

A close-up photograph of a hand cupping water flowing from a rusty, outdoor faucet. The faucet is made of dark, weathered metal and has the words "BAKER MFG CO" embossed on its side. The background is a soft-focus green field. The hand is light-skinned and is positioned to catch the water as it falls from the spout.

# SOURCE WATER PROTECTION IN IOWA

## WHAT IS SOURCE WATER?

**Source water refers to a lake, river, stream, or underground aquifer that serves as a source of drinking water.**

Drinking water contamination continues to be a concern in Iowa. Source water protection is a relatively inexpensive way to ensure communities have clean, reliable drinking water. By contrast, advanced treatment technologies can be expensive to implement, especially in rural Iowa communities where the cost is spread over smaller customer bases. New policies that focus on source water protection would help combat threats to the health and safety of all Iowans who rely on clean drinking water.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Designate 10% of Water Quality Initiative funding, and any future water quality funding, for source water protection of vulnerable wells and watersheds

Formalize the watershed planning approach with state-level administration, fully funded watershed coordinator staff positions, and increased grant support through the DNR's Watershed Improvement Section

Adopt a universal riparian buffer law to require 30-foot minimum buffers along state waterways

Require growers to file a fertilizer application plan to reduce overapplication of fertilizer

Ban fall tillage to reduce erosion

Reinstate four-inch topsoil replacement rule after construction development