



COUNTY OF NEVADA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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WELLS

Frequently Asked Questions

What is needed to install a water well in Nevada County?

Well permits can only be applied and submitted by a certified well driller containing a CSLB type C-57 license with the state of California. The permit application must be signed by a licensed driller and include a plot plan drawn to scale. If proposed well is a Class II well, please contact the Nevada County Environmental Health Department (NCEHD) for more information for additional requirements (530) 265-1222 Ext.3.

I'm a certified well driller, can I apply online?

Yes. Click [here](#) to go to our Accela Citizen Access portal. Once you create a user ID and password, you will be able to log in and submit your application, pay fees and attach your site plans.

Is testing required for my new well?

NCEHD only requires testing to be done when the well will be hooked up to a new residence. In those cases, a well yield test and a raw water certification is required.

A well yield test is a four hour pump test to determine if the well can produce **at least 3.0 gallons per minute** sustained production rate. The well ordinance will grant approval for the Certificate of Occupancy for well production as low as 1.5 gallons per minute with a required minimum 1000 gallon holding tank.

A raw water certification is a bacteriological test performed by a California State laboratory that determines if there is any coliform bacteria present in the water. The sample is taken by a NCEHD Specialist and requires an application and fee.

What are coliform?

Coliform bacteria are "indicator organisms" used in water microbiological analysis. Coliform is a group of bacteria readily found in soil, decaying vegetation, animal feces, and untreated surface water. They are not normally present in deep groundwater or treated surface water. These indicator organisms may be accompanied by pathogens. Coliform bacteria do not normally cause disease in healthy individuals, however, pregnant women, the elderly or persons with compromised immune systems are considered to be at risk.

Drinking water found to contain coliform bacteria is considered contaminated and unsafe, and should not be consumed. We recommend that a well or spring source be sampled for total and fecal coliform at least once a year during the rainy, winter season.

Are there setbacks for wells?

Yes. Please refer to the following table with regard to well setbacks:

From	Minimum Setback Distance (feet)
Property Line	50
Easements	5
Septic tank and septic system pumps	100
Public or private sewer pipe line of approved water-tight piping and joint materials	25
Other public or private approved sewer line	50
Individual sewage disposal field	100
Community sewage disposal field	200
Pit privy	150
Animal or fowl enclosures (pastures excluded)	100
Seepage pit	150
Sanitary landfill	As approved by Nevada County Environmental Health Department
Water storage tank	10

Where, in the opinion of the Nevada County Environmental Health Department (NCEHD), adverse conditions exist, these distances may be increased as determined by the NCEHD.

A five (5) foot minimum setback from property line shall be permitted for a Class I well if the adjoining property meets one or more of the following:

- Is three (3) acres or greater in size.
- Has a developed or approved sewage disposal system (including repair area) that is 100 feet of the proposed well location.
- Has features that would preclude development of a sewage disposal system (including repair area) within 100 feet of the proposed well location.
- Has a well which precluded developments of a septic system within 100 feet of the proposed well location.

Does NCEHD monitor groundwater levels or water well use for private wells?

No.

Can NCEHD limit the amount of water extracted from private wells?

No.