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WELL SAID NEWSLETTER

Available on the web at OWRD home page, under *Agency Spotlight > Well Said Newsletter*. Please share with others at your organization. *Well Said* is a production of the OWRD Well Construction Section and is designed to inform the drilling industry and the public about program activities and other items of interest.

Questions or suggestions about this newsletter may be directed to Kristopher Byrd at (503) 991-2470 or email at Kristopher.R.Byrd@water.oregon.gov



Serving the public by practicing and promoting responsible water management.

WELDING REQUIREMENTS FOR MONITORING WELL LICENSE APPLICANTS

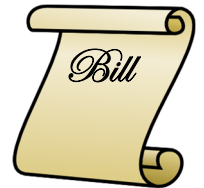


At their March 21, 2024, meeting the Water Resources Commission adopted new rules that remove the requirement for monitoring well constructor license applicants to provide evidence of welding proficiency to get their monitoring well constructor's license.

The rule change, which was effective April 1, 2024, is the result of House Bill (HB) 3343, passed by the Oregon Legislature during the 2023 legislative session. The bill provides the Department with the discretion to determine the types of wells that require license applicants to provide evidence of welding proficiency. Based on the bill, and on the fact that welding is not typically required in the construction of monitoring wells, the Department moved forward with a rulemaking to clarify that applicants for a monitoring well constructors license do not need to provide evidence of welding proficiency.

Questions about licensing requirements should be directed to Buffy Madrigal-Adams, Well Licensing Program Specialist, at (971) 287-8305 or Buffymadrigal-Adams@water.oregon.gov.

E-FILING REQUIRED IN JULY 2024



The passage of House Bill (HB) 2145 was the first step in the Department's efforts to modernize and increase efficiency within the well construction program. These efforts have focused on preventing well deficiencies that can lead to contamination or waste of groundwater, better protecting groundwater resources for Oregonians, and giving the well construction industry timely assurance that their work is being performed in a manner that is consistent with state standards. Program changes have been implemented in phases as required by the new law since 2021.

Effective July 1, 2024, all start cards and well reports must be submitted electronically using the Department's e-file system. Both the start card and well report e-file system are available for use and can be found on the Resources for Well Constructors web page: <https://www.oregon.gov/owrd/programs/GWWL/WCC/resourcesforwellconstructors/Pages/default.aspx> The Department has created videos on how to e-file start cards, well constructor notifications, and special standard requests, using the e-file system. The next video scheduled to be released will be on how to e-file a well report. Please visit the Well Construction Program Video Tutorials web page at <https://www.oregon.gov/owrd/programs/GWWL/WCC/resourcesforwellconstructors/Pages/Well%20Construction%20Program%20Video%20Tutorials.aspx> to see the available and upcoming videos.

For questions regarding e-filing requirements, please contact Travis Kelly, Well Construction Compliance Coordinator, at Travis.N.Kelly@water.oregon.gov or (971) 304-5079.

START CARD NOTIFICATIONS

The implementation of House Bill (HB) 2145 brought a lot of changes to the well construction industry. Two of the most important changes are the requirements for the constructor to submit commence work and seal placement notifications. Since these requirements were so different for the industry compared to what they were used to, the Department decided to provide a grace period and spend the first year of the implementation process to work with the industry on the changes to help drillers be successful. It has now been almost a year since the changes took effect; the Department is now preparing to end the grace period and enforce the notification requirements after July 1, 2024.

As a reminder, the notifications require that on the day that work on the well commences, the licensed or permitted person shall, before commencing work, notify the Department that the work is about to commence. Additionally, if the actual date for seal placement is not the date proposed on the start card, the licensed or permitted person shall notify the Department of the change at least four hours before placing the seal.

Well constructors that are unsure of their notification responsibilities are encouraged to contact the Department prior to July 1, so that they are prepared to comply with the requirements after the grace period.

Questions about the notification requirements should be directed to Tommy Laird, Well Construction Program Coordinator, at (503) 302-8618 or Tommy.K.Laird@water.oregon.gov.

WELL CONSTRUCTOR LICENSE RENEWALS

For well constructors who have licenses expiring on June 30, 2024, this is reminder that the fee for a two-year water supply or monitoring well license renewal is **\$150.00**. An additional fee of **\$100.00** will be assessed for renewals submitted after **June 30, 2024**.

Well constructors must have a minimum of **14** continuing education credits (CECs) to renew their license. Of the 14 credits, a minimum of two **credits must be in Oregon rules and regulations**. An online rules course is offered on the Department's website for those that wish to get their rules credits online. The Department's online course costs **\$40 a credit hour** and is available at: http://apps.wrd.state.or.us/apps/gw/cec_rules_course/. Use the same login credentials that you use for electronic submittal of well reports and start cards. Please click the checkbox after reading the "Statement of Integrity" to enter the course. Unfortunately, online payment for the course is not yet available; please **mail in the invoice and payment** to WRD's Salem office via check or money order.

Well constructors who currently meet the minimum CEC requirement, may renew their license online here: https://apps.wrd.state.or.us/apps/gw/well_license_renewal/secure/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=/apps/gw/well_license_renewal/secure

License renewal paperwork will be mailed to the business address you have on file with the Department at the end of April. Please go to the Department's website and log into the "Update Contact Information" here to verify that WRD has your current information: https://apps.wrd.state.or.us/apps/gw/well_license_address_update/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fapps%2fgw%2fwell_license_address_update%2fDefault.aspx

Questions related to license renewals or CECs may be directed to Buffy Madrigal-Adams at Buffy.M.Madrigal-Adams@water.oregon.gov or (971) 287-8305.



UPDATING WELL CONSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFO ONLINE

Well constructors can update their own contact information at any time on the Water Resources Department's (WRD) website: https://apps.wrd.state.or.us/apps/gw/well_license_address_update/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fapps%2fgw%2fwell_license_address_update%2fDefault.aspx

Drillers can log in using the same password that is used for the e-filing portals. When accessing the site, drillers will see what contact information WRD currently has on file on the left side of the screen. Changes can be made on the right side of the screen and submitted by clicking the "Update" button as seen in the screenshot at right.

There is also an opportunity to verify contact information during the license renewal process. If drillers choose to renew online, they will be asked to verify their information. If they choose to renew by paper and check, they will receive documentation showing what is currently on file for them and an opportunity to make any changes.

For questions about updating contact information or acquiring a password, please contact Buffy Madrigal-Adams, Well Licensing Specialist, at (971) 287-8305 or Buffy.M.Madrigal-Adams@water.oregon.gov.

WELL DRILLERS AND WATER RIGHTS

Well constructors play an important role in the development of a water right permit. It is important that the well be constructed in both the authorized location and manner specified in the permit or transfer. Because of this, the Department encourages water right applicants to wait until after the permit or transfer has been issued to construct the well. Constructing the well before a permit has been issued may result in a denial of a permit application if the construction does not meet the necessary seal depth or location for that site. An existing permit may also be cancelled if the well construction fails to meet the location or construction conditions of the permit. This can be avoided by asking the person contracting for a well if it is for a water right, whether the water right has been issued, and whether well construction conditions have been placed on the permit.

Here is a list of some of the conditions that drillers need to be aware of:

Well Location for Water Right Permits - Permits contain specific coordinates for each authorized well. It is important that the well be drilled as close to the authorized location as possible. It may be helpful for the landowner to hire a surveyor or Certified Water Right Examiner (CWRE) to establish that point on the ground based on the authorized coordinates. If the well cannot be drilled in the authorized location, or if the permit holder wishes to establish additional wells not previously authorized under the permit, they should request and receive a permit amendment to obtain authorization for the new or additional wells before beginning well construction.

Well Location for Water Right Transfers – Transfers also contain specific coordinates for each authorized well. Again, it is important that the well be drilled as close to the authorized location as possible, and it may be helpful for the landowner to hire a surveyor or CWRE to establish that point on the ground based on the authorized coordinates. Transfers differ from permits in that there is not a process to change or add additional wells once the transfer final order is issued. Because of this, it is very important that the well be drilled in the authorized location.

Continued next page

Well Drillers and Water Rights, Cont'd

Specific Well Construction Standards – Permits and transfers may require that the well be constructed above minimum construction standards. These special well construction standards may include casing and sealing to specific depths, or into specific geologic formations. In addition, there may be requirements that limit the production of water to a specific water bearing zone.

Installation of a Measuring Tube – Many permits require the installation of a measuring tube. Well construction plans should take this requirement into account.

Questions about the intersection of well constructors and water rights should be directed to Travis Kelly, Well Construction Compliance Coordinator, at: Travis.N.Kelly@water.oregon.gov or (971) 304-5079.

FREE WELL WATER TESTING FOR SOUTH DESCHUTES CO RESIDENTS

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is extending a well-water testing program to residents in southern areas of Deschutes County.

Water from residential wells will be analyzed for contaminants that pose a potential health risk, including nitrates, arsenic, pesticides, and herbicides, among others. The program will accept up to 40 landowners with a well and they will provide the results to them for free. These sample results will be made publicly available, but landowner information will not be included in the public database. Well users will receive testing results after the report is published.

Southern Deschutes County is targeted because groundwater data in the area shows elevated nitrate levels in some water samples. Sources of groundwater contamination can include failing septic systems, application of fertilizer or pesticides, and leaking underground fuel tanks.

For more details, check out the program webpage: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/programs/Pages/GWP.aspx>.)

Landowners with concerns about their water quality should contact the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality at: (503) 693-5736 or groundwater.monitoring@deq.oregon.gov to be considered for testing.



GROUNDWATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE SOLICITATION

The Groundwater Advisory Committee (GWAC) is a nine-member committee appointed by the Oregon Water Resources Commission to advise the Commission on groundwater issues. The appointment terms of three GWAC members expire each year on November 30. Agency staff will recommend candidates for open positions at the Water Resources Commission meeting in December 2024. Appointments will be made for a three-year term expiring on November 30, 2027.

GWAC vacancies may be filled by individuals with expertise in and representing interests of one or more of the following: well drilling industry, hydrogeology, irrigation, local government, Indian Tribes, environment, public health, industry, commerce, water project development, watershed enhancement, instream flow, agriculture, well pump installation, exempt groundwater users, or any other category with a groundwater interest. We also look for candidates representing various regions of the state.

Those wishing to apply for membership are encouraged to electronically submit a brief letter describing their background and groundwater interest to:

wrd_dl_director@water.oregon.gov.

An interest letter may also be sent by mail to:

Douglas Woodcock, Interim Director
Oregon Water Resources Department
725 Summer St. NE, Ste. A
Salem, Oregon 97301

There is a rolling application process for GWAC positions and letters of interest are accepted year-round. However, a letter of interest should be received by October 31, 2024, to ensure consideration for appointment in December 2024.

For additional information, please contact Justin Iverson at (503) 302-9728 or Justin.T.Iverson@water.oregon.gov.

MEET ANNETTE LIEBE



Annette joined the Water Resources Department (WRD) in June 2022 as the Technical Services Administrator. In this position Annette provides leadership to the Well Construction, Dam Safety, Groundwater and Surface Water Hydrology programs. Prior to joining WRD, Annette served as Regional Solutions Coordinator for Central and South-Central Oregon and Regional Solutions Director in the administrations of Governors Brown and Kitzhaber.

Annette was born in Berlin, Germany and grew up in Boulder, Colorado; she attended the University of Colorado where she earned a BA in Interpersonal and Organization Communication. During college and the following gap year, Annette worked as a Bank Teller. Standing between someone and "their" money gave her a keen sense of customer service and a desire to pursue a career more aligned with her personal interests. This led to the study of environmental and natural resources law at the University of Oregon. After law school, Annette moved back to Colorado for a couple years before following a partner back to Oregon. Prior to joining the Governor's Office, Annette lived in Portland and held leadership

positions in Oregon's water and air quality programs during her 17 years with the Department of Environmental Quality.

Annette is happiest outdoors and loves to ski, bike, hike and play with the family dog. She and her family live and work in Bend.

WATER WELL ABANDONMENTS USING UNHYDRATED BENTONITE

One of the most common types of grouts used in water well abandonments is unhydrated bentonite. It can be used in both the cased and uncased portion of the well. In the cased portion of the well, an original well report must show proof of the original seal and where the seal is placed. For the cased portions of the well where there is no seal, the casing must be ripped or perforated, and cement grout must be used to abandon that interval. The uncased portion of the well may be entirely abandoned with bentonite, drillers are just encouraged to be aware of the diameter, depth, and if there is water in the well, because there are restrictions on the depth it can be placed.

When there is water in the well, a total dissolved solids (TDS) reading must be taken and recorded on the report, as bentonite may only be used in water with a TDS that is less than 800 parts per million (ppm). Along with the TDS, there are also depth limits for the use of unhydrated bentonite. Wells at least four inches in diameter and less than eight inches in diameter may be abandoned with unhydrated bentonite to a maximum depth of 700 feet through water and 1000 feet if dry. Wells with diameters at least eight inches may be abandoned with unhydrated bentonite to a maximum depth of 1200 feet through water and 1500 feet if dry.

When abandoning a well with bentonite, the resulting seal must be free of voids and bridges. To help ensure this, OAR 690-220-0115 requires that the bentonite be screened across a minimum 1/4-inch mesh screen during placement, and the pour rate shall not be less than two minutes per 50-pound sack. In addition, a sounding or tamping tool must be used in the sealing interval during placement to measure the fill rate and to break up possible bridges. If there is a dry sealing interval, then that interval must be hydrated in maximum 10-foot lifts with potable water from land surface to a minimum depth of 50 feet below land surface (bls). This hydration will help to ensure activation.

Questions regarding well abandonments should be directed to Tommy Laird, Well Construction Program Coordinator, at Tommy.K.Laird@water.oregon.gov or (503) 302-8618.

MONITORING WELL ABANDONMENT

Monitoring wells are constructed in areas of **known or reasonably suspected contamination**. Because of this, it is important to make sure that they are constructed and abandoned in a manner that is **protective of the resource and consistent with State standards**.

When abandoning monitoring wells, the rules are specific about the different options available to the driller. In areas where groundwater contamination has been identified, the abandonment procedure requires the borehole to be completely redrilled to a minimum of the original diameter. All casing, screen, annular sealing material, drill cuttings, debris, and filter pack material must be removed prior to sealing.

If remediation occurred, then any other abandonment method would require a special standard. In areas where groundwater contamination has not been identified, the well can be abandoned by filling the casing from the bottom up with an approved sealing material. This is contingent, however, on the fact that it can be verified that the monitoring well was constructed according to the rules. If it is not possible to verify the original construction, then the well must be abandoned by drilling out the original well and sealing it to standards. Finally, to ensure that wells that are constructed outside of the normal requirements are abandoned properly, monitoring wells that were constructed under special standards can only be abandoned under special standards.

Monitoring well abandonment procedures can be found in Oregon Administrative Rule 690-240-0510.

Questions about monitoring well abandonments should be directed to Tommy Laird, Well Construction Program Coordinator, at Tommy.K.Laird@water.oregon.gov or (503) 302-8618.

UNDERGROUND UTILITIES



Before beginning the construction of a well, drillers should call 811 to make sure that they are not drilling into a buried natural gas, electric, tele-communications, water, or sewer line. Not only is this a good habit, but it is also the law. There is one exception to this requirement, however, and that is for private property owners and tenants that excavate less than 12 inches deep into an area that is not an established easement.

The 811 notification system works by submitting a locate request at Oregon811.com or by calling 811, and then waiting at least two business days before starting a drilling project.



By waiting, drillers are providing the service enough time to mark the underground lines and utilities so that they are

aware of the approximate location of the underground lines, pipes and cables, marked or flagged with color coded paint.

Remember, individuals should not rely on old drawings or maps, or the landowner's knowledge to locate buried utility lines as they may not be reliable. In addition, enforcement action can be taken by the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) against those who do not use the one-call system and utility service providers that don't provide location and marking services.

APWA UNIFORM COLOR CODE	
WHITE :	Proposed Excavation
PINK :	Temporary Survey Markings
RED :	Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables
YELLOW :	Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials
ORANGE :	Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit
BLUE :	Potable Water
PURPLE :	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines
GREEN :	Sewer and Drain Lines

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Well inspectors and WCC staff at OGWA Spring Conference



Dug well cleanout for abandonment



Drill rig in NW Oregon

Leaking flowing artesian well in NC Oregon





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WELL SAID NEWSLETTER - Oregon Water Resources Dept

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