



Sealing/Abandoning Wells

Wells are no longer used for a variety of reasons:

- Not enough water
- Needed repairs
- Became contaminated
- Simply "lost" or abandoned when the property changed hands
- Land use changed
- Connected to a community water system

If a well is not properly abandoned, it can pose a risk with

- Physical safety
- Health and environment
- Legal Responsibilities

**WHEN DO YOU NEED TO
ABANDON YOUR WELL?**

**HOW TO FIND A WELL BY A HOUSE
THAT WAS BUILT BEFORE PUBLIC
WATER WAS AVAILABLE:**

Inspect your property and look for:

- A glass block or a concrete patch in an exterior step
- A small room in the basement
- A pipe sticking up out of the floor in your basement

- A low spot or sunken area in the ground
- A metal, wood, or concrete cover or manhole
- Areas that stay wet can be caused by an unsealed flowing well
- windmill, an old shed, well house, or old pump
- dug wells (typically appear as a ring anywhere from 1ft to several feet in diameter)
- pipes 1 to 8 inches wide (sewer or septic lines may have similar pipes)

A well in use:

MN laws do not require a well that is in use to be abandoned unless it is contaminating the groundwater or has the potential to pose health issues.

An unused well:

MN laws require that any unused wells that do not have a Water Well Maintenance permit, or the well poses a threat to health or safety, the wells must be properly sealed.

DETERMINING WELL USAGE



Sealing/Abandoning a Well

Contracting

The most important fact for you to know about well sealing is that you cannot do it yourself. MN law mandates that a well only be sealed by an MDH licensed well contractor.

For a list of licensed contractors in your area, look-up the Licensed Well and Boring Contractor Directory online.

Cost

The cost to seal a well can vary considerably. Access to the well, special geological conditions, debris in the well, depth, and diameter are all factors that can affect the cost of well sealing; therefore, it is important to get several estimates to compare costs.

Funding Assistance

Various grants and/or cost-share programs may be available through local or state government agencies. Low interest loans for well construction, repair, and sealing are also often offered through local lenders to homeowners that meet income and location requirements. Preapproval is often required to qualify for these grants or loans, so arrangements should be made before you contract to have the well sealed.

For more information, look up Sealing of Wells and Borings online.

Record Keeping

Once the well is fully sealed, the contractor is required to submit a Well and Boring Sealing Record to MDH. You will receive a copy for this record as well and you should keep this document with your other property records as it documents that the well has been properly sealed.