

## Guidance on Registering Domestic Water Wells Completed Prior to 2002

A fillable PDF form and online tools are available to assist with everything a person needs to do to provide the minimum information required to register their own old domestic well. Once the water well registration form is completed using the resources described below, it should be mailed to the address on the form along with the \$70 registration fee made out to the Department of Natural Resources (Department). The Department offers the following guidance to minimize the chances that a well-owner-submitted registration for a domestic well drilled prior to 2002 will be rejected for insufficient information.

If known, the water well contractor who originally drilled the well should be contacted to see if they have detailed records that could be used to fill out a well registration form more completely. Domestic water wells completed before September 9, 1993, are not legally required to be registered with the state of Nebraska. Domestic wells completed before 2002 may be registered by the owner of the well. Water wells completed after 2001 should be registered by the licensed water well contractor who drilled the well.

The minimal requirements for well-owner-submitted water well registrations are listed at the bottom of the last page of the registration form (see world wide web links below). Here are the requirements for an owner registering a well drilled prior to 2002: Minimum Required Sections - 1, 3(a,b,e,f), 5, 6, 7, 8(a,g,i), 9d. Registration forms that are submitted without the minimum required information will be returned for correction, as will forms with conflicting location and date information. If more information about the well is known, that information should be supplied in addition to the minimal requirements above.

There is also an instruction document available that should clear up many questions. The following are brief descriptions of the most common errors or points of confusion that the well registration team at the Department is noticing. The link to the web page with the form and separate instruction document is provided below.

There has been some confusion about what is required for location information. A legal description is required with quarter-quarter, section, township, and range (don't forget range direction E or W). We have online tools available to help determine this. Latitude and Longitude (GPS) geographic coordinates are also required. Modern smart phones have Global Positioning System (GPS) applications built into them and usually will give a decimal degree location of the phone's current location if you know which application to use. Google mapping applications also provide geographic coordinates for locations of interest. We have conversion tools to convert decimal degree longitude and latitude readings to degrees, minutes, and decimal seconds. Other tools with reference links below can also be used to determine accurate coordinates.

The place of use required in Section 3 e of the registration form for a domestic well can be the same legal description used for the well location in Section 3 a. Footages from section lines are optional in Section 3 c, so you may skip over that section.

Well construction (Section 9 d) and pump installation (Section 8 g) dates will have to be estimated if no actual records are held by the current well owners. Reasonable estimates are acceptable. If no specific records are available, it is usually best to put the same dates for completion and pump installation.

Don't forget to fill out Section 8 i, to indicate whether the well is pumping less than 50 gallons per minute (GPM). Most domestic wells pump less than 50 GPM, so 'Yes' is the most common answer for these wells. If the well is pumping more than 50 GPM, you need to contact your local Natural Resources District to see if a special permit is needed.

### Reference Links and Tools

Tabular search site to look up wells:

<https://nednr.nebraska.gov/dynamic/Wells/Wells>

If you are unsure whether your well is registered, you may want to search our database for your well. You select criteria you want to use as search filters, such as last name, county, Section-Township-Range. Then you submit the criteria categories and create your filter. Then submit the filter criteria to receive a list of wells that match your criteria. With each well listed on the results page it has a MapIt link to open a map interface to confirm the location of the well with an aerial photo background.

Mapping Site to Look Up Wells and Use the Map Tools to Look Up Geographic Coordinates:

<https://gis.ne.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=7e332656859247c9874b02c7aa1f58e8>

This is another way to look for your well if you are unsure if it is registered with the Department.

Web Page for Well Owners with useful links and the Well Registration Form:

<https://dnr.nebraska.gov/groundwater/landownerspublic>

The forms section has helpful hints, the well registration form itself, this guidance document and a detailed instruction document for filling out the form completely. See the bottom of last page of the registration form itself for minimum requirements for well owners. The well registration form is a fillable PDF document.

The Useful Reference Tools section of the landowners / public part of these web pages have links to the tabular registered water well website, the interactive map for registered wells and the coordinate conversion tool with MapIt function.

The 'Find My Well' Coordinate Conversion Page:

<https://nednr.nebraska.gov/dynamic/Geo2LegalCalc/Geo2LegalCalc/LocationEntry>

The link above will take you to a page where you can enter coordinates or a legal description and hit the 'Submit' button and a map will pop-up with the location you entered, which will be displayed as a red dot. No matter what geographic coordinates are typed into the web page to get the map to display, once you are on the map page it will tell you degrees, minutes, and decimal seconds in the header area of the page. Therefore, you can start with decimal degrees and then read off the degrees, minutes, and decimal seconds from the header of the map page. The well registration form requires degrees, minutes, and decimal seconds for the well location for both longitude and latitude. The map page header will also tell you the county and NRD where the red dot plots, which are also required to be filled-in on the location part of the registration form.

Final note: There is one exception to the type of well information you can look up online. Since the 9/11 attacks the Department has taken information about public water wells offline. This shouldn't deter a well owner's efforts to register an old domestic well.