

Bucks County Department of Health  
Division of Environmental Health  
Quakertown Office 215-529-7000  
Doylestown Office 215-345-3318  
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Policy and Procedures to Construct / Modify a Well

The Bucks County Department of Health (BCDH) has established procedures and standards for the location, construction/modification and abandonment of residential wells, test wells, monitoring wells, irrigation wells, geothermal wells, and water quality sampling as set forth in the **BCDH Rules and Regulations Governing all Wells and their Construction Specifications**. Well casing reconstruction, pitless installations, deepening a well or hydrofracturing are considered well modifications.

Residential well and/or Geothermal well applicant instructions:

- a. Applicant must submit BCDH Application to Construct/Modify all Wells (SA-130), current fee and a plot plan of the property.
- b. It shall be unlawful to install a new well or geothermal system or modify an existing well without a valid well permit.
- c. The application to construct must be filed and signed by the current property owner or equitable owner.
- d. This Department will field-verify accuracy of submission. The well location(s) must be marked with an appropriate visual stake. If it is not visual and a second field stop is necessary a fee will be charged (see current fee schedule).
- e. The application shall be approved or denied within (7) seven working days of receipt of an administratively complete application and fee. BCDH shall notify applicants if the application is determined to be incomplete or contains information that cannot be verified. Upon receipt of the supplemental information, BCDH has an additional (7) seven days to approve or deny the application.
- f. Municipal well permits do not supersede the requirement to obtain a valid BCDH well permit along with all supporting data and the appropriate fee. Check with the municipality in which the well will be located to determine if there is a separate ordinance governing well permitting.
- g. All sewage system component locations within 125 ft. of the proposed well(s) on said property must be clearly staked prior to approval of the well construction permit and commencement of well drilling.
- h. Verification of property lines is the responsibility of the property owner. It is recommended that the property owner have a qualified professional certify all isolation distances.
- i. Any relocation of the proposed well site(s) from the permitted location must be submitted in writing and approved by BCDH.
- j. An application is neither a contract for, nor a guarantee of satisfactory water quantity or quality. An application is not a final approval to use the well, nor is it a guarantee that final approval will be granted.
- k. The BCDH must receive at least forty-eight (48) hours notice prior to drilling the well for an on site inspection.
- l. If well construction is not completed within (3) three years of the application approval date, the approval to construct shall expire.

Construction Specifications

Residential Well / Geothermal System Location:

- a. For the proposed well(s), minimum isolation distances shall be maintained from the designated facilities and potential pollution sources listed below.
- b. Any proposed deviation from the isolation distances in the referenced section must be submitted in writing to the Department for review.

## Individual Residential Water-Supply / Geothermal System Isolation Distances

- a. Delineated wetlands or 100-year floodplain - **25 feet**
- b. Storm drains, retention basins, storm water stabilization ponds, and rain water pits - **25 feet**
- c. Community spray irrigation sites, sewage sludge and septic disposal sites - **100 feet \***
- d. Lakes, ponds, streams or other surface waters - **50 feet \***
- e. Farm silos, barn yards, manure pits, tanks or other storage areas of animal manure - **200 feet \***
- f. Subsurface sewage absorption areas, elevated sand mounds, cesspools, sewage seepage pits, single family spray irrigation system, etc. - **100 feet \***
- g. Septic tanks, aerobic tanks, sewage pump tanks, holding tanks - **50 feet \***
- h. Gravity sewer lines and drains carrying domestic sewage or industrial waste - **50 feet**
- i. Gravity sewage lines and drains using cast iron pipe with watertight lead caulked or neoprene gasketed joints, or Schedule 40 polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes with solvent welded joints - **10 feet**
- j. Sewer lines and drains carrying domestic sewage or industrial waste under pressure (except welded steel pipe or concrete encased pipe) - **50 feet \***
- k. Commercial preparation area or storage area of hazardous spray materials, fertilizers or chemicals; salt piles - **300 feet \***
- l. Drip irrigation zones - **102 feet \***
- m. Building foundations, mobile homes, driveways, property lines, right of ways and swimming pools - **10 feet**

**Note:** Closed Loop Geothermal Systems shall meet one half the isolation distances noted with an \*

### Plot Plans

- a. Must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" or larger paper using the whole page @ 1" = 50' or more.
- b. Must also include all of the following information: property lines, adjacent streets, lot dimensions, reference to north, direction of slope, delineation of floodplain (where applicable)
- c. For geothermal systems; the grout type, piping and system operating pressure must be submitted with the plot plan.

The following is an example of a plot plan required with the Application to Construct/Modify an individual residential well.

