

May 11, 2005

TO: Well Drillers licensed for Master, Journeyman, Journeyman B Class and Drilling Contractor/Company:

**RE: Change in Procedure Effective May 11, 2005
Blanket Approval for the Decommissioning of Domestic Wells with a Diameter of two inches or less.**

The regulations at N.J.A.C. 7:9D-3.1(d), adopted October 4, 2001 by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) regarding decommissioning of private wells require that the well driller¹ obtain all applicable well records prior to decommissioning. As part of this process, a well record search must be performed, and if none are found, the driller must obtain approval from the Bureau of Water Allocation (Bureau) before sealing the well(s) [see N.J.A.C. 7:9D-3.1(g)1]. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that the driller has properly identified the well being decommissioned, and been provided adequate information to ensure a proper and appropriate decommissioning.

Since the practice of installing two inch domestic wells has been an inconsistently regulated activity under the NJDEP's well construction regulations, domestic wells measuring two inches or less in diameter were exempted from the well record search process beginning in early 2003. However, the submission of a plan by the well driller and receipt of an NJDEP approval to decommission the well was still required.

In order to facilitate the search and approval process, the NJDEP will be issuing to well drillers of the proper class a blanket approval for decommissioning domestic wells 2 inches or less in diameter which are being decommissioned in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:9D-3.1 *et seq.* **These are the only wells that are eligible for blanket approval. The blanket approval does not apply to the decommissioning of any other type of well.** For the decommissioning of all other wells, the process described in paragraph one above still applies.

To use the blanket approval, a licensed well driller must fill out, sign and date the attached form and return it to the NJDEP Well Permitting Program. The original form will be kept on file in the well permitting program and an approval will be mailed (or FAX'd) to the well driller. Only those drillers with a blanket approval form on file with the Bureau may decommission 2 inch or less in diameter domestic wells without prior approval for each individual well. Please remember that well abandonment reports must be filed within 90 days of the well decommissioning. If you have any questions, please contact the Bureau of Water Allocation at (609) 984-6831. We look forward to your cooperation with this program.

Sincerely,

Fred Sickels, Administrator
Bureau of Water Allocation

PB/hp/to

¹ Applies to well driller license categories Master, Journeyman and Journeyman B only

Enclosure