



# INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

## Drinking Water Ground Water Rule

[www.idem.IN.gov](http://www.idem.IN.gov)

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### Description:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) promulgated the final Ground Water Rule (GWR) in October 2006, and it will become effective on December 1, 2009. The GWR applies to public water systems that use wells, and sometimes springs, to provide ground water as a drinking water source. Public water system requirements will be affected, including conducting sanitary surveys, source monitoring, corrective actions, treatment and public notification. IDEM is in the process of developing a State specific rule to implement and clarify areas in the federal GWR.

### Environmental and Public Health Benefits:

- Protecting the public health in a public water supply is based on layers of protection from the source to the tap. The GWR improves protection by requiring monitoring to detect viral and bacterial contamination in ground water sources of drinking water and is estimated to provide a 23% increase in protection from waterborne viral illnesses.

### IDEM's Role:

- The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) is responsible for protecting human health and the environment while providing for safe industrial, agricultural, commercial and governmental operations vital to a prosperous economy.
- IDEM's Office of Water Quality has the primary responsibility for implementing federal Safe Drinking Water Regulations in Indiana. IDEM's Drinking Water branch assists owners/operators of public water systems in understanding the federal rules and meeting their requirements.

### Public Water Suppliers' Role:

- There are several things that can be done to prepare public water systems for the GWR before its December 1, 2009, compliance date.

#### 1. Source Monitoring:

- Install a sample tap for each well, if one hasn't already been installed. The GWR works in conjunction with the Total Coliform Rule (TCR) to detect microbial contamination in drinking water. The GWR requires a sample to be collected from the source when a total coliform distribution system sample is unsatisfactory. This GWR "triggered" source sample must be collected at the well(s) within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving an unsatisfactory total coliform distribution system sample, and must be analyzed for a fecal indicator (such as, *E. coli*). If a sample isn't collected from the source within twenty-four (24) hours, the system will receive a monitoring violation.



Each well in a well field must have a tap for collecting a sample. Samples must be collected at a point representative of the groundwater source, prior to any pressure tank or treatment.



**Location of sample taps must be at a point:**

- of positive pressure;
- of relatively constant flow rate;
- that is readily accessible;
- a minimum of eighteen (18) inches above ground or floor level; and,
- inside a building, if possible.

**The sample tap itself must be:**

- down-turned;
- smooth-nosed;
- without interior or exterior threads;
- without a screen, aerator, washer, filter, hose attachment, purification device or other connected appurtenance; and,
- maintained in a clean condition.

- For specification for the sampling tap contact your field inspector.

**2. Sanitary Surveys:**

- Correct deficiencies noted in the last sanitary survey. As part of conducting sanitary surveys, IDEM notes any deficiencies found at any facility. Deficiencies may include:
  - an inadequately sealed well or storage tank;
  - chemical or bacterial sources of contamination within the sanitary setback area;
  - unprotected cross-connections; or
  - similar public health risks.
- All deficiencies identified must be corrected or provide an acceptable schedule to IDEM for correcting the deficiencies. Refer to the most recent sanitary survey report to understand any deficiencies specific for that system. (If a copy of the report cannot be located, contact your field inspector.) Correct all deficiencies before the next sanitary survey, to be in a better position to protect public health and comply with the GWR.

**For More Information:**

- If you have questions about the Ground Water Rule, please call IDEM's Drinking Water branch at (317) 232-8670.

