWCD ANNUAL MEETING

At its recent Annual Meeting and Summer Conference, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts presented its Legislator of the Year award to Senator, Jason Barickman.

In his introduction, AISWCD Vice President Tom Beyers explained Senator Barickman's selection by stating, "Senator Barickman was a champion of soil and water conservation and Soil and Water Conservation Districts while he served in the Illinois House. His appreciation for the importance of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts is evidenced by his successful sponsorship of an amendment to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. HB 5315 was signed into law January 1, 2013 and allows soil and water conservation district directors to take the required Open Meetings Act training in a group setting rather than electronically as was originally the case."

The AISWCD believes this was an important piece of legislation because many of the Illinois' Soil and Water Conservation District directors do not have ready access to high speed Internet and more than a few do not own computers. Requiring them to utilize electronic means to take required training was at best onerous and at worst made compliance with state statutes unnecessarily difficult.

The law now makes allowances for those instances where high speed Internet is not available and where a director may not own a computer because of poor connectivity conditions, thanks to Senator Barickman.

We appreciate Senator Barickman's support for the needs of Illinois' Soil and Water Conservation Districts and we wish him well in his future endeavors.



Pictured are Senator Barickman and AISWCD President Lonnie Wilson.

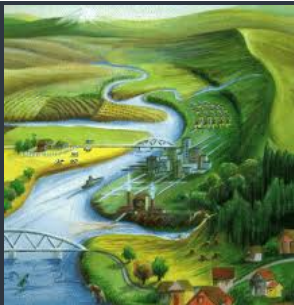
THIS ISSUE

Senator Receives Legislator of the Year Award P. 1

Thank You P. 1

Districts' Spotlight P. 2

SWCDs Provide Many Kinds of Services and Assistance P. 2



Soil and Water Conservation Districts Provide Many Kinds of Services and Assistance.

- The 97 SWCDs are continually involved in implementing the most up-to-date conservation practices to maximize use of available resources while also protecting these essential environmental resources.
- SWCDs provide educational assistance to urban and rural decision makers so that they can make wise choices that will protect people and property in the future
- Through education and the various programs they administer, such as the Envirothon, and the technical assistance they provide, SWCD's encourage the protection, conservation and wise use of our environmental resources to assure sustainability for future generations.



NOTE: SWCDs DO NOT have taxing authority and must rely on state source funding to employ staff to administer programs.

Your efforts as a member of the General Assembly, have resulted in a \$515,000 increase for soil and water conservation districts in the FY14 state operating budget.

THANK YOU!

PROTECT & CONSERVE

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Districts' Spotlight

Sangamon County: The Sangamon County SWCD sponsored a Lake Springfield Watershed tour on Sunday afternoon preceding the AISWCD Annual Meeting and Summer Conference. Approximately 40 people boarded a bus to travel through the watershed to see first hand the work that the district, with cooperation from a number of other agencies and organizations, has done to protect the City of Springfield's water supply lake.

The two main tributaries, Lick Creek and Sugar Creek, account for about 90% of the drainage area that feeds the lake. Since about 75% of the watershed is in agricultural row crop production, agricultural chemicals have been a significant factor in treatment costs for the City. The SWCD has concentrated efforts in the upper reaches of the watershed and has succeeded in installing nearly 13 miles of vegetated filter strips along the stream corridors. That effort has reduced Springfield's long standing annual \$250,000 cost for Atrazine removal to zero since the practices were installed. Lately, however, because of excessive rainfall amounts, the City has had to remove Atrazine again but the cost is much less, about 10% of what is once was. The SWCD continues to work with landowners in the watershed to implement additional conservation practices to protect the lake.



Aerial seeding of cover crops

Livingston County: Nearly 300 people from throughout the US and Canada attended a tour of the Indian Creek Watershed to view different practices and techniques for reducing nutrient contributions from agricultural land to water bodies. The Tour was sponsored by the Conservation Technology Information Center at Purdue University, the Livingston County SWCD and a number of agribusiness companies, agencies and organizations and featured several conservation systems that have been put in place to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous contribution

rates to Indian Creek, Fairbury's water source. The goal of the project is to determine what water quality improvements result when 50-75% of producers and acres in a small watershed adopt comprehensive agriculture conservation systems over a six-year period.

The tour highlighted many of the conservation systems in place and featured an aerial seeding demonstration, a tile drainage management research site, cover crop demonstration plots, rotational grazing practices and displays of equipment designed to maximize nutrient placement efficiency for better utilization by crops. Better crop utilization will reduce the potential for excess nutrients to enter streams and water bodies.



A soil pit was dug to examine the effects of root penetration from various cover crops

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YOUR LAND, YOUR WATER, YOUR ILLINOIS

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SOIL &
WATER

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