

Well Permits Application Process

February, 2014

Well permits are required for either wells installed to access ground water or for heat pump wells. Water wells include both those for human consumption and for livestock/irrigation, etc. uses. Installation of ground source heat loops are not considered wells and therefore do not require permits, as long as the loops are less than 25' deep.

Well permits are issued by Guthrie County but are an extension of the State system. The Dept. of Natural Resources is the legal permitting authority. The State then delegates the permitting to counties wishing to accept the responsibility. Guthrie County does this to simplify the process for the property owner by being able to deal with someone locally.

There is a two tier permit fee. Guthrie County currently charges a \$125.00 permit fee. The State of Iowa charges only a \$25.00 surcharge fee when the County does the actual field work. The County money helps to cover the cost of this Dept. to deal with the well driller and to do a GPS reading of the site as well as to input all the information into the State system, including the well driller's log. The \$25.00 surcharge helps the State provide the computer system for this system. In addition, staff personnel are available to answer questions of anyone needing information. This department has an extremely informative 30-page booklet that is provided to our Dept. by the Dept. of Natural Resources that provides excellent information on all aspects of a well/water system. This is available at no charge to you, either at the office in the Courthouse or it can be mailed to you.

The procedure for obtaining a permit is relatively simple. In most cases, the driller will contact this Dept. to obtain the permit. (Some drillers do request the property owner to make this initial contact.) When we are notified of a well to be installed, one of our staff will visit the site (normally during the time the driller is working there) to GPS the location, verify that setback distances from septic systems, existing wells, feedlots, etc. are being met. We are also available to answer your questions regarding the well and water system. The immediate vicinity is also checked for any abandoned wells that must be properly eliminated.

Our staff then collects all the information regarding well ownership, location, etc. The driller provides this Dept. with the drilling log that delineates the types of materials drilled through, such things as the type of aquifer accessed, type of well screen, etc. All this information is then entered into the State permit system and is available for future reference by you or your well repairman.

For any well that accesses water for pumping from the ground, a water test is provided to you at no additional fee. The State requires this test to be done. This water test checks for three things: (1) coliform bacteria, (2) fecal coliform bacteria, and (3) nitrates. When you receive these results, this Dept. is available to answer questions on any problems shown by this test.

This Dept. does not recommend well drillers nor have the ability to rate any driller as good or bad. But we do have a listing of drillers that work in this area on a regular

basis. We do not purport this to be a complete list. If you would like a copy of this well driller listing with phone numbers, please contact our office and we will provide you with this listing of drillers that work in this area.