

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL FOR A HIGH CAPACITY WELL SYSTEM, SCHOOL WELLS AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT WELLS

In accordance with Sections NR 812.09(4)(a) & (b), Wisconsin Administrative Code, prior department approval is necessary for the construction, reconstruction, or operation of a high capacity well system, school well system, or wastewater treatment plant well system. Prior approval is also necessary before a high capacity well or well system can be operated after a change of ownership. Starting on May 1, 2005, a \$500 application fee is required for high capacity well applications except that there is no fee required for a high capacity well application that is solely for a change of ownership. An application for a wastewater treatment plant well or a school well that is not a high capacity well does not require the high capacity well application fee, but these wells will require that the notification fee for a low capacity well be paid prior to construction.

Section NR 812.07(53), Wisconsin Administrative Code defines a high capacity well system as one or more wells, drillholes or mine shafts used or to be used to withdraw water for any purpose on one property, if the total pumping or flowing capacity of all wells, drillholes or mine shafts on one property is 70 or more gallons per minute based on the pump curve at the lowest system pressure setting, or based on the flow rate.

An application for a high capacity well system, well for a school or well for a wastewater treatment plant should be made on the appropriate form, as follows:

- Form Number 3300-256. This form is used for most high capacity wells. If you are seeking approval for a school well or a well for a wastewater treatment plant, use this form. The current version of the form is labeled (R 7/05) and this version should be used. The department will accept older versions of the form however the current version of the form was revised for latitude and longitude format. The format is in degrees and minutes with minutes quantified to three digits to the right of the decimal point (example: latitude 43 degrees and 4.512 minutes north, longitude 89 degrees and 22.833 minutes west).
- Form Number 3300-257. This form is a streamlined form for certain types of proposed wells that have a capacity of less than 70 gallons per minute on a property that already is a high capacity property. The current version of the form is labeled (R 7/05) and should be used. The department will accept older versions of the form but the older versions of the form use an incorrect format for latitude and longitude.
- Form Number 3300-258. This form is specific to temporary construction dewatering projects of short duration. There also is a separate guidance document available for preparation of this form. The current version of the form is labeled (R 11/02).

Only submit one form for the entire property.

The above listed forms are available on the internet at: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/hicap.html>. You can download the form and print it from your computer. In some situations, better quality copies of the form will be obtained if the following instructions are followed for printing from your computer system:

- Adobe Reader Version 5. Click on “File” and click on “Print,” then uncheck the box that is labeled “Shrink oversized pages to paper size.” Then, click on “OK” to print.
- Adobe Reader Version 6. Click on “File” and click on “Print,” then select “none” for page scaling, then click on “OK” to print.

The above listed forms include blank graph paper for the applicant to use for sketch maps and diagrams. Some computer configurations may not be able to print the graph paper due to memory limitations. Other paper (graph, lined, blank, etc.) can be used for sketch maps and diagrams instead of the graph paper that is provided.

If you do not have a computer and access to the internet to obtain a copy of a form, you can request a paper copy of the pertinent form at (608) 266-0821. Paper copies of the forms can also be requested by fax by faxing a request to the Private Water Systems Section at (608) 267-7650 or by mail to the Private Water Systems Section, WDNR DG/2, P.O. Box 7921, Madison WI 53707-7921. Paper copies of the requested form will be mailed to the requester the next business day.

If you have any questions regarding the preparation of a **complete** high capacity water supply proposal, you can contact Mark Putra, R.S., Section Chief (608) 267-7649.

Additional important information about the approval process for high capacity wells, school wells and wastewater treatment plant wells, is as follows:

- There are different well construction requirements for high capacity wells than for low capacity wells. Refer to Chapter NR 812, Wisconsin Administrative Code.
- All wells on a high capacity property are defined as high capacity wells. If you wish to construct a well with a capacity of less than 70 gallons per minute to the construction standards for low capacity wells on a high capacity property, you will need to request a variance.
- If the application is for a school, Chapter NR 812 Wisconsin Administrative Code has more stringent setback and construction requirements for school wells, such as at least 200 feet from any soil absorption field and 250 feet if the soil absorption field has an operating capacity greater than or equal to 8,000 gallons per day. School water supply well applications should include an estimate of the number of students and staff.
- If the application is for a wastewater treatment plant, Chapter NR 812 Wisconsin Administrative Code has more stringent casing depth requirements for certain types of wastewater treatment plants.
- Most applications can be submitted by the owner or an agent of the owner. The exception is that plans and specifications for a school well or wastewater treatment plant well shall be submitted by a registered professional engineer or well driller for wells, and by a registered professional engineer or pump installer for pumps. See NR 812.09(3) for more information.
- If you wish to use a pitless adapter or pitless unit for a school or high capacity well, specific approval must be obtained as part of the approval for the well. Only equipment currently in the Department's List of Approved Equipment can be used. The department requires that the pitless adapter or pitless unit be pressure tested as a condition of the approval. Refer to Section NR 812.31(2)(c), Wisconsin Administrative Code for more information.
- The Department has the authority to set specific requirements for the design of high capacity wells to minimize the risk for groundwater contamination affecting the quality of the water that may be extracted by the well. See Section NR 812.09(4), Wisconsin Administrative Code.
- Wells that are located in or near the arsenic advisory area in the Fox River Valley will be evaluated on a case by case basis. There is a high probability that the Department will require additional well casing and restrict the use of air rotary drilling in this area. For more information either contact your local Department Drinking Water Specialist or log on to <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/arsenic/index.htm>.
- When more than one water source will serve a common plumbing system (system with more than one well or a system served by wells and municipal supply), the department will require check valves, backflow preventers and/or other components for backflow prevention. Such systems are reviewed on a case by case basis. A schematic of the proposed system must be included in the application.
- If the proposed high capacity well system will be for a new nontransient noncommunity water system, a Capacity Evaluation Form (form number 3300-246) must also be submitted. A nontransient noncommunity water system is a system that will regularly serve at least 25 of the same people over 6 months of the year. This includes schools and may include several types of businesses.
- The department can rescind any approval if it determines that the applicant submitted an inaccurate or incorrect application. The department can also rescind an approval if the high capacity well system is not constructed and operated in accordance with all the conditions of the department's approval.
- The department may limit pumping capacity or deny an approval for a high capacity well(s) if the department believes that operation of the high capacity well(s) would have an adverse impact on water availability to a public utility well. See Section NR 812.09(4)(a)1., Wisconsin Administrative Code.

- The department shall complete its review and issue an approval or deny the approval within 65 business days after receipt of a **complete** application. The start of the 65 day review period will not begin until a **complete** application is received by the department, incomplete applications will be returned.

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers:

- Why does the department need to have information about existing wells on the property when an approval for a new high capacity well is requested? There are two answers: First, the department has to evaluate the potential impacts to a public utility well that will be caused by all wells on a high capacity property. The second answer is that department approvals are written for all wells on a property, not just the proposed well.
- The forms ask for a lot of information, do I need to provide answers to all questions? Answer: Some topics are more important than others. Several examples include:
 - If you do not have complete information about the construction of an existing well, provide all of the information that you can provide. The department expects that a good faith effort will be made to gather and provide complete information, and the department considers a good faith effort to include a site inspection. But, the department recognizes that there are times when the requested information will not be available.
 - The proposed well construction has to be approved by the department, so information about construction of the proposed well is very critical and must be included.
 - The forms request well location by latitude and longitude. In the past the department accepted applications without this information but in the future you will need to use a Global Positioning System unit to obtain the latitude and longitude of existing wells and the proposed well location. The department needs accurate information to assess possible impacts to trout streams, exceptional and outstanding resources waters.

Contact one of the people that are listed on page one if you have additional questions.

- How long will it take to get an approval? Answer: The department reviews applications and issues approvals on a first-in first-out basis. At times, an approval may take over two months, but at other times when there are very few applications pending, an approval may take less than two weeks. By law, the department has to provide a decision within 65 days business after receiving a **complete** application.

- Is there anything I can do to expedite an approval? Answer: The best way to ascertain that an approval will be obtained in the least amount of time is to make sure that the application is complete and accurate. When critical information in an application is missing or is incorrect, it will take longer to get an approval. If the department requests additional information during the approval process, providing that information in a timely basis will also expedite the approval.

- When I won the bid to drill the well, the property owner did not provide detailed information on the property boundary to me. Do I need this information? Answer: The department does not issue approvals for a single proposed well, instead the department issues approvals for all existing and proposed wells on a high capacity property. Thus, the property boundary is critical information for the department to review in the approval process. If incomplete or inaccurate information on the property boundary is submitted in the application, the approval may be delayed.

- The forms ask for pumping capacity, estimates for average water usage and for maximum daily water usage? Can I just provide pumping capacity and leave the other lines blank? Answer: The department's data base of high capacity wells is used by many people inside and outside the department for water planning. The most accurate information that is available should be provided so that planners can depend on the data in the department's data base. If this data is not provided, the application is not complete and the approval will not be granted.

- What if I do not know where the nearest well is that is operated by a public utility? You may need to contact nearby communities. If a utility cites security reasons for not identifying detailed well locations, state that on the form and provide a distance estimate to that community boundary instead.

- Why can't I get approval for more pumping capacity from my golf course irrigation well? Answer: The department limits the pumping rate when there is the potential for an adverse impact at the location of a well that is operated by a public utility. See Section NR 812.09(4)(a)1., Wisconsin Administrative Code. When major land developments are proposed that will need high capacity wells near public utility wells, the developer may wish to consider the location of the wells during initial project planning.

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