

## WELL DECOMMISSIONING.

**Is permanently closing a well that is no longer used or is deemed unsafe. State law requires abandoned wells in Wisconsin to be sealed.**

**Wells are removed from service for a number of reasons**, including construction of a replacement well, destruction of the building being served, failure of the well to produce safe water, failure of the well to meet the State Well Code (NR812) standards, or when a community water system is extended into an area formerly served by individual private wells.

**Abandonment**, administrative code NR 812.26(2)(a)] requires permanent abandonment of any well “that has been taken out of service or has not been used for 3 or more years and is not needed by the owner in the immediate future as a source of water for human consumption, sanitary purposes, commercial use or for stock watering.” In most cases, “immediate future” refers to a timeframe of six months.

**“Capped well”** a “capped” well or “capped off” well usually refers to an unused well that has a cap or plate covering the open top of the well. People sometimes install such a cap or plate mistakenly thinking that’s all that’s required when they stop using a well.

**Proper filling and sealing of unused wells is done by a licensed well driller or pump installer.** This generally means that the pump and any piping inside of the well casing have been removed and the well has been filled from bottom to top with proper filling materials, such as cement grout, concrete grout, concrete, a clay/sand slurry mix or, in some cases, bentonite chips and to shape the land to protect the abandoned wellhead from precipitation and runoff.

**Why seal abandoned wells?** Abandoned or unused wells pose a great threat to the safety and quality of groundwater drinking water supplies. An unused well provides a direct path for contaminants and pollutants to the underground aquifers that supply working wells.

## COST SHARE

- 1) Program will pay up to 70% of the cost or in cases of financial hardship 90%.
- 2) In kind labor and equipment use can be used towards landowner's cost.

## ELIGIBLE COSTS

Costs to design and implement a well decommissioning, including costs to fill the well, seal the well, and shape the land to protect the abandoned wellhead from precipitation and runoff.

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Well Filling and Sealing Wisconsin DNR](#)