

**DIGGIN'**

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avoid adding fertilizer at this stage. Seedlings have everything they need stored inside the seed. Extra nutrients too early can cause distorted growth, kind of like giving a toddler espresso.

As seedlings grow, they may need more space. If roots begin circling inside their cells or leaves start crowding one another, it's time to transplant them into slightly larger containers. This gives them room to continue developing without becoming stressed or stunted. It's the horticultural equivalent of realizing a child has outgrown their shoes.

A small fan set on low and placed a short distance away can also help. The gentle airflow encourages seedlings to develop sturdier stems. The goal isn't to blast them, just to give them enough movement to strengthen their structure.

The most important stage comes later, when seedlings are ready to transition outdoors. This process, known as hardening off, is the gradual introduction to the wider world. Indoor conditions are calm and predictable. Outdoor conditions are not. Sunlight is stronger, temperatures fluctuate, and wind is a constant presence in our region. Exposing seedlings to these elements slowly. Starting with short periods in a sheltered, shaded spot and increasing the duration and intensity over a week or more helps them adjust without shock.

Timing matters as well. Starting seeds too early is a common mistake. A tomato sown in January may look impressive by April, but it will be difficult to manage and may suffer from stress long before it reaches the garden. Each crop has an ideal indoor start date based on its growth rate and our last frost date, which typically falls in late May. Reading the back of the

seed packet is the simplest way to know when to start, those guidelines are there for a reason.

Seed packets will indicate whether a variety needs to be soaked or nicked before planting. Soaking softens the seed coat and encourages more even germination: nasturtiums and sweet peas are classic candidates. Nicking, which involves lightly scratching the outer layer with a file or knife, helps water penetrate more quickly. It's a small extra step, but for certain seeds, like morning glories, it can make all the difference in getting them to sprout reliably.

Even with careful attention, seedlings will occasionally struggle. Some may grow unevenly, some may fail to germinate and some may never quite catch up. Early care is important, but not every seed becomes a strong plant. Pull out the strugglers. "Culling" is part of the process, and part of the reason gardeners sow more seeds than they expect to need.

There's something satisfying about tending seedlings. With steady light, warmth and attention, these young plants develop the resilience they'll need for the season ahead. When the time comes to move them outdoors, there's a quiet pride in watching your little green "babies" grow up and handle the world on their own. Proof that all the growing pains were worth it.

Have plant questions? I've got answers. Email your questions or photos to digginit@nordaknorth.com, or stop by The Leader-News office with a photo or sample.

Phaidra Yunker is a Master Gardener and a certified horticulturist with over a decade of experience in the horticultural industry. She serves as Vice President of the City of Washburn Forestry Board.

**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**Lake William Township Equalization Meeting**  
 Lake Williams Township Equalization Meeting  
 April 8, 2026  
 9 a.m. at Badlands Coffee in Turtle Lake  
 (Mar. 26 & April 2, 2026)

**City of Turtle Lake Board of Equalization**  
 Notice is hereby given that the Turtle Lake City Commission will conduct an equalization meeting on Monday, April 13, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall at 107 Eggert Street, Turtle Lake, ND. Each taxpayer has the right to appear to discuss any questions and/or concerns of the taxpayer's property assessment.  
 Michelle Pickett, City Auditor  
 (Mar. 19 & 26, 2026)

**Underwood Tax Equalization Meeting**  
 The Underwood Board of Tax Equalization will hold its annual hearing Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., at the Underwood City Hall. Property owners do not have to attend in person but are encouraged to contact the City Assessor, Ryan Oberg, 701-462-8541, with any concerns or mail their concerns to PO Box 168, Underwood, ND 58576.  
 (Mar. 19 & 26, 2026)

**Notice of Sale Parcel in Turtle Lake**  
 Notice is hereby given the City of Turtle Lake will offer for sale parcel 79230200010000, legal description LOTS 23-24 BLK 1, located in the City of Turtle Lake, North Dakota. The sale will occur through sealed bids submitted to the Turtle Lake City Commission through the City Auditors office located at PO Box 338, 107 Eggert Street, Turtle Lake, ND 58575.  
 Minimum bid amount is \$10,000.00 with bid submission due by 5:00p.m. on April 13th, 2026. Bids will be presented to the Turtle Lake City Commission at the regular commission meeting on April 13th, 2026  
 (Mar. 19 & 26, 2026)

**Notice Of Leasing State School Lands**  
 The Board of University and School Lands will Conduct Surface Lease Auctions in the following Counties:  
 Benson Logan Mountrail  
 Divide McHenry Oliver  
 Dunn McIntosh Pierce  
 Eddy McKenzie Rolette  
 Griggs McLean Slope Williams  
 Auctions will be held in person at location in the County Seat. Refer to the advertisement in the official county newspaper or the public lease auctions schedule posted on the Department of Trust Lands' website for auction dates, times, locations, & list of tracts offered. Auctioneer will read specific requirements at the auction. The information contained in this advertisement may be revised prior to the auction upon further review by the North Dakota Department of Trust Lands. The Board reserves the right to reject any and all bids. For more information, visit <https://land.nd.gov> or call (701) 328-2800.  
 Joseph A. Heringer COMMISSIONER 1707 N 9th St | Bismarck ND 58506  
 PHONE: 701-328-2800 | FAX: 701-328-3650 | WEB: <https://land.nd.gov>  
 (Mar. 5, 12, 19 & 26, 2026)

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**  
 City of Turtle Lake  
 Turtle Lake, NORTH DAKOTA  
 Street Improvement District No. 2025-1  
 City-Wide Street Replacement, Mill & Overlay, Chipseal and ADA Improvements MOORE PROJECT NO. 22810A  
**General Notice**  
 Owner is requesting Bids for the construction of the project listed above.  
 Bids for the construction of the Project will be received and accepted via electronic bid (vBid) through Quest CDN until April 9, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. local time. Bids will be viewed and read via video/phone conference at 2:30 p.m. Mailed or hand delivered bids will not be opened or considered. Link for the video/phone conference is provided at [www.mooreengineeringinc.com](http://www.mooreengineeringinc.com) by clicking the Bid Information tab, or at [www.Quest CDN.com](http://www.Quest CDN.com).  
 The Project includes the following Work: Full depth street replacement, asphalt mill and overlays, chipseal, ADA improvements, and other miscellaneous work.  
**Obtaining the Bidding Documents**  
 Digital project bidding documents will be available at [www.mooreengineeringinc.com](http://www.mooreengineeringinc.com) by clicking the Bid Information tab, or at [www.Quest CDN.com](http://www.Quest CDN.com). You may download the complete set of digital documents for a nonrefundable fee of \$50.00 by locating eBidDoc™ Number 10116291 on the website. Contact Quest CDN Customer Support at 952-233-1632 or [info@Quest CDN.com](mailto:info@Quest CDN.com) for assistance in membership registration, downloading digital project information, and vBid online bid submittal questions.  
 Bidding Documents may be downloaded from the designated website. Prospective Bidders are urged to register with the designated website as a plan holder, even if Bidding Documents are obtained from a plan room or source other than the designated website in either electronic or paper format. The designated website will be updated periodically with addenda, lists of registered plan holders, reports, and other information relevant to submitting a Bid for the Project. All official notifications, addenda, and other Bidding Documents will be offered only through the designated website. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for Bidding Documents, including addenda, if any, obtained from sources other than the designated website. The Issuing Office for the Bidding Documents is:  
 Moore Engineering, Inc.  
 4503 Coleman Street, Suite 105, Bismarck, ND 58503  
 Each bid must be accompanied by a bidder's bond in a sum equal to 5% of the full amount of the bid executed by the bidder as principal and by a surety, conditioned that if the principal's bid is accepted and a contract is awarded to the principal, the principal, within ten (10) days after the notice of the award, shall execute a contract in accordance with the terms of the bid and the bid bond, and any conditions of the City of Turtle Lake, as required by law. A countersignature of a bid bond is not required. If the City of Turtle Lake elects to award a contract to the lowest responsible bidder, and the lowest responsible bidder does not execute a contract within ten (10) days, the bidder's bond will be forfeited to the City of Turtle Lake, and the City of Turtle Lake may award the project to the next lowest responsible bidder.  
 Each bidder must possess a valid North Dakota contractor's license for the full amount of their bid, as required by N.D.C.C. § 43-07-7. Each bidder MUST enclose a copy of their Contractor's License or Certificate of Renewal, issued by the North Dakota Secretary of State, and each license must be valid and dated at least 10 days prior to the date set for bid opening, as required under N.D.C.C. § 43-07-12.  
 No bid may be read or considered if the bid does not fully comply with the requirements of this section and that any deficient bid submitted must be resealed and returned to the bidder immediately.  
 City of Turtle Lake reserves the right to reject any and all bids and rebid the project until a satisfactory bid is received.  
**Instructions to Bidders:**  
 For all further requirements regarding bid submittal, qualifications, procedures, and contract award, refer to the Instructions to Bidders that are included in the Bidding Documents.  
 Use the following ONLY for equivalency projects which use Clean Water Fund or Drinking Water Fund State Revolving Fund (SRF) funding.  
 [Bidders on this work will be required to comply with Title 40 CFR Part 33- Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in the United States Environmental Protection Agency Programs. The requirements for bidders and contractors under this regulation concern utilization of Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Women's Business Enterprises (WBE), and Small Business Enterprises (SBE) and are explained in the specifications.  
 The goal for MBE is 2% of the total dollar value of the project. The goal for WBE is 3% of the total dollar value of the project. To demonstrate a good faith effort to comply, bidders must include the MBE/WBE subcontractor solicitation form in the bid package.  
 Bidders on this work will be required to comply with the President's Executive Order No. 11246, as amended. The requirements for bidders and contractors under this order are explained in the specifications.  
 Bidders are required to comply with the Build America, Buy America Act Requirements.]  
 Include the following language for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) equivalency projects and/or projects with loan forgiveness:  
 [Bidders are required to comply with BIL signage requirements.]  
 Use the following language for all DWSRF and CWSRF treatment works projects.  
 Use the following ONLY for United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funding.  
 This Advertisement is issued by:  
 Owner: City of Turtle Lake  
 By: Michelle Pickett  
 Title: Auditor  
 Date: March 9, 2026

**Cassandra Altringer, DNP**  
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**Financing Options Available**

**Contact Your Trusted Seed Advisor**  
**701-256-2599**

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