

FRESHWATER

March 19, 2025

Chair Fong Hawj
Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
1150 Minnesota Senate Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Opposition to SF2442 Outdoor use of rainwater and stormwater provision

Chair Hawj and committee members,

At Freshwater, we believe that well rounded perspectives based in science are essential for ensuring clean and safe water for everyone across the state. We also promote the development of the circular water economy and strongly support water conservation, water reuse, and water recharge practices.

We are writing today to oppose bill SF2442 because there is a current process in place to develop best practices for rainwater and stormwater use. **We urge the committee to wait to allow that process and evaluation to be completed before legislating a solution found in SF2442.**

Since 2015 an interagency team of the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR), the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has been meeting to help provide guidelines for water reuse across the state. This team has authored several reports on best practices and recommendations for water reuse and has found that using untreated stormwater and rainwater for irrigation may have health risks when humans are exposed to it.

In response to a 2022 white paper led by the MN Department of Health, the state formed an expanded group of stakeholders which has met since the fall of 2023 to evaluate and develop best practices for stormwater capture and use. This group broadened the previously mentioned interagency team to include representatives and design practitioners from multiple cities, watershed districts, the Minnesota Cities Stormwater Coalition, the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association, the University of Minnesota, private engineering firms, and environmental nonprofits.

This effort is complicated, has opposing viewpoints to understand, and is still in progress to determine when treatment is a good practice to manage risks to public health. As a member of this stakeholder group, we appreciate this collaborative process, and we urge the Legislature to see it through.

This bill would circumvent this extensive stakeholder- and agency-led process and eliminate the science-based stakeholder and water quality professional input we have been encouraging the past few years. **While we strongly support the reuse of stormwater and rainwater, we urge the Legislature to wait until this process is completed and revisit SF2442 at a later time.**

Sincerely,



Michelle Stockness, PE
Executive Director, Freshwater

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[Freshwater is a nonprofit organization working to inspire and empower people to value and preserve water.](#)