

Cedar County Private Well Grant Procedure Manual

IOWATM
Health and
Human Services



**Fiscal Year 2025
July 2024-June 2025**

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CEDAR COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRIVATE WELL GRANT POLICIES FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM AND SELECTION METHODOLOGY FOR PRIVATE WATER WELL SAMPLING, ABANDONMENT AND/OR RENOVATION

The Cedar County Environmental Health Department utilizes several different methods to provide information to the public about the Private Well Grant water well sampling, abandonment and rehabilitation programs including, but not limited to, the use of area newspapers, Cedar County website, the Cedar County Public Health Office, Women, Infants and Children (W.I.C.), Cedar County Farm Bureau, and Iowa State Extension.

Private water wells are selected for testing upon several factors including but not limited to the following:

1. New water well construction, as required by IAC 49.27 (455B).
2. Requests by the property owner, tenant, or real estate agent (s).
3. Solicitation by the Environmental Health Department (E.H.) during interaction with the property owner.
4. Request by governmental agency.
5. Request by well contractor as part of a renovation project.
6. As part of a variance requirement during reconstruction of a private on-site wastewater treatment and disposal system.

Private water wells are selected for abandonment based upon factors including but not limited to the following:

1. Identification as an abandoned water well subject to abandonment and plugging as per State of Iowa required schedule.
2. Request by the property owner.
3. Recommendation by a certified water well contractor to eliminate an un-needed or threat to the public health.
4. As part of a permitted water well construction.
5. Request by a governmental agency and/or this department for the purpose of protecting the public health.

Private water wells are selected for rehabilitation based upon several factors including but not limited to the following:

1. Inspection of the well site by the Environmental Health Department (E.H.) as part of water well sample testing.
2. Request for funding (subject to satisfactory nitrogen (nitrate + nitrite) analysis of water sample) by the property owner or water well contractor.
3. Information provided by certified well contractors during site visits and relayed to E.H. personnel.

At this time, Cedar County E.H. does not have any subcontractors or IAC 28E agreements with other governmental agencies who would perform duties related to the Private Well Grant.

**CEDAR COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
PRIVATE WELL GRANT
GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR PRIVATE WATER WELL TESTING,
RECONSTRUCTION & PLUGGING OF ABANDONED WATER WELLS.
IAC 641-CH 24.1(135)**

- To protect groundwater quality in Cedar County, and the State of Iowa by providing assistance and information to the public with private water well sampling, testing and test result interpretation in Cedar County.

Cedar County at this time utilizes the University of Iowa, State Hygienic Laboratory, at 2490 Crosspark Rd., Coralville, IA, 52241-4721, and/or the University of Iowa, State Hygienic Laboratory, at 2220 S. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny, IA, 50023-9093 for all PWG well water testing.

- A) *E. coli*
- B) Coliform bacteria
- C) Nitrogen (nitrate + nitrite)
- D) Arsenic
- E) Manganese
- F) Pesticides, in the case of a chemical spill incident (SHL funding approved)
- G) Hydrocarbon (i.e. fuel) spill or L.U.S.T. incident (SHL/IDNR funding approved)
- H) Other state funded projects as applicable

This program does not include private water well testing for lead (Pb). There is a sampling and analysis fee payable to this department, by the person requesting the sample collection for lead in drinking water.

- To assist the public with corrective action for private water wells which through testing indicates contamination is present.
- To assist Certified Water Well Contractors in correction action measures to eliminate the causes of the water well's contamination.
- To provide information to the public on suitable water treatment options for correction of identified water well contaminants.
- To identify private water wells eligible for reconstruction.
- To identify abandoned private water wells and cisterns.
- To develop county wide private water well plugging plan to prioritize the order and proper plugging of abandoned wells.
 - A) To require the proper plugging of these identified wells in accordance with State of Iowa regulations.
 - B) To evaluate cisterns as a source of ground water contamination, and as public

nuisance.

- To provide cost-sharing program funding to owners of private water wells eligible for reimbursement of reconstructed wells and properly plugged wells and cisterns.
- To enhance the database of the State of Iowa pertaining to the status of private water wells, well and cistern plugging through data entry into the State of Iowa Private Water Well Tracking System (PWTS).
- To maintain accurate records of all water well sampling, reconstruction and plugging activities of the E.H. department pertaining to the Private Well Grant (PWG) program.
- To ensure the accuracy of existing county issued water well records including their location and status of use for the purpose of entering this data into the Private Water Well Tracking System (PWTS), or as may be appropriate, the Public Water Well Supply section of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.
- To identify the location of existing wells and cisterns by sampling wells and entering well information into the county database and PWTS.

**CEDAR COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
PRIVATE WELL GRANT
PRIVATE WATER WELL SAMPLING POLICIES**

- Private water well testing: Follow the Cedar County Environmental Health and/or University of Iowa, State Hygienic Laboratory (S.H.L.) procedures for sampling procedures.
 - 1) The Environmental Health (E.H.) department will provide up to two (2) water tests per year for targeted contaminants at no cost to the well owner or user for the standard water contaminants through this program with the exception of Arsenic and pesticides. As Arsenic in well water is found only in certain geological formations and research indicates that there is only minor season fluctuation that do not vary over several years of testing, only one (1) sample shall be collected.
 - 2) Two (2) follow up water tests for bacteria will be collected for each of the standard water tests at no cost to the well owner or user through this program.
 - 3) Additional well water samples to be collected by County E.H. staff at the request of the well owner or user will be charged a for the cost of the sample and shipping fee as billed from the State Hygienic Laboratory. Information pertaining to these costs shall be provided to the public upon request.
 - 4) As an alternative, upon request, the E.H. department may, subject to availability, have available unpaid water well sample kits from S.H.L. for Cedar County well owners/users. For these unpaid kits, the E.H. staff shall provide written instructions on the water well sampling procedure. All costs, including postage, are to be paid by the well owner or user. E.H. staff shall assist the well owner and/or user with written and/or verbal information to assist them in the understanding of the water sample test result. E.H. staff shall provide to the well owner and/or well user a written copy of the S.H.L. water testing analysis report with, at a minimum, a copy of the S.H.L. water analysis interpretation sheet as soon as possible.
- E.H. staff conducting water well sampling shall complete a minimum of 12 hours of continuing education every year as approved by the Iowa Environmental Health Association (IEHA) Environmental Health Registry Program.
- E.H. staff shall provide information pertaining to treatment options for positive bacteria test results, nitrogen (nitrate + nitrite) levels exceeding the maximum contaminating level (m.c.l.) of 10 mg/l (p.p.m.), or arsenic levels which exceed the m.c.l. of 10 ug/l (p.p.b.). This may include a recommendation to contact a certified water well contractor (IAC 567-82) for assistance and consultation.
- E.H. staff shall discuss with the well owner, and user, observations made during the on-site inspection well assessment regarding adverse conditions, inadequate separation

distances, etc. with the water well and the area surrounding the well site. Options for correction will be provided, including referral to certified water well contractors for assistance and consultation.

- E.H. staff will provide information pertaining to treatment options for non-health related water contaminates upon request (S.H.L. water treatment system document).
- E.H. staff will work in conjunction with certified water well contractors in the enforcement of State of Iowa regulations pertaining to private water wells, private sewage and disposal systems, State of Iowa building, electrical, plumbing and fire codes in the service and protection of the public and the promotion of the public health.
- All background information collected as part of the required well assessment, shall be recorded on IDNR form #542-1207.
- All water well sample test results shall be entered into the E.H. department's electronic record system and the State of Iowa private water well tracking system. A copy of this information and form #542-1207 shall be manually filed in the E.H. department's monthly PWG activity file.
- Water sample results will be shared with the well owner and/or homeowner by email or mail delivery, whichever the well owner and/or homeowner prefers. If results come back unsafe according to the State Hygienic Laboratory, the well owner and/or homeowner will be called to discuss the findings and possibilities for remediation.

**CEDAR COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
PRIVATE WELL GRANT
PRIVATE WATER WELL RECONSTRUCTION POLICIES**

- Funding for this program is available only for private water wells in Cedar County. Public water wells, regardless of status with the IDNR, are ineligible. In addition, county PWG funds are not available for the reconstruction of monitoring wells.
- A well water sample shall be collected by qualified E.H. staff as per the policy pertaining to well water sampling (Iowa Administrative Code 641-24.7). At the time of the water sample collection, a well assessment shall be performed and background information collected to determine the condition of the water well which may be eligible for PWG funding. This will include, but is not limited to, an evaluation of the water well site for the required separation distances as established in IAC 567-49.
- No funding will be available for water well reconstruction without a record of a water sample and a well identification number on file with the E.H. department.
- E.H. staff will discuss the well assessment with a certified water well contractor and the well owner as part of this PWG program.
- All water well reconstruction work shall be performed by a certified water well contractor (IAC 567-82).
- Private water wells are ineligible for county PWG funding when the well does not comply with the separation requirements of IAC 567-49; the water test result indicates a nitrogen (nitrate + nitrite) level greater than 10 mg/l (p.p.m.), unless approved by the Iowa DNR Water Quality Bureau Environmental Specialist Senior or equivalent role, or in the opinion of a certified water well contractor the water well is unsuitable for reconstruction.
- The certified water well contractor shall provide to the E.H. department a written description of the completed reconstruction work as part of the water well record.
- The Director or Health Officer shall determine by review of an itemized reconstruction billing statement from the certified water well contractor what work, equipment, and materials shall be eligible for reimbursement. Only materials and labor pertaining to public health aspects of the reconstruction work are eligible for payment. If no itemized billing statement is available or provided to the Director or Health Officer, the approving official may use their own discretion in the amount of funding to provide in accordance with Board of Health policy and IAC 641-24.5(7).
- A well owner may request a review by the Cedar County Board of Health in cases where funding for reconstruction is denied in all or in part by the Director or Health Officer. The well owner shall request in writing, stating the reason for the reconsideration for

funding, a meeting before the Board of Health for the purpose of reviewing the decision of the Director or Health Officer. Said petition for a meeting shall be filed in either the Cedar County Environmental Health or the Cedar County Public Health Department(s) within twenty (20) days of the postmarked letter of denial or postmarked reimbursement by mail. The Board of Health shall schedule a hearing and following such hearing shall confirm, modify or order rescinded the denial, all or in part, for reconstruction funding through the E.H. department's PWG funding.

- Cedar County water well reconstruction reimbursement funding, in accordance with IAC 641-24.5(7), shall not exceed \$2,000.00 per water well, plus \$400 as administrative fees. An itemized billing statement from the well contractor is required.
- All water wells, whether reconstructed through the PWG program or not, shall be entered in to the State of Iowa Private Well Tracking System (PWTS) and a copy of the completed water well reconstruction documentation, including IDNR form #542-1519, and the site assessment manually filed in to the E.H. department's monthly PWG activity file.

CEDAR COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRIVATE WELL GRANT ABANDONED PRIVATE WATER WELL PLUGGING POLICIES

- Funding for this program is available only for private water wells in Cedar County. Public water wells, regardless of their status with the IDNR are ineligible. In addition, county PWG funds are not available for the abandonment of monitoring wells.
- Abandoned private water wells are subject to the State of Iowa schedule for the proper plugging of known abandoned water wells.
- All water wells or cisterns to be plugged, abandoned or otherwise, shall be properly plugged in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code 567-39 (455B).
- All water well or cistern plugging must be conducted by a certified water well contractor (IAC 567-82), or by the property owner under the direct supervision of the Director or Health Officer.
- Prior to the plugging of the water well or cistern, a site assessment must be performed by E.H. staff for the purpose of documenting the well and the surrounding area. Standard background data shall be collected for the well plugging file and shall include a site plan diagram.
- All water wells and cisterns to be plugged shall have the information from the site assessment and the physical evaluation of the well recorded on IDNR form #542-1226. In addition, the exact procedure used to plug the well or cistern shall be documented on this form or as an attachment.
- E.H. staff shall provide to the well owner information on abandoned wells and the procedure(s) used to properly plug the abandoned well or cistern. In addition, E.H. staff will assist the well owner with the estimation of the quantity of materials required for the plugging of the well or cistern when it will be plugged by the owner with the direct supervision of the Director or Health Officer.
- Wells plugged under the direct supervision of the Director or Health Officer shall be disinfected with a chlorine solution immediately before the plugging procedure begins. The Director or Health Officer may require the disinfection of a cistern prior to plugging.
- Water cisterns shall be evaluated to determine the risk posed to the ground water supply and the public health as part of a water well sampling request, a water well reconstruction, well plugging or at the request of the property owner or concerned citizen. Funding through the PWG program will be determined by the Director or Health Officer based upon the results of the site evaluation, and the availability of funding prior to the close of the fiscal year.

- County water well and cistern plugging reimbursement funding in accordance with IAC 641-24.5(5,6) shall not exceed \$700.00, plus \$100.00 for administrative fees, per well. Cistern plugging reimbursement shall not exceed \$400.00, plus \$100.00 for administrative fees per cistern.
- All water wells and cisterns plugged through the PWG program shall be entered in to the State of Iowa private water well tracking system and a copy of all documentation, including form #542-1226, manually filed in to the E.H. department's monthly PWG activity file.

**CEDAR COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRIVATE WELL GRANTS
PROGRAM PRIVATE WATER WELL DISINFECTION POLICIES**

- Only private water wells located in Cedar County, Iowa, are eligible for well disinfection (shocking) through this program.
- Public water supplies (permitted by the State of Iowa) and water well(s) owned by private homeowner associations (i.e. subdivisions with shared water supply) are not eligible for sampling, testing, or disinfection through this program. These well owners are to make other arrangements for well sampling, testing, and disinfection.
- Approved county safety policies, if any, apply while on both public and private property. While arrangements for the inspection are being made, ask the contact person of any special conditions or requirements to be observed or followed. This would include asking if there are any animal precautions (i.e. a dog) the County E.H. personnel should be aware of. County safety procedures, if applicable, are to be followed when working on top of and/or entering the well pit. Use common sense.
- Owners are eligible to request funding once County E.H. personnel have conducted a water test and the results have come back with a positive reading of coliform bacteria. The water test must be performed within the last 6 months prior to shock chlorination.
- Contractors/owners must notify County E.H. personnel about the well disinfection prior to work being performed to be eligible to receive reimbursement from Grants-to-Counties. Contractors shall complete IDNR form #542-0503 and provide this form and an itemized paid receipt to the County E.H. personnel within 30 days of completion of well disinfection.
- County E.H. personnel shall collect a water sample post well disinfection. Collection of the sample should be taken no earlier than 7 days from the date of disinfection. This ensures the chlorination has spread from the well through the entire water distribution and has been adequately flushed out of the system.
- County E.H. shall follow the Cedar County Environmental Health Private Water Well Sampling Program Procedure when collecting water samples.
- County E.H. personnel shall make a thorough visual and physical inspection of the well site and surrounding area during the inspection following well disinfection to notate any repairs or rehabilitation that has occurred to the well. This will include documenting in

writing observations made during the inspection, and by a site diagram of the property on the back of the well form. There may be situations in which another inspection of the well site must be made to adequately collect all required information.

- County E.H. personnel shall be accompanied by the property owner or tenant when entering a residence. There will be NO exceptions to this policy. If no one can meet with County E.H. personnel at the time of the water sample collection, an exterior hydrant or hose bib valve must be used as the sampling point. See the Cedar County private water well sampling procedure.
- Cedar County Environmental Health will only reimburse for two (2) shock chlorination's within a 12-month period. If more chlorination's are needed, the homeowners will be responsible for the total cost. County E.H. personnel has the discretion to decline any request for reimbursement that does not follow the Grant to Counties policies.
- Reimbursement for the shock chlorination in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code 641-24.5 (5,6) can be up to \$400 to the homeowner. Owner must provide a copy of the paid invoice in order to receive reimbursement.

FY 2025 PWG Funding Reimbursement

Per contract #PUHE-ENH-25-016 between Cedar County Environmental Health Services and the State of Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, the following reimbursement fees have been set.

| Item | Payable to Well Owner | Administrative Expenses | Maximum Unit Reimbursement |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Well Testing | Actual cost of nitrate, bacteria, arsenic, or other water test analysis* | \$125 | Actual cost plus \$125 |
| Well Plugging | Actual cost up to \$700 | \$100 | \$800 |
| Cistern Plugging | Actual cost up to \$400 | \$100 | \$500 |
| Well Reconstruction | Actual cost up to \$2,000 | \$400 | \$2,400 |
| Shock Chlorination | Actual cost up to \$400 | \$100 | \$500 |
| Well Assessment | Actual cost up to \$600 | \$100 | \$700 |

*pg. 8 of contract