

Ripple Effect Water Minute #10 – Cost of Water Treatment

Cleaning the Red River to use it for municipal drinking water can be expensive.

The Red River got its name because of the natural summer color created by the fine clay sediment that is suspended in the water. This fine sediment creates a problem for the cities on the Red who depend on it as a source of community drinking water. The water taken from the Red must undergo a series of treatment in order for it to be used for any domestic purpose, including drinking, bathing or watering the lawn.

The costs for treatment are not cheap. For example, during the summer the City of Moorhead's costs for cleaning the sediment out of the water increases by ten to fifteen thousand dollars as compared to the winter. The increased summer flows of the river, and increased runoff from the land, cause the increase in sediment suspended in the water.

Utilizing best management practices in the city and on the farm will help reduce the sediment in the Red River and keep the cost of water treatment down.

This Ripple Effect is brought to you by the Red River Basin Commission.