



January News

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

By Elizabeth Kluesner

Happy New Year from Minnesota Brownfields! I wish all of you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2026! If you have not yet seen it, please check out the link below to our [2025 Annual Report](#). It's packed with information on the work we did together in 2025.

This year will be a landmark year for our organization, celebrating our 20th anniversary year and the [15th Anniversary of the ReScape Awards](#). Please submit your ReScape Projects and reserve your spot at Royalston Square for ReScape 2026!

Beginning in 2026, Minnesota Brownfields will be holding three Lunch & Learn Webinars. The first of this series will be on February 9th and will feature a talk from member-firm Braun Intertec. The topic of the webinar is: Protecting Public Utilities from Contamination during Redevelopment. Please encourage colleagues who may not be members of Minnesota Brownfields to [join us for this free webinar](#). It's a great opportunity to get to know Minnesota Brownfields.

And, Save the Date for our Vapor Workshop on March 5th. This will be a great opportunity to learn what is new with vapor and ask questions of MPCA staff.

I am looking forward to working with all of you in the New Year.

Warm Regards,
Elizabeth



Welcome, New Board Members!

Minnesota Brownfields is pleased to announce two new Board Directors for 2026. Please welcome Rick Kubler, Lathrop GPM and Cathy Mehelich, City of Saint Cloud to the Board.



Rick Kubler

Rick is a Partner with Lathrop GPM. He has over 30 years of experience in advising public and private clients on the acquisition, disposition and redevelopment of Brownfield sites and associated environmental due diligence, risk assessment, and liability considerations. He is currently involved in many significant cleanup and redevelopment projects.

Rick also specializes in representing clients in federal and state Superfund and environmental administrative proceedings and regularly counsels clients on environmental compliance, under and above-ground storage tanks, and pollution insurance matters. Rick is a member of the Minnesota Brownfields Board of Directors and Advisory Committee and serves on the MPCA's Vapor Intrusion and PFAS Stakeholder Advisory Groups, and MPCA's External Stakeholder Focus Group for Remediation and Brownfield Guidance.



Cathy Mehelich

Cathy Mehelich was selected as St. Cloud's Economic Development Director in 2011 with the City's creation of its first Economic Development Authority. She has 30 years of providing economic development services for municipalities including City of Elk River, City of Olivia, Spicer and Downtown Virginia, MN.

Cathy has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Local and Urban Affairs from St. Cloud State University and is a Certified Economic Development Finance Professional by the National Development Council. She is an active member of the Economic Development Association of Minnesota and serves in a leadership role on the League of Minnesota Cities Improving Local Economies Committee. Cathy is a member of the Rotary Club of St. Cloud and enjoys building fellowship and community at Summertime by George events.

In her role with the City of St. Cloud, Cathy facilitates several business expansion, attraction, and redevelopment projects. Her passion is driven by a strong desire to help businesses grow and succeed by understanding their unique needs, effectively connecting resources, and efficiently facilitating the city development process.

Celebrate Minnesota Brownfields 20th Year at Our Happy Hour Event on Jan. 27!

Join us at Surly Brewing Co. on January 27 to celebrate 20 years of Minnesota Brownfields!

January 27, 2026
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Surly Brewing Co.

This is a free event but please register for F&B counts.

[Register](#)



Check Out Our 2025 Annual Report



The Minnesota Brownfields 2025 Annual Report can be found below - check it out!

[View the Report](#)

Webinar: Protecting Public Utilities from Contamination during Redevelopment

**Monday, February 9
12:00 pm**

Join us for a virtual MN Brownfields Lunch and Learn on Protecting Public Utilities from Contamination during Redevelopment. Public utility work in areas with contamination has become increasingly common in both dense urban areas and rural communities. Protecting the utility infrastructure as well as the contents requires an evaluation of risk that should be incorporated into the project design process. We discuss the risks posed to the utility system, utility customers and to the construction process. We will provide strategies to identify, minimize and manage the impacts from design through construction. Attendees will gain information on the factors to evaluate before design, strategies for design modifications to minimize risks, and best management practices for construction.

Webinar: Protecting Public Utilities from contamination during Redevelopment



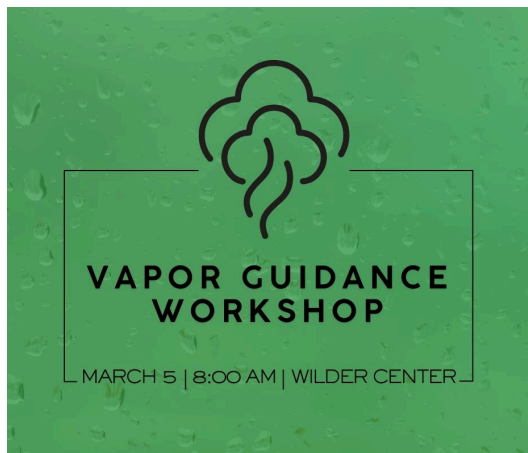
[Register for the Free Webinar](#)

Save the Date! Vapor Workshop

Registration is now open for the March 5th Vapor Workshop. The session will be held at the Wilder Center in Saint Paul.

Managing Vapor Issues continue to be an important component of environmental cleanup in Minnesota. Join Minnesota Brownfields and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to learn about new Vapor Guidance and other issues associated with managing vapor intrusion in brownfield redevelopment projects.

[Register](#)



Submit Your ReScape Projects!

The ReScape Awards is Minnesota Brownfields' yearly awards program. It was established to recognize and celebrate development projects that bring remediation, redevelopment and revitalization to communities across the state of Minnesota.



Each year, dozens of brownfields projects are submitted. These nominations are submitted to one of four categories – [Community Impact](#), [Economic Impact](#), [Environmental Impact](#) and [Innovation Awards](#). Eligible entries include projects completed between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2025. The projects are evaluated by a panel of industry professionals resulting in one winner per category.

Awards are presented to the project partners that most demonstrate efficient clean up and reuse of contaminated land as a means of generating economic growth, strengthening the community and enabling sustainable land use and development. [The deadline to submit is Friday, January 30, 2026.](#)

In 2026, we will be celebrating our winners on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at Royalston Square in Minneapolis.

[Learn More & Submit a Project](#)

Sponsor the 15th Annual ReScape Awards Gala



We're looking for 2026 ReScape Award sponsors to help mitigate costs of the annual ReScape Awards Gala! Join us in celebrating redevelopment professionals and their work to forward Minnesota Brownfields' mission of promoting the efficient cleanup and reuse of contaminated land as a means of generating economic growth, strengthening communities and enabling sustainable land use and

development. Lock in your ReScape Sponsorship today!

Lock in Your Sponsorship!

Apply to Judge the ReScape Project Submissions by January 7th!



We are looking for help judging the 2026 ReScape Awards! If you are interested, please apply here. After submitting, your application will be reviewed and you will be notified by Minnesota Brownfields staff if selected in mid-January. The deadline to apply is Wednesday, January 7th.

Judging Commitment:

This is a 4-5 hour time commitment from January - March. After the ReScape submission window closes at the end of January, judges

receive the applications to review and judge. After reviewing, the committee meets as a group to review and select winners.

Why should you become a judge?

What makes the ReScape awards different from other competitions is that we place great emphasis on the impact of programs on their communities. Be a vital part of this awards program and take pride knowing your support has greatly impacted the wonderful workers of this industry. No traveling is required to be a judge – your work is done on your own computer.

Who is Eligible to Judge?

It is extremely important a judge is familiar with the industry and understands what brownfield redevelopment entails. In the judge application above, please note your area of work so we can assign you the submissions that fit.

Save the date! Our 2026 ReScape Gala will be on Thursday, April 23 at Royalston Square. We are looking forward to an evening of celebration our winners.

The deadline for applications is Wednesday, January 7th.

Apply to be a Judge!

Applications for 2026 Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment & Cleanup Grants Due Jan. 28



EPA's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (OBLR) is soliciting applications from eligible entities for Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup Grant funding. These Brownfields Grants allow more vacant and abandoned properties to be turned into

community assets that can attract jobs and promote economic revitalization in communities. **The application submission deadline is January 28, 2026.**

Pre-Recorded Videos on Minimum Grant Requirements

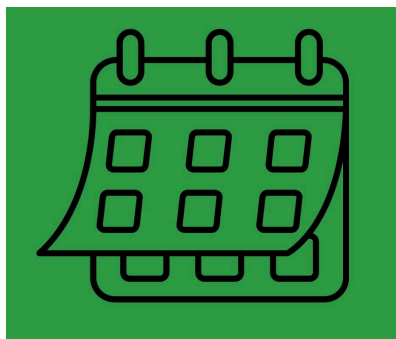
EPA has pre-recorded video overviews of the FY 2026 grants submission process and Application Information Sheet and threshold requirements for each grant type. Please visit the [MARC Grant Application Resources](#) page for the recordings and a copy of the presentations.

[View the Guidelines](#)

New Website Feature - Yearly Calendar!

Check out our newest website feature - Minnesota Brownfields' annual calendar! Now, members can see what online and in-person events we have coming up as well as when certain meetings are - MB board, committee meetings and more!

[View the Calendar](#)



January Fact of the Month:



FACT OF THE MONTH:

Did you know? The Surly Brewing site (a past MN Brownfield ReScape winner) was covered with concrete slabs when the property was purchased? One of the site's remediation goals was to recycle the concrete. Some of the slabs were saved and used as pavers while the rest was crushed and used as aggregate. Crushing yielded about 14,000 cubic yards of aggregate!

Thank you, Members!

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City of Rochester
City of St. Cloud Economic Development
Condition Services LLC
Dakota County CDA
Dakota County Water Resources
DEED-Brownfields and Redevelopment
Duluth Economic Development Authority
Duluth Seaway Port Authority
Hennepin County
HTB Project Navigation LLC
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Sherry Van Duyn

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Thank you, Platinum Member - Stantec!



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