

A high-speed photograph of water splashing, with a stream of water falling from the top right and creating a large splash in the center. The water is clear and blue, with many bubbles and droplets visible.

WATER ACT Regulations

Q&A for Well Construction Regulations

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Communities, Land
and Environment

Questions and Answers for the Well Construction Regulations

Q1 How much water are you allowed to pump from a well?

A1 The Well Construction Regulations do not control how much water can be pumped from a well.

Unlike the previous “Water Well Regulations” established under the *Environmental Protection Act*, the “Well Construction Regulations”, to be made under the *Water Act*, will deal only with the construction of wells. The pumping of wells and other methods of water withdrawal will be controlled under new “Water Withdrawal Regulations”.

Q2 Is the construction of “geothermal wells” covered in the regulations?

A2 Yes, both open-loop and closed-loop geothermal wells are covered in the regulations.

The previous “Water Well Regulations” did not make any reference to geothermal wells of any type. Under the proposed “Well Construction Regulations” wells for open-loop and closed-loop geothermal systems must be constructed by a licensed well drillers, and some additional provisions have been added to the regulations that apply specifically to geothermal wells.

Q3 Who can drill a well in PEI?

A2 A person must hold a PEI well driller’s licence to drill a well in PEI.

Well driller’s licences are issued to individuals that have a total of 4000 hours well drilling experience as a helper, and who successfully pass a written exam as well as a practical field test. To respect current positions on inter-provincial trade mobility, the proposed new regulations do not include a requirement that 1500 of the hours of experience drilling experience be obtained in PEI. Also, if a person has held a driller’s licence in another province, the requirement for the practical field test may be waived.

Q4 Do I need a permit to have a well drilled?

A4 For most domestic wells no permit is required but there are a few special circumstances where a “Well Permit” is required :

- before drilling a well in a restricted area, where because of existing groundwater contamination, or where there is a need to provide additional protection to groundwater, or
- it is not possible to meet some of the construction requirements normally required in well construction.

For low capacity wells pumping between 25 and 350 m³ of water per day, no permit is needed to drill the well but a Water Withdrawal Permit under the Water Withdrawal Regulations is needed to pump that amount of water.

For high capacity wells utilizing more than 350 m³ of water per day or any size well supplying a water supply system, a Groundwater Exploration Permit under the Water Withdrawal Regulations is required to drill the well. A Water Withdrawal permit is needed to pump that amount of water.

Q5 Do I need a permit to get my well fixed?

A5 No, if you have a domestic well or a low capacity well. You need a Groundwater Exploration Permit if you have a high capacity well or any size well supplying a water supply system and the work involves redrilling the well.

Q6 Can I get a permit for a new agricultural irrigation well?

A6 No, you cannot obtain a permit to construct a new high capacity well for agricultural irrigation. A low capacity well for agricultural irrigation does not need a permit to be drilled but it does need a Water Withdrawal Permit to be used. To be sure you can use a new low capacity well, it is advised to apply for the Water Withdrawal Permit prior to drilling the well.

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