



proud past, promising future

Clark County Public Health
 1601 E. Fourth Plain Blvd.
 Vancouver, WA 98661
 (360) 397-8000

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF WELLS FOR IRRIGATION PURPOSES	POLICY NO: EPH009
UNIT: Environmental Health – Drinking Water Program	EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/21/08
SIGNATURE OF DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR: <i>[Signature]</i>	
SIGNATURE OF HEALTH OFFICER:	
COPIES DISTRIBUTED TO: Environmental Health Specialists and Managers	REVIEW: Annually
REFERENCES: RCW 18.104, WAC 173-160, RCW 90.03	

POLICY

It is the policy of Clark County Public Health (CCPH) that water wells may be used for irrigation purposes if they meet the criteria listed below.

OVERVIEW

CCPH has signed an interagency agreement with the State of Washington Department of Ecology. The purpose of this agreement is to delegate to CCPH the authority to administer and enforce the well sealing, tagging and decommissioning portions of the water well construction program in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 173-160 WAC entitled Minimum Standards for Construction and Maintenance of Wells. Therefore, departmental policy needs to be established for reviewing irrigation water well proposals to verify that the well is not an environmental or public health hazard.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Terms used in this policy will conform to the aforementioned references and the following definitions:

- Irrigation well** A well utilized strictly for the purposes of irrigation
- Back-flow prevention device** A device defined by the utility that services the area
- CCPH** Clark County Public Health
- Decommissioning** Properly abandoning a well so that it will not produce water, serve as a channel for movement of water or pollution, or allow the entry of pollutants into the well or aquifer
- Dug well** A well usually excavated by hand, although it may be dug by mechanical equipment
- Drilled well** A well constructed by making a hole in the ground with a cable tool or rotary (air or mud) drilling machine
- Ecology** Washington State Department of Ecology
- EHS** Environmental Health Specialist - an authorized representative of the Health Officer for the CCPH’s Environmental Public Health Program
- Escherichia coli (E.coli)*** A bacteria associated with human or animal waste as tested for with a potability test (not E.coli 0157:H7)

**Nitrate (NO₃)
Spring-fed well**

A form of nitrogen that can leach into surface water and groundwater
Spring-fed wells are generally rock springs or earth springs depending on
how the water source emerges

PROCEDURE - GUIDELINES

The following criteria must be met for CCPH to consider approval of a proposed irrigation well, unless the property owner possesses a valid water right certificate specifying irrigation as an approved use. This policy does not cover every possible scenario. It is a guide by which the EHS can use his/her best professional judgment to approve/deny a proposed irrigation well.

If CCPH determines the proposed irrigation is not approvable, the well must be decommissioned by a licensed well driller. The well driller must sign the decommissioning log and submit it to Ecology and to CCPH within 30 working days of the decommissioning.

1. CCPH will evaluate each application for a proposed irrigation well based on water sampling results, well construction data, size of property parcel, location of property parcel and whether the well meets all current setbacks to potential sources of contamination (e.g., distance to on-site sewage systems, property lines, etc.)
2. All proposed irrigation wells that are either “hand-dug” or spring-fed (or equivalent) will only be approved for use as an irrigation well if the well meets, or could be retrofitted to meet, current state well construction standards. If the well does not, or cannot be made, to meet current state well construction standards, then the well must be decommissioned. All decommissioning activities must comply with Chapter 173-160 WAC Minimum Standards for the Construction and Maintenance of Wells. A copy of the decommissioning report signed by a licensed well driller shall be submitted to Ecology and CCPH within 30 working days of the decommissioning.
3. CCPH shall determine the water quality of the proposed irrigation well. In so doing, all proposed irrigation wells shall be sampled for the presence of *E. coli* and Nitrate (NO₃).
4. If the sampling result indicates the presence of *E.coli*, the proposed irrigation well must be decommissioned as per WAC 173-160-381.
5. If nitrates are found at a “trigger” level of 10.0 mg/l or greater, the well must be decommissioned as per WAC 173-160-381.
6. All proposed irrigation wells must be located on lots with a minimum lot size of 0.5 acre or larger, and the proposed irrigation well must be located within the property boundary of the applicant’s lot.
7. All proposed irrigation wells located inside any Urban Growth Boundary designed by Clark County shall provide a letter from the responsible jurisdiction indicating their concurrency.
8. All proposed irrigation wells must maintain established setbacks from all potential sources of contamination.
9. No more than 5,000 gallons per day shall be withdrawn from an irrigation well, nor shall more than ½ acre of non-commercial garden or property of other agricultural use be irrigated, without possession of a valid water right certification granted by Ecology.
10. If a proposed irrigation well is an existing Group A or B water supply well, is current with the sampling protocol and meets the aforementioned criteria, an approval may be issued.

11. The proposed irrigation well and “lift” method must be in a safe and operational condition at the time CCPH conducts an inspection.
12. Appropriate fees will be assessed for all applications for proposed irrigation wells.
13. If the proposed irrigation well is currently a drinking water supply for residential or non-residential use, the drinking water connection to the well must be removed and connection to an approved drinking water supply must be completed prior to final approval of the irrigation well.
14. Prior to final approval of the irrigation well, the applicant must complete and sign a Notice to Title (*Attachment #1*), submit it to CCPH and pay the appropriate Notice to Title fee. CCPH will submit the Notice to Title to the Clark County Auditor’s office.

EMPLOYEE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

All newly hired Environmental Health Specialists and Environmental Health Managers will receive training on this policy within 30 days of hire. This policy will also be reviewed no less than annually with all Environmental Health Specialists.

Clark County Environmental Public Health
1601 E. Fourth Plain Blvd. – PO Box 9825
Vancouver, WA 98666-8825

**PROPERTY DECLARATION RECORDING OF:
NOTICE TO TITLE
FOR
IRRIGATION WELL, NON-POTABLE WATER**

Declarations as Property Recordings may be completed by the property owner, or by property owner representative, presented to CCPH, Environmental Public Health, 1601 E. Fourth Plain Blvd., PO Box 9825, Vancouver, WA 98666, then submitted to the recorder at the Clark County Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver.

The facility on the property at the address _____, contains a non-potable water source. Water from source _____ shall not be used to supply water for drinking, bathing, or other household uses. No more than 5,000 gallons shall be withdrawn from the source, nor shall more than one-half acre of non-commercial property be irrigated without first securing a water appropriation certificate as required by law. All setbacks listed in WAC 173-160-171 shall be met prior to irrigation well approval and maintained. CCPH retains discretion to require decommissioning of the source at any time should it decide that decommissioning is in the best interests of the public health and if decommissioning is warranted pursuant to WAC 173-160-381, as it now currently reads or as it may be amended or any successor regulation.

PROPERTY OWNER NAME: _____

PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

OR

LICENSED DESIGNER'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS

TAX PARCEL ID# SEC TWN RNG

GRANTEE: Clark County Public Health

LEGAL DESCRIPTION CONTAINED IN AUDITOR'S DOCUMENT NUMBER _____
(Fill in the document number for the most recently recorded document containing a legal description)