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## WELL SAID NEWSLETTER

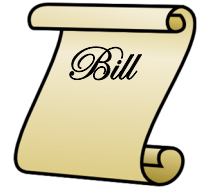
Available on the web at OWRD home page, under *Agency Spotlight > Well Said Newsletter*. Please share with others at your organization. *Well Said* is a production of the OWRD Well Construction Section and is designed to inform the drilling industry and the public about program activities and other items 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](mailto:Kristopher.R.Byrd@water.oregon.gov)



Serving the public by practicing and promoting responsible water management.

## WELL PROGRAM CHANGES EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2024



In 2021, Oregon House Bill (HB) 2145 passed the legislature to: (a) modernize and increase the efficiency of the well construction program to prevent well deficiencies that can lead to contamination or waste of groundwater; (b) better protect groundwater resources for Oregonians; and (c) give the well construction industry timely assurance that their work is being performed in a manner that is consistent with state requirements. The phased implementation of the new law is underway, with the final changes going into effect on July 1, 2024.

### Effective July 1, 2024, the following changes went into effect:

- **All Start Cards must be e-filed using the Department's online e-file system.**
- **All Well Reports must be e-filed using the Department's online e-file system.**
- **Paper Start Card and Well Reports can only be submitted with prior written approval.**

In May and June, department staff reached out to all well constructors who file paper start cards and well reports to remind them about the upcoming changes and to address any questions or concerns. To assist with the e-file requirements, the department has created video tutorials titled *How to E-file Start Cards* and *How to E-file Well Reports*, on the Well Construction Program Video Tutorials web page, at <https://www.oregon.gov/owrd/programs/GWWL/WCC/resourcesforwellconstructors/Pages/WellConstructionProgramVideoTutorials.aspx>. A new "Paper Submittal Request Form" is available on the department's website for those who have a continuing need to file using paper.

For questions about filing paper start cards and well reports please contact Travis Kelly, Well Construction Compliance Coordinator, at (971) 304-5079 or [Travis.N.Kelly@water.oregon.gov](mailto:Travis.N.Kelly@water.oregon.gov).

If you have questions about e-filing or need help with the web applications, please contact Buffy Madrigal-Adams, Well Licensing Specialist, at (971) 287-8305 or [Buffy.M.Madrigal-Adams@water.oregon.gov](mailto:Buffy.M.Madrigal-Adams@water.oregon.gov).

## REQUESTS TO FILE PAPER START CARDS OR WELL REPORTS

After July 1, 2024, paper filing of start cards and well reports require **prior approval**. A Paper Submittal Request form, available on the department's website, will be required at the time the documents are filed. Once reviewed, an approval/denial will be issued similar to the Special Standards Request process. If a paper start card or well report is submitted without the Paper Submittal Request form, it will be entered into the database; however, the driller will be contacted by the department with a reminder that start cards and well reports may only be e-filed. Should paper submittals continue to occur without approval, the driller may be subject to enforcement action.

A Paper Submittal Request form must be submitted every time a driller intends to file a paper start card and/or well report.

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## Requests to File Paper Start Cards... Cont'd

On the request form, the driller will need to select the documents to be submitted on paper (Start Card, Well Report, or both), describe the circumstances preventing them from electronically filing the start card and/or well report, the start card number, location and street address of the well, name and address of the landowner, and the bonded well constructors name, license number, e-mail, and signature. Each start card and/or well report submitted on paper requires a Paper Submittal Request form. Additional start cards and/or well reports will require their own forms. There will be no after-the-fact approvals for paper filed documents, as approval must be received prior to submittal.

For questions regarding the paper submittal request process, please contact Tommy Laird, Well Construction Program Coordinator, at (503) 302-8618 or by email at [Tommy.K.Laird@water.oregon.gov](mailto:Tommy.K.Laird@water.oregon.gov).

## START CARD NOTIFICATIONS

Effective July 1, 2023, well constructors were required to submit commence work and seal placement notifications. Because the notifications were such a big change for the industry, the department provided a grace period for the first year to work with drillers on the changes and to help them be successful. With the end of the year-long grace period, the department will now begin enforcing the notification requirements, beginning 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 begin. 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. Both notification types can be submitted via the online e-file Start Card platform.

For additional information on how to submit these notifications, please see the video tutorial titled "Well Constructor Notification Tutorial", on the [Well Construction Program Video Tutorials](#) web page.

Well constructors with questions, or who are unsure of their notification responsibilities, should contact Travis Kelly, Well Construction Compliance Coordinator, at (971) 304-5079 or [Travis.N.Kelly@water.oregon.gov](mailto:Travis.N.Kelly@water.oregon.gov).

## WELL REPORT REVIEWS: DEFICIENCY FOLLOW-UP

July 1, 2022, marked the beginning of the Department's efforts to review **100%** of completed well reports, as mandated by House Bill 2145 (2021). These reviews ensure that the well report is complete, and based on information contained in the well report, that the well appears to have been constructed in accordance with **minimum well construction standards**. Technical well report reviews and on-site inspections are used to verify that wells are constructed to minimum well construction standards. As a follow-up to the review, the department notifies the bonded well constructor that their well reports have been evaluated, and they reach out to drillers regarding any potential deficiencies found during reviews.

Bonded drillers are required to sign the well report certifying that the information on the report is correct to the best of their knowledge and belief. To ensure resolution is achieved for well reports with identified deficiencies, the well report reviewer contacts the driller via e-mail. Drillers should reply to the e-mail with the **amendments** needed, or answer questions about the report. If a response is not received, a **follow-up letter** will be sent to the driller's mailing address on record requesting that the unresolved deficiencies be addressed.

If no response is received to the initial letter, a **certified letter** will then be sent requesting resolution of the unresolved deficiencies. If the department does not receive a response after sending the certified letter, the bonded driller may be referred for enforcement action.

For questions regarding well report reviews or deficiency resolution, please contact Travis Kelly, Well Construction Compliance Coordinator, at (971) 304-5079 or [Travis.N.Kelly@water.oregon.gov](mailto:Travis.N.Kelly@water.oregon.gov).

# NEW DIRECTOR AT OWRD



The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) is pleased to announce the confirmation of Ivan Gall as the Department's new director, following his executive appointment by Governor Tina Kotek and confirmation by the Oregon Senate. Ivan brings a wealth of experience and a commitment to this critical role of sustainable water management. As the head of OWRD, he will oversee the state's water resources, ensuring their responsible allocation, conservation, and protection. His extensive background in water science, policy, and administration uniquely positions him to address the challenges facing Oregon's water supply.

Ivan brings over 30 years of experience in water science, water resource management, and environmental policy. Over his tenure with OWRD, he has served as a hydrogeologist, region and section manager, and administrator, before most recently serving as interim deputy director since September 2022. He has worked to reorganize field staff into new watermaster districts (Willamette, Crooked and Walla Walla River basins) and created a sixth region to focus on complex water issues in the Klamath and Goose/Summer Lake basins. His expertise in water rights, irrigation, and sustainable practices will be invaluable as Oregon faces increasing demands on its water supply due to population growth, climate change, and competing uses.

The confirmation of Ivan Gall as director comes after a rigorous selection process, during which his qualifications, vision, and commitment to public service were thoroughly evaluated. His tenure began July 1, and he is eager to collaborate with OWRD staff, water partners, Tribes, and the public to safeguard Oregon's water resource.

## STATEWIDE FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR DRY WELLS

The Well Abandonment, Repair, and Replacement Fund (WARRF) has received an additional **\$1 million** in funding and is now accepting applications. These funds will provide financial assistance to help Oregonians repair or replace and permanently abandon a household well that is dry or severely declining or that was damaged or destroyed by wildfire and is unable to supply water for household purposes. The department will award grants up to **\$40,000** to eligible applicants. Last year when funding was open, grants averaged about **\$28,500**, so we expect to be able to assist up to 40 homeowners with funding. We will continue accepting applications until all the funding has been awarded. An important update to this round of funding is that it is available **statewide** and does not need to be in a county with a drought declaration, as was previously required.

This program has been incredibly successful, with over **\$5 million** previously awarded to grant recipients throughout the state since June 2022. We strongly encourage drillers to inform landowners of this program.

### Well Abandonment, Repair, and Replacement Fund Summary

**Grant Awards:** Funding up to \$40,000 per grant will be awarded to eligible applicants who submit completed applications in the order received until all funds have been awarded.

**Eligibility:**

- The household is low to moderate income
- The property is the homeowner's only residence (unless displaced by natural disaster), and the homeowner does not own any additional property.
- The well is connected to the home for the purpose of supplying water for drinking, culinary, washing, bathing, a small household garden, or other household uses.
- The well is unable to supply enough water for household purposes.
- The property does not have an alternate source of water available.

**Total Funding Available:** \$1 million

**WARRF**

For more information, please contact Lisa Kingsley at [OWRD.Well.Funding@water.oregon.gov](mailto:OWRD.Well.Funding@water.oregon.gov) or (503) 779-5763.

# MONITORING WELL SEALS

Recent technical well report reviews by department staff have found monitoring well reports that list concrete as a seal material. As a reminder, concrete is not an approved grout for sealing monitoring wells. Concrete may be used in the construction of a pad around the above-ground monitoring well protective casing, as well as in a flush-grade monument, but may not be used in the annular space of the well for sealing.

Approved sealing material for monitoring wells are neat cement, sodium bentonite, a cement-bentonite grout mixture, or unhydrated sodium bentonite granules, pellets, or chips. It is important to note that if a grout slurry is used, the well constructor must meet the mud weight requirements and include that information on the well report. For neat cement, the mud weight must be approximately 15.6 pounds per gallon. Bentonite slurry must have a minimum mud weight of at least 9.5 pounds per gallon and contain at least 20 percent solids. Lastly, a cement-bentonite mixture must have a mud weight of approximately 14.1 pounds per gallons, and cannot be more than five percent, by dry weight, of sodium bentonite gel powder (3.75 pounds of bentonite per sack of cement).

For questions regarding monitoring well seals, please contact Tommy Laird, Well Construction Program Coordinator, at [Tommy.K.Laird@water.oregon.gov](mailto:Tommy.K.Laird@water.oregon.gov) or (503) 302-8618.

## MEET TIM SEYMOUR



Tim Seymour joined the Water Resources Department (WRD) in June 2022 as the Groundwater Section Assistant Manager. In this position, Tim assists Justin Iverson in the management and support of twenty Groundwater Section staff, as well as ensuring they have what they need to be successful. Prior to joining WRD, Tim served as the East Region Emergency Coordinator for the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM).

Tim grew up on a cattle ranch outside of Haines, Oregon, where he learned at an early age the value of holding senior water rights. He attended the University of Oregon and earned a degree in business administration. After graduation, Tim spent years working for a technology company in Washington, DC, managing teams of people providing support services to members

of Congress and their staff. When the opportunity presented itself, he moved back to Oregon with his wife and eventually to her family farm near Milton-Freewater, while continuing to work in information technology. During the pandemic, Tim decided to completely shift careers and moved to public service with OEM.

Tim enjoys trail running, skiing, and spending time with his wife and daughter. He also volunteers as a local school board member and with Umatilla County Search and Rescue.

## NEW STAFF



# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Irrigation well abandonment in eastern Oregon



Travis Kelly inspecting a well in NW Oregon



Well seal damaged during pitless adapter installation



Well inspectors at training event in NC Oregon



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## WELL SAID NEWSLETTER - Oregon Water Resources Dept

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