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## **WATER WELL INFORMATION**

### **Sealing Old Wells**

Since 1990, Minnesota Legislature passed new laws protecting our most valued resource-ground water. These new laws regulated the proper installation, maintenance, and sealing of water well and borings.

The new law states that all wells must be in good operating order, have a maintenance permit, or must be sealed by a licensed water well contractor. When you sell your home or transfer your property, you must sign a well disclosure affidavit indicating that the well is either in good working order or has been sealed by a licensed water well contractor.

### **You Are Required to Seal Your Well If:**

The Minnesota Department of Health will require you to seal any well you have on your property if:

- 1.The well is contaminated
- 2.The well was attempted to be sealed- but done so incorrectly
- 3.The well is located, constructed, or maintained in a manner that continues to endanger the groundwater quality or is a safety or health hazard
- 4.The well is inoperable and there is no maintenance permit held by the property owner

Closing on property transfers will be delayed until the water well is either repaired to good working order, or is sealed in accordance to state laws.

### **Servicing Existing Wells**

By law, your water well must be in good operating condition. The Minnesota State Department of Health may require you to repair or reconstruct your water well to meet the new codes and law. If you have an older residential well, or need repair on your present newer well, call a Certified Master Water Well Contractors for a full analysis.

The Contractor will analyze your situation and tell you what must be done to bring your well up to code, to register your well with the state, and to file the necessary forms.

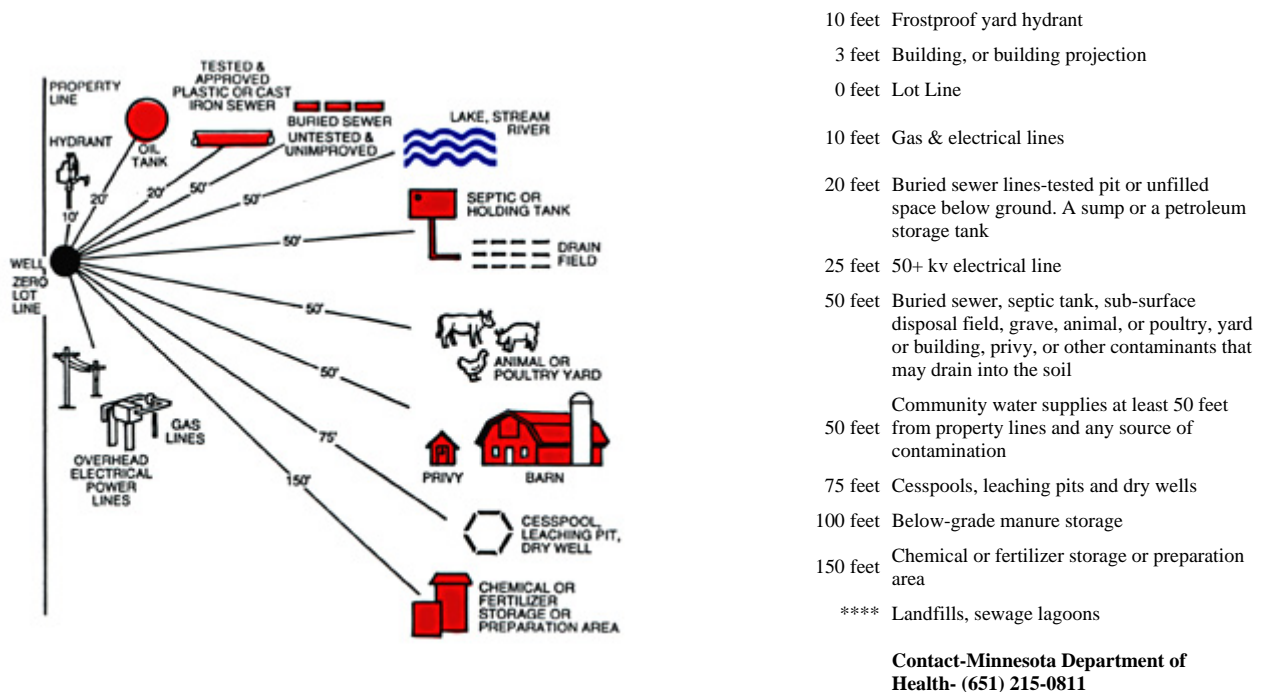
*A well provides a reliable, safe source of drinking water when the well is properly located, constructed, and maintained. You can ensure that your well provides a safe source of drinking water [by testing the water periodically](#), sealing unused wells, and keeping potential sources of contamination away from the well.*

The following is basic information to assist you in protecting your well:

### Location

The diagram below indicates minimum separation distances that are required between wells and some potential sources of contamination. The minimum distances to these and other potential sources are listed in Minnesota Rules, Chapter 4725. Minnesota state law requires that potential sources of contamination must be kept a minimum distance away from a water supply well. You must maintain these distances when constructing a new well: installing potential contaminant sources, such as a fuel storage tank, septic system, or a feedlot; or when constructing new buildings; or adding onto existing structures.

### Minimum Separation or "isolation" distances between wells and contamination sources



Wells which do not have 50 feet of watertight casing & which do not penetrate at least 10 feet of impervious material such as clay, must be located twice as far from contamination source where contaminants are entering the soil.

### Casing Damage

Be careful not to BUMP the well while working with trucks, farm equipment, lawn mowers, or snow plows. Bumping the well can crack the well casing, connections, or the grout seal around the well. Such damage may allow contaminants to enter the well. If a well is located in a high traffic area, protect it by placing three steel posts around it. Place flags or reflectors on protective posts or the well casing to increase the visibility of the well.

### **Equipment Washing**

Wash equipment at least 50 feet away from the well and in a down slope direction.

### **Farm Animals**

Keep farm animals at least 50 feet away from the well (100 ft for wells that are less than 50 ft deep).

### **Hazardous Chemicals**

Store agricultural chemicals at least 150 feet away from the well unless the storage area meets the standards of the MN Department of Agriculture. Portable anhydrous ammonia tanks should be at least 50 feet away from the well. Fill bulk or spray tanks at least 150 feet away from the well preferably in a down slope direction. When filling tanks, avoid the potential for back-siphoning into your well by fixing the nozzle of the fill hose above the tank opening and allowing the water to fall at least twice the diameter of the delivery pipe before entering the tank (air gap). Another way to avoid back-siphoning is to use a backflow prevention device.

### **Plumbing**

Keep plumbing in good repair to maintain watertight connections. Make sure that any faucet that is threaded for a hose has a backflow prevention device. Connections that are not protected may back siphon contaminants into the water supply system.

### **Septic System**

Recommendations for pumping septic tanks are based on the use and size of the system. This information is available from the University of MN- Extension or the MN Pollution Control Agency. Do not rely on additives as a substitute for regular pumping of the tank. They may simply dissolve materials and send them to the drain field. Do not dispose of hazardous materials, such as solvents and oil, in the septic system.

### **Water Quality Test**

Test your well water for Coli form bacteria every year. Test for nitrate every two or three years, or more frequently if nitrate previously has been found. If the well shows contamination, consult your local county health department or the MDH. Have the well and plumbing system disinfected after work is done on the well or pump.

### **Well Cover**

Keep an approved cap securely attached to the well in order to prevent the entry of insects, animals, and other contaminants.

### **Well Pit**

A well pit may serve as a catch basin for contaminated surface water and precipitation. Any well located in a pit should have the casing extended above grade. Water can be prevented from accumulating in the old pit and entering the well by breaking up the pit floor and walls and filling the pit with clean material. Always be extremely cautious whenever working in a pit, because of the danger of collapse or the buildup of toxic gases.

### **Well Sealing**

Unused wells must be properly sealed to prevent direct contamination of groundwater. MN state law requires that a licensed well contractor or well sealing contractor must seal a well.