

# E-Newsletter

## April 2020

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### From The President

Happy Spring!

Though I cut my trip to Florida short just as the governor closed the beaches of Fort Myers Beach I stubbornly continued my planned vacation at home. After 14 days staying in because I had been in Florida, I don't really have any place I have to go anyway. This is an unprecedented time for all!

There is no doubt that we should not distribute water testing coolers in April! John and I visited about it again today. Minnesota is under a stay at home order. As responsible citizens we certainly don't want to gather our water testers or ask Ellie to expose herself to others. How would the coolers themselves be cleaned as they're passed out and go to the many homes? COVID-19 lives on hard surfaces for days. The great majority of those involved are over 60; most are retirees.

If it looks better in May Ellie has offered to distribute the coolers early in the month so we can begin with the May testing. It's also possible we might miss the month of May or the entire season. It would be a shame to have this gap in our data, but it is what it is! We can revisit this as time goes on.

This can also apply to our meetings. I have a direct line to Dr. Paul Carson through my daughter, Tish, who is Chief Clinical Officer at two nursing homes in Fargo and in daily contact with him. Dr. Carson is the Infection Control Specialist involved with Sanford, NDSU advisor to ND Health Dept., Federal Center for Disease Control, etc. He's often quoted. The latest prediction is for the surge to be in the Fargo-Moorhead area May 4 and in the outer MN two weeks later. Since all the news is about the virus we can certainly stay informed.

We can only hope for the best and get the most out of the summer season. If worse comes to worse, John is exploring tele-conferencing.

Wash your hands, don't touch your face, practice social distancing 6 feet apart, and stay home!!!

Comments are welcome.

[Sylvia Soeth](#), President OTC COLA

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### **2020 Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener Postponed 73rd annual event to be hosted by Otter Tail County, May 6-9, 2021**

ST. PAUL, Minn. (Apr. 1, 2020) — Governor Tim Walz announced today that the 2020 Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener has been postponed to May 6-9, 2021. The 73rd annual event was previously slated to be held May 7-10, 2020 in Otter Tail County but appropriate event action has been taken to curve the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the Governor's Fishing Opener event postponement, the 2020 fishing season will still open on May 9.

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## 2020 Water Sampling Kickoff May 12

The Kickoff for the 2020 OTC COLA Water Sampling program will not take place in April due to travel restrictions. Currently the Kickoff for distributing the sample coolers is scheduled for May 12, 2020, from 5-7 pm, at the Ottertail Community Center, 93 Lake Avenue South, Ottertail, MN 56571. Ellie Kriese of RMB Labs will be available to answer questions and will have instructional handout information. The scheduled May sampling date is May 17 for delivery to RMB or drop off location by noon on May 18. We will send separate emails to samplers we have on record for notification of this event as well as for any future developments. Samplers and couriers should confirm with **Jeff Vansteenburgh** contact information if they do not receive the first special email notification.

[jeffrey.vansteenburgh@gmail.com](mailto:jeffrey.vansteenburgh@gmail.com)

641-420-0928



### Audio/Visual Remote Conferencing

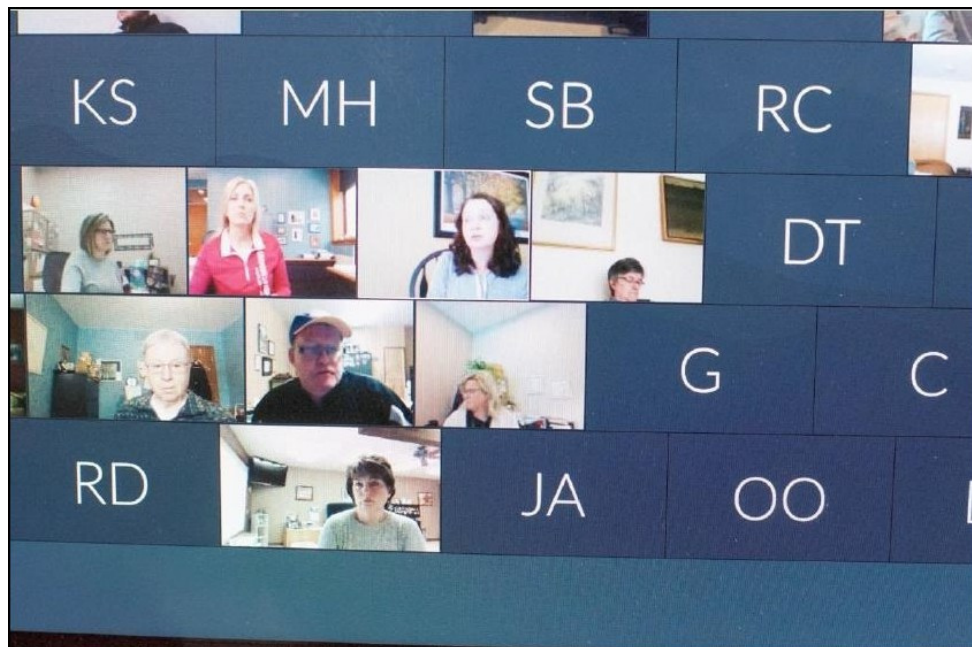
Social/physical distancing has had a profound effect on the ability of Boards and Committees to manage their organizations. Preferred is to regularly and personally meet to have face to face interaction with associates and have the ability to include written and graphic materials in presentations. At the present time this is not only discouraged but it is also prohibited. Though not preferred, technology offers alternative opportunities using now common devices and the internet.

Participate in the [Audio/Visual Conferencing Survey](#)

See article: [Conference Services for Small Business](#)

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## **Otter Tail County COVID-19 Special Meeting**

It is no secret that the COVID-19 pandemic is demanding extraordinary decisions from state government.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz dropped a “Stay-at-home” rule on Minnesotans last Saturday in an effort to give medical facilities more time to prepare for an expected onslaught of coronavirus patients.

Bowing to the state’s emergency declaration, the Otter Tail County Board of Commissioners has been adding special meetings to their normal monthly meeting schedule since March 20. On Friday, a special meeting of the board was held with some commissioners joining by interactive teleconference from

their homes. Also joining the meeting were county staff members.

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### **Otter Tail County Sheriff's Office Deputies To Conduct Property/Cabin Checks Upon Request.**

The Otter Tail County Sheriff's Office is asking property owners to comply with the Governor's order to stay home. To assist with people staying at home, the Sheriff's Office has a property check request form available online. If you have a seasonal property that you would like checked on, please complete the form online and a deputy will check on your property and report back to you.

Click [Cabin Check Request](#) for the online form.

Although the executive order doesn't prohibit traveling to or from a cabin, the Governor strongly urges all Minnesotans to stay in their primary residences. Staying home helps protect your neighbors from spreading COVID-19 and also avoids crowding rural medical facilities. Avoiding this kind of travel makes us all safer and healthier.

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## **Drunk Boaters, Off-Road Riders Face Steeper Suspensions**

A bill recently introduced in the Minnesota Legislature could stiffen penalties for those caught boating and off-road riding while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Depending on the drug taken or amount of alcohol ingested, offenders could lose their licenses for longer periods of time than are currently on the books. State Department of Natural Resources officials say that would help cops and prosecutors to keep bad actors off Minnesota roads, lakes and trails.

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## **Safety Is Paramount Around Late Ice And Open Water**

As the winter-to-spring transition unfolds, the way people experience the change in seasons will be a little different this year. But while we stay close to home for our outdoors time and practice social distancing, one thing remains the same. People must put their safety first, especially around lakes and rivers where the ice conditions vary around the state. With many lakes and rivers now ice-free, and the ice where it remains getting weaker by the day, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources conservation officers remind people to be especially vigilant.

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## **Support Increased Fines for AIS Violations**

Aquatic Invasive Species prevention and management cost the state of Minnesota and civic groups like lake associations tens of millions of dollars a year. It is long past time for the penalties for violating laws put in place to prevent the spread had fines that reflected the seriousness of the offense.

When the Aquatic Invasive Species laws were first put in place in 2012, policy makers argued that the penalties for violation should be set rather low because:

- This was a new area of game and fish laws, and some time was necessary for the public to be appropriately educated to the threat, and the new laws put in place to meet the threat.
- While it was well understood that it was prudent and in the public interest to work to prevent the spread of aquatic Invasive Species, we lacked data on what the impacts might be of these species in our lakes and rivers.

Today, after so much education it is inexcusable for any boater not to Clean, Drain and Dry their boats between waterbodies.

Violating AIS Laws is serious:

- The Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species research Center in 2019 published a study showing a 25% reduction in walleye growth due to AIS,
- The costs of managing current infestations of AIS run into the millions every year in Minnesota - Lake Koronis spends about \$200,000 on starry stonewort control,
- MN Seagrant reports that zebra mussels alone cost the US economy \$1 billion annually.

**[Support The AIS Fine Increase](#)**





### **More Than 50 Invasive Carp Captured On Mississippi River**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is conducting an immediate response to the capture of 51 invasive carp on the Mississippi River. The invasive carp were caught by two commercial fishing operators near La Crosse and Trempealeau, Wisconsin, during routine spring netting last weekend. In response to this discovery, the DNR is working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Wisconsin DNR and commercial fishing operators to conduct large-scale netting, studies of the captured carp and increased monitoring.

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### **OTC Board Of Commissioner Minutes**

- [March 3, 2020](#)
  - [March 17, 2020](#)
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- [Water Quality Analysis](#)- Individual reports for 168 OTC Lakes
- [Lake Property Owner Directories](#)- Directories by Street and Name for 100 OTC Lakes
- [Interactive Access to OTC GIS](#)- Find addresses, navigate the OTC County map

- [\*\*Lawmaker Hotline\*\*](#)- Comprehensive contact information for OTC Board of Commissioners to the MN Governor
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[\*\*John Kruse\*\*](#), OTC COLA Administrative Assistant