

DNR Permitting & Water Supply Plan Activity (Nov. 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021)

A total of 61 DNR Water Appropriation Permit actions occurred in the North and East Metro Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) during the last six months. These permit actions can be broadly divided into the following categories:

General Permit for Temporary Appropriation: 45

Preliminary Well Construction Assessments: 3

Amendments to Existing Permits: 10

New Individual Permits: 3

General Permit: The General Permit for Temporary Appropriation has the DNR Permit Tracking Number 1997-0005. Appropriations can be approved under DNR Permit 1997-0005 when the volume is less than 50 million gallons, and the time that water will be appropriated is less than one year.

Individual Permits: Individual Permits are on-going long-term DNR Water Appropriation Permits. Individual permits are issued for a variety of use types throughout the North and East Metro GWMA including public water supplies, athletic field irrigation and pollution containment, among others.

Amendments to Existing Permits: Amendments occur when there is a need to increase the authorized volume or rate of the DNR Appropriation Permit. Amendments also occur when installations (wells) are added to, or subtracted from, the permit holder's water use system.

Preliminary Well Construction Assessment: A preliminary well construction assessment determines whether a proposed well would be constructed in a location, or aquifer, where there are conditions or if there are features that would prevent the DNR from issuing a DNR Water Appropriation Permit for the use of the well. In the North and East Metro GWMA a well was proposed that would appropriate water from polluted aquifers. When they were informed of the presence of the pollution, the landowners abandoned their plans to drill the well.

On a county-by-county basis, the above DNR Permit actions can be divided up as follows:

- Washington County: 9 general permits, 3 permit amendment, no new individual permits, 2 preliminary well construction assessment (PWCA)
- Ramsey County: 13 general permits, 1 permit amendment, 1 new individual permit, no PWCAs
- Anoka County: 21 general permits, 5 permit amendments, 1 new individual permit, no PWCAs
- Hennepin County: 2 general permits, 1 permit amendment, 1 new individual permit, 1 PWCA

Significant Information Concerning DNR Permit Actions

1. Under the Ramsey County District Court Order (Court Order), File No. 62-CV-13-2414, the DNR cannot issue any new groundwater appropriation permits or authorize increases in existing groundwater appropriation permits that are located within five miles of White Bear Lake. However, the DNR can issue permits that qualify to be authorized under the DNR Temporary Water Appropriation General Permit (GP), No. 1997-0005 within 5 miles of White Bear Lake. This change that allows the DNR to issue temporary water appropriation permits under GP No. 1997-0005 in this area was modified by the Court in March 2018. No individual permits have been issued or amended within 5.0 miles of White Bear Lake.

2. The DNR has not received reports of violations during the last six months. The total number of compliance actions during the last four years is 539 actions. Compliance activities included: contacting the owners of high capacity wells to determine whether their appropriations were large enough to require a DNR Water Appropriation Permit and ensuring that the conditions on DNR Water Appropriation Permits, such as measuring and reporting ground water levels are being met.
3. Precipitation has been less in 2021 than it was in 2020. As a result, the DNR has not been receiving new DNR General Permit or Individual Permit applications to prevent high water from damaging homes, roads, and other structures.

Water Supply Plan Status Update

Communities who operate a public water supply for 1,000 or more residents, and cities within the 7-county metro area who manage a water supply for any number of residents must submit a water supply plan to the Minnesota DNR. Communities submit an updated plan every ten years, and the DNR receives them over a three-year period. The current round of plans were due in 2016, 2017, and 2018. All of the plans for communities within the N & E Metro Groundwater Management Area were due in December 2016.

Once a plan is received, our process is as follows:

- Check that the plan is complete. Notify the community of missing elements, if any.
- Send to the County for (optional) review.
- Send to the Metropolitan Council for their review. The water supply plans are also a component of a community's Comprehensive Plan.
- If needed, send to the DNR Groundwater Technical Unit for their review.
- Once the Met Council and Groundwater Technical Unit reviews are complete, the Area Hydrologist reviews the plan.
- All comments are compiled and the plan is either approved or sent back to the community with comments and required changes.
- If/when no required changes remain, plan is approved.

As of 6/03/2021, the status of the **39 plans** within the N&E Metro Groundwater Management Area are as follows:

- 38 plans approved
- 1 plan incomplete; DNR is still working with the community to receive basic plan information before we will review it.
- None in review