

New Wells in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin

The Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Urgency Ordinance requires the Department of Planning and Building to review well permits and issue well clearances for new groundwater wells in the basin.

If you filed for a well permit with Environmental Health and an electrical permit from the Department of Planning and Building prior to August 27, 2013, your well permit can be issued and processed as normally required. However, if you wish to establish new structures or agricultural uses on your site that would use that well – establishment of those uses is subject to the requirements of the Urgency Ordinance.

If you file for a well permit with Environmental Health after August 27, 2013, you will be subject to the requirements of the Urgency Ordinance.

Well Offset Clearances

The property owner or well driller should contact the Department (James Caruso – icaruso@co.slo.ca.us or Cheryl Cochran - ccochran@co.slo.ca.us). Well clearances are issued by the Department to the owner (or owner's representative) with a copy to Environmental Health.

Replacement Wells

A replacement well for a well that went dry or is otherwise non-producing is not subject to the Urgency Ordinance. The new well must be drilled to the same or smaller diameter as the existing well. Contact us at the e-mail addresses above with the following information:

1. Assessor Parcel Number
2. Street address
3. Owners name
4. Purpose of the new well (in this case it would be a “replacement well”)
5. Casing diameter
6. Will the well support **new** irrigated crops? If not we can proceed; if yes, new water demand must be analyzed and offset.

If all the information checks out, we can issue a well clearance in 72 hours. Be advised that every new well must be equipped with a flow meter!

New Wells

For new wells, this basic information is needed:

1. Assessor Parcel Number

2. Street address
3. Owners name
4. Purpose of the new well (e.g. support new residential development; support new irrigated crops or no proposed water use at this time).

If no new development is proposed then a well clearance will be issued by the Department. If new irrigated crop production or new structural development is proposed, then the water demand from the new use needs to be offset.

If no new development is proposed, the Department will issue the well clearance to the owner and copy Environmental Health. However, if new development or new irrigated crop production is proposed on the site during the term of the Urgency Ordinance, the new water use will have to be offset.