



Your thinking, our future.



**Media Contacts:**

Kari Ruth  
Minnesota Community Foundation  
651-325-4243 (o)  
[klr@mncommunityfoundation.org](mailto:klr@mncommunityfoundation.org)

Nick Banovetz  
Padilla Speer Beardsley  
612-455-1705 (o)  
[nbanovetz@psbpr.com](mailto:nbanovetz@psbpr.com)

**Water Takes Center Stage at the Minnesota Idea Open**  
*Pentair Helps Local Visionaries Define the Future of Water for the Land of 10,000 Lakes*

**SAINT PAUL, MINN., June 21, 2011** – Get your best thinking out of the shower and into the open – the Minnesota Idea Open, that is. Beginning today, Minnesotans can go online at [www.MNIdeaOpen.org](http://www.MNIdeaOpen.org) to suggest ideas for Challenge II: **“How would you use \$15,000 to help your community become aware of and address water issues in Minnesota?”**

All Minnesotans can be part of the solution by submitting ideas for how their communities could use the awarded funds to help solve water issues, including pollution, contamination and its diminishing supply. Expert judges will narrow the ideas to three finalists and then every Minnesotan can vote for their favorite solution. The Idea Open will fund \$15,000 to the “Champion” idea to make that idea a reality.

“Here in the ‘land of 10,000 lakes,’ we really value the quality of our water,” said Carleen Rhodes, president and CEO of Minnesota Community Foundation. “It is exciting to be able to bring attention to the issue of water quality and inspire each other to develop solutions to that quality for future generations.”

Visitors to [www.MNIdeaOpen.org](http://www.MNIdeaOpen.org) can join group discussions with other Minnesotans and issue experts, as well as find resources to learn more about the issue.

The Minnesota Idea Open is a project of Minnesota Community Foundation with funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The Challenge II Lead Partner is [Pentair](http://www.pentair.com) and its Foundation, a global leader in sustainable water solutions headquartered in Minneapolis.

“We recognize the Minnesota Idea Open as an effective platform to engage Minnesotans in civic matters. We’re particularly excited to support Challenge II and see our fellow Minnesotans’ best thinking on sustainable water conservation and clean water solutions,” said Todd Gleason, vice president of strategy and marketing for Pentair. “Often the simplest ideas garner the strongest, most meaningful returns.”

**Challenge II: Facts to Keep in Mind when Addressing Water Issues**

(more)

- According to the University of Minnesota Extension, the average Minnesotan household uses as much as 30-60 gallons of water each time they shower, 30-50 gallons every time they run a washing machine, and 6-8 gallons each time they flush a toilet. Leaky faucets and running toilets inside our homes only compound the problem.
- Water contamination and consumption pose a major challenge for farmers in Minnesota. In each growing season, corn requires 54 gallons of water per plant, tomatoes require 35 gallons, and potatoes require 25 gallons. Water issues are especially crucial in Minnesota because agriculture plays a large role in our economy.
- Pollution of our water, the introduction of invasive species, and the drying up of streams and rivers may limit the continued recreational use of our lakes.

Imaginative entries with real-life applications are encouraged – no matter how small or how broad the solution.

Idea submissions will be accepted through Friday, July 15. The three finalists will be announced on Saturday, August 6. Voting on the finalists will take place Tuesday, August 23 – Monday, September 5, in conjunction with the Minnesota State Fair. The Challenge Champion will be announced on Tuesday, September 6.

Minnesotans can find more information and resources about Challenge II at [www.MNIdeaOpen.org](http://www.MNIdeaOpen.org).

### **About Minnesota Idea Open**

Minnesota Idea Open is an interactive, cutting-edge utility that facilitates community problem-solving around critical issues facing Minnesota. Minnesota Community Foundation launched the Idea Open in 2010 with funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and partnered with [Ashoka's Changemakers](#) to create the online Idea Open platform. The Idea Open hosts multiple challenges simultaneously, and has made its platform available to other organizations that want to use the technology to engage their stakeholders on issues of importance. For more information, visit [www.MNIdeaOpen.org](http://www.MNIdeaOpen.org).

*To contact our sponsors and other key partners, please see the supplemental page.*

### **How to Contact Our Partners**

We invite the media to contact our Challenge II sponsors and Idea Open partners:

#### **Pentair**

*A global leader in providing innovative products and systems used worldwide in the movement, treatment, storage and enjoyment of water.*

Betsy Day, Corporate Communications Manager

763-656-5537 (o); [betsy.day@pentair.com](mailto:betsy.day@pentair.com)

#### **Citizens League**

*The nation's premier citizen-based "good government" organization that builds common ground for the common good will help implement the Champion idea.*

Sean Kershaw, Executive Director

651-324-0991 (c); [skershaw@citizensleague.org](mailto:skershaw@citizensleague.org)

#### **Ashoka's Changemakers**

*Specializes in online competitions for social change.*

Delyse Sylvester, Director of Community

Ashoka's Changemakers

250-352-0616 (o); 250-551-0570 (c); [dsylvester@ashoka.org](mailto:dsylvester@ashoka.org)