

Water Well Permitting Procedures



This document is for guidance only. It does not replace or supersede the official rules and regulations of the District.

Q *I was recently notified that my water well needs a permit. I want to comply with the law, so what do I need to do?*

A Obtaining a permit for your water well is a very simple task, and District staff are available to assist you at any point in the process. The following steps will give you a general overview of the permitting process:

STEP 1: Complete an application for a water well permit and submit it to the District with the appropriate application fee.

The District has created a one-page application form that must be completed for each well to be permitted. You may obtain copies of the form directly from District staff or by downloading it from our website. You may also complete the application and submit it online, and it will then be processed once your application fee is received.

The application form requests a variety of information that is needed by the District in order to review your application. In addition to your name and contact information, additional information is requested regarding the physical location of the well, the depth and size of the well, and the amount of groundwater you expect to use over the next year.

If you don't know some of the information requested, such as the latitude and longitude of the well or the well depth, simply complete as much of the application as you can, and after it is submitted, District staff will contact you if additional information is needed.

Once you've completed and signed the application form, it should be sent to the District along with the appropriate application fee. The application fee is \$200 for new wells or wells that have never been permitted and \$50 for renewals (discussed further below). If your well is not yet drilled, you will also be required to submit a signed Acknowledgement of District Regulatory Requirements.

STEP 2: You will receive a letter from the District notifying you that your application has been scheduled for a hearing.

The District is required by law to hold a hearing on each permit application submitted to the District. Prior to the date of the hearing, you will receive a hearing notice informing you of the time, date, and location of the hearing. Although your attendance is welcomed, you are not required to attend the hearing, and in most cases the hearing is simply a formality.

At the hearing, District staff will present your application to a Hearing Examiner along with staff's recommendations and comments on the application. After the hearing, if staff has any questions or needs any additional information, they will contact you by phone to discuss your application.

STEP 3: Your permit application will be considered by the District's Board of Directors.

Your permit application will be scheduled for one of the District's regular, monthly board meetings. You are not required to attend the Board meeting, and you will only receive notice of the Board meeting if you specifically request it or if there are special circumstances regarding your application, such as a prior violation or a difference between the amount of groundwater requested in the application and the amount recommended by the Hearing Examiner.

STEP 4: You will receive a permit fee statement invoicing you for payment of the permit fee.

Once your permit application is approved by the Board, you will receive a permit fee statement showing the amount of groundwater that may be pumped during the term of your permit and the corresponding charge for that amount of permitted groundwater, which is based on our current permit fee rate of \$17.00 per million gallons (\$8.00 per

million gallons for agricultural wells). The minimum permit fee is \$17.00 per year.

STEP 5: Once your permit fee statement is paid, you will receive your water well permit.

Payment of your permit fee is the final step in receiving your water well permit. It is important that the permit fee be paid promptly because failure to timely pay the permit fee could result in the voiding of your permit, which would require starting the application process all over.

Total Cost of Permitting a Small Water Well (< 1 mg/yr)	
Initial permit application fee	\$200.00
Permit fee	\$ 17.00
Total - First Year	\$217.00
Renewal application fee	\$50.00
Permit fee	\$17.00
Total - Following Years	\$67.00

Q How will I know when to renew my permit?

A Approximately four months prior to the expiration of your permit, the District will mail you a permit renewal application form that you must fill out and return to the District along with your \$50 renewal application fee. Your renewal application should be submitted to the District at least 60 days prior to the expiration of your existing permit in order to avoid any lapse in the permitting of your well. Renewal applications can also be completed online, but the application will not be processed until the \$50 application fee is received.

Your renewal application form will include spaces to enter the amount of groundwater you pumped from your well and the amount of water you purchased from other sources. This information should be based on the 12 months immediately preceding the date you complete the application. In most cases, you will be required to submit copies of water bills to verify the amount of water purchased from other sources.

Q What if I stop using my water well? Do I still have to renew the permit?

A A well must remain permitted as long as it is

“operational.” Even though you may choose to not use your well, the District still considers the well “operational” until the plumbing and electricity are completely, physically disconnected and the well is securely capped to prevent contaminants from entering the well.

Q Other than submitting my renewal application and paying my annual permit fee, is there anything else that I need to remember to do each year?

A Yes. One way that the District monitors groundwater usage is by collecting annual pumpage data from each well owner. Each year around January 1st, you will receive an Annual Report Form for each permitted well that you own on which you will report the amount of groundwater pumped for the preceding year. Each well owner is required to fill out and return the Annual Report Form by January 31st. If your well is not required to be metered, then you are asked to estimate the amount of pumpage to the best of your ability.

Q Why doesn't my permit term line up with the calendar year?

A The Subsidence District permits over 8,000 water wells each year, and the permit terms are staggered so that renewals are distributed evenly across all 12 months of the year.

Q How do I contact the Subsidence District?

A Be sure to visit our website for up-to-date information, online forms, and other helpful resources. If you have additional questions or need more information, you may contact the District at the following number or address:

Harris-Galveston Subsidence District
1660 W Bay Area Blvd.
Friendswood, TX 77546-2640
Website: www.subsidence.org
Phone: (281) 486-1105
Fax: (281) 218-3700

