



Stearns County Minnesota



JANELLE P. KENDALL
Stearns County Attorney

STEVE SOYKA
Stearns County Sheriff

September 17, 2026

Stearns County is issuing an advisory press release regarding unpermitted events at a venue known as “The Hay Shed”, located at 36271 County Road 2, St. Wendel Township, north of the City of St Joseph in Stearns County. This advisory is intended to inform potential users of “The Hay Shed” regarding the issuance of a judge’s Order this week holding Aloysius William Studniski, the owner of the property, in contempt of court for continuing to hold events in direct violation of a prior Court Order requiring compliance with safety, fire, septic and related rules required of all venue rental businesses in Minnesota. The Court Order authorizes the Stearns County Sheriff’s Office to disburse gatherings and post notices that the venue is closed until the Court Order has been followed. Following years of trying to gain compliance, this legal action was required to address Studniski’s claims that the laws do not apply to him.

In 2023, Mr. Studniski applied for a permit for an agricultural shed on his property. Shortly after the shed was built, the Sheriff’s Office started receiving complaints that large events involving big crowds were happening at the venue. Investigation showed that Mr. Studniski was charging wedding parties and others substantial sums to host weddings and gatherings at “The Hay Shed”, while claiming to state and local officials that the events were only private parties not subject to commercial venue requirements. Numerous witnesses and documentation showing thousands of dollars in fees collected by Studniski prove otherwise.

Stearns County and Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry staff repeatedly advised Studniski both personally and in writing that he needed to obtain permits for driveway access, a stormwater management plan, an approved septic plan, and fire mitigation systems to use the building as an event center. These requirements apply to all commercial venues charging money to host events.

Throughout the 2025 wedding season, Stearns County Officials continued to attempt to work with Studniski to gain compliance. Studniski repeatedly stated that he is not a U.S. Citizen and that he is tax exempt and the rules do not apply to his property. The Stearns County Attorney’s Office brought formal legal action against Studniski on January 16, 2026. Studniski attended numerous hearings where he was personally instructed by the court to work with officials to come into compliance and warned of the potential penalties if refusal continued. On August 6, 2026, Stearns County District Court Judge Laura Moehrle ordered Mr. Studniski to stop using his property as an event venue unless and until he complied with all applicable laws and ordinances. Since then, Studniski has continued to host events in violation of the Order, resulting in a contempt of court hearing on September 11th, followed by a September 15th Order finding Studniski in contempt, authorizing the Sheriff’s Office to shut down further events and setting another hearing on October 16th for Studniski to report directly back to the judge on compliance, with further violations to include fines and jail time.

Stearns County is aware that Studniski continues to claim he is in compliance and that events are able to continue. Sheriff Steve Soyka and County Attorney Janelle Kendall want to provide notice to potential clients of the wedding venue that Studniski is not in compliance, and that further events will be shut down until Studniski complies with the Court Orders. Attached are copies of the Court’s original Order as well as the Contempt Order.

Questions can be directed to Chief Deputy Dan Miller at the Stearns County Sheriff’s Office.

Janelle P. Kendall
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Steven Soyka
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