

Dayle Williamson

2012 Maurice Kremer Groundwater Achievement Award Winner



DAYLE WILLIAMSON

Dayle Williamson, Greater Nebraska District Manager for U.S. Senator Ben Nelson and Groundwater Foundation Board Member for 20 years, received the 2012 Maurice Kremer Groundwater Achievement Award. Williamson was presented with the award at the Nebraska Water Resources Association and Nebraska State Irrigation Association Conference on November 19, 2012 in Kearney, Nebraska.

The award was named for Maurice Kremer, who spent 20 years in the Nebraska Legislature where he was best known for his contributions toward protecting the state's water resources. It was established in 1985 by The Groundwater Foundation to recognize Nebraskans who have made a substantive contribution to the conservation and protection of Nebraska's groundwater.

"I always had the highest respect for this great gentleman," said Williamson about Kremer. "Maurice Kremer was dubbed as 'Mr. Water' with great respect for all of the work he did during the 70s when many new state and federal environmental laws went into effect."

Williamson worked with Senator Kremer for many years as Director of the Natural Resources Commission. "As a farmer and irrigator, [Kremer] came to the Legislature with a great recognition of the value of groundwater," said Williamson. "He had lived through the drought and depression of the 1930s and remembered crops withering each and every year in Hamilton County. As well drilling techniques and pumps improved, he gained firsthand knowledge of the value of groundwater on his farm."

Williamson joined Senator Nelson's staff in 2001 and has focused on agriculture and military support. Prior to that time he had a long career in State Government, beginning in 1958. He later served as Executive Secretary of the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission during the development of "Nebraska's State Water Plan" in the early 1970s. After reorganization to the Natural Resources Commission, Williamson served several Governors as an agency director for a period of 30 years.

Selection Committee member Don Kraus points to Williamson's accomplishments for Nebraska's water resources as Director of the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission. "Dayle worked with producers for common sense approaches to Federal programs that would affect Nebraska resource management. Dayle also helped to guide many of the

Commission studies on natural resource management that provided guidance for future water legislation.”

Williamson began his agricultural career with the University of Nebraska Agricultural Extension Service as a county agent. After graduating from the University of Nebraska, he spent two years in the United States Army, and spent the next 30 years in his military career as a member of the Nebraska Army National Guard, reaching the rank of Brigadier General before retiring.

“I have worked with Dayle since 1969 in my days in the Nebraska State Office of Planning and Programming. Through the years I have never ceased to be amazed by his never ending enthusiasm and optimism,” said selection committee member Bob Kuzelka.

The Kremer Award is chosen by a selection committee appointed by The Groundwater Foundation Board of Directors. Selection committee members include: Don Kraus, Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District; Jim Goeke, University of Nebraska Conservation and Survey Division; Bob Kuzelka, University of Nebraska School of Natural Resources; and Jane Griffin, The Groundwater Foundation.