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MEMORANDUM

To: Local Health Departments
Directors of Environmental Health
Regional Supervisors

From: Robert Cowles, P.E. *RC*
Division of Environmental Health

Date: November 1, 2006

Subject: Water Wells – Requirements for Permits, and Construction

The purpose of this memo is to clarify the requirements for water wells regarding permitting, and construction.

The Illinois Water Well Construction Code [415 ILCS 30/3], states: "Water well" means any excavation that is drilled, cored, bored, washed, driven, dug, jetted or otherwise constructed when the intended use of such excavation is for the location, diversion, artificial recharge, or acquisition of ground water, but such term does not include an excavation made for the purpose of obtaining or prospecting for oil, natural gas, minerals or products of mining or quarrying or for inserting media to repressure oil or natural gas bearing formation or for storing petroleum, natural gas or other products or for observation or any other purpose in connection with the development or operation of a gas storage project."

This is how the definition applies to the following wells:

Dewatering wells are designed mainly to lower the groundwater level to a specified depth to facilitate belowground construction. They also fall under the definition of a water well and shall be permitted as such. Sumps intended for the purpose of removing water from excavations for basements or foundations, and trench excavations for utilities are not classified as water wells; and they are not required to be permitted as water wells. If the surface area of a trench or hole is larger than its depth, then, generally, it is not considered to be a well.

Driven Wells are required to be permitted. They do not have to be constructed by a licensed water well contractor.

Closed loop wells and monitoring wells are exempt from permitting under Section 6 of the Illinois Water Well Construction Code [415 ILCS 30/6].

Groundwater remediation wells fall under the definition of a water well, since they are constructed for the purpose of pumping and treating groundwater to remove contaminant(s). They are required to be permitted as water wells.

The table below provides a summary of water well permitting and construction requirements.

Type of Well	Permit Required	Construction Report Required	Licensed Contractor Required	Construction Code Compliance
Dewatering Well	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sand Point Well	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Monitoring Well	No	Yes	No	Yes
Closed Loop Well	No	No	No	Yes
Groundwater Remediation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes; IEPA approval as well