

Water Quality & Water Quantity



Who We Are:

Friends of the Big Sioux River is a water advocacy nonprofit on a mission to protect and restore the Big Sioux River and its watershed. We focus on four main areas: water quality monitoring, public policy and advocacy, river restoration, and education. These core areas all center around improving our local community and building a conservation ethic.

What is Water Quality?

- Water quality is the condition of a body of water, including the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics. It can be used to help determine a water body's suitability for a particular purpose, such as drinking or swimming.
- In the Big Sioux River in 2022, water quality decreased as the river flowed south. The river is regularly exceeding safe levels for E. coli, and contaminant levels often spiked following rainfall events.

What is Water Quantity?

- Water quantity is the ability of a water system to supply enough water for a community.
- Water quantity issues arise when the water source cannot be naturally replenished as quickly as it is being used. Additionally, water quantity issues can lead to water quality issues.

How Can You Improve Water Quality and Water Quantity?

Urban Areas

- Replace turf grass with native grasses and flowers.
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle materials. Keep trash, soap, paints, etc. out of storm drains.
- Conserve water inside your home and business.
- Install water-efficient fixtures and appliances. Look for WaterSense labeled products, which meet the EPA's specifications for water efficiency and performance.

Rural Areas

- Use cover crops to build healthier soil, reduce fertilizer applications, and retain soil moisture.
- Preserve wetlands to act as natural filters for runoff and serve as critical habitat for wildlife.
- On farm fields, improve irrigation infrastructure and water supply.
- Control drainage with tools such as water and sediment control basins.

Volunteer For Friends of the Big Sioux River

- **Clean-Up Events:** FBSR offers companies, organizations, and community groups an opportunity to be directly involved in picking up trash on the streambanks of our local streams and rivers. If your business or group is interested in donating time to help clean up a stretch of a waterway, FBSR will provide all clean-up materials.
- **Water Testing:** From May through September, our incredible team of water testing volunteers collects water samples from the Big Sioux River and its surrounding tributaries. You can help make an impact in our watershed by becoming a water testing volunteer or joining us for a water testing ride-along this summer!

Learn more at fbsr.org

Contact our Outreach and Donor Coordinator at outreach@friendsofthebigsiouxriver.org to schedule a clean-up event or to learn more about becoming a water testing volunteer.

