

## **Chapter 173-160, Minimum Standards for Construction and Maintenance of Wells**

### **What is Chapter 173-160 WAC?**

The statutory authority for Chapter 173-160 WAC is Chapter 18.104 RCW. This law authorizes Ecology to adopt rules governing licensing and well construction as may be appropriate to carry out the purposes of the chapter. The standards for well construction under Chapter 173-160 WAC identify specific construction requirements that all wells must meet in order to protect public health, safety, and welfare as well as protect the ground water resource.

### **Summary of the rule changes adopted on December 19, 2008**

Chapter 173-160 WAC was revised for several reasons. These include the need to further protect ground water, to clarify provisions of the existing rule, and to address the requests of drillers and other interested parties. The newly-adopted rule amendment contains provisions that:

- Clarify and revise certain well construction terms and definitions.
- Add sections requiring drillers to use drilling materials, such as bentonite or those containing polymers and additives that have been certified by the National Sanitation Foundation or the American National Standards Institute.
- Clarify the standards for water well reports, surface seals, the upper terminal of water wells, dug wells, injection wells, well sealing, and decommissioning of resource protection wells and geotechnical soil borings.
- Add a provision that allows drillers to submit electronic well reports;
- Add a new section on vibrating wire peizometers;
- Clarify the minimum casing standards; and
- Correct typographical and grammatical errors.

#### **WHY IT MATTERS MORE INFORMATION**

The Department of Ecology is amending this rule to:

- Correct typographical and technical errors.
- Require certification of certain drilling materials to protect ground water resources.

**The rule becomes effective  
January 19, 2009.**

#### **Contact information:**

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#### **For more information:**

Visit the Well Construction website:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wells/wellhome.html>

#### **Special accommodations:**

If you need this publication in an alternate format, call the Water Resources Program at 360-407-6600. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341

## Response to Comments

Ecology's response to comments received during the public comment period is now available. Download a copy of the Concise Explanatory Statement at:  
[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wells/rule\\_amend.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wells/rule_amend.html).

## Whom does this rule affect?

This rulemaking will affect the following:

- Well drillers;
- Counties with delegated authority to inspect wells;
- Future well owners;
- Local and state health agencies; and
- Consultants and engineers.

## When does the rule become effective?

The rule becomes effective **January 19, 2009**.

## Other Information

To get updates on Ecology's rule-making activities, sign-up for the WAC Track e-mail list at:  
[www.ecy.wa.gov/maillist.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/maillist.html).

## Appeal procedures

This adoption can be appealed under procedures described in the Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05.330). For additional information about appealing this adoption please contact Jerry Thielen, Ecology's Regulatory Affairs Manager at (360) 407-7551 or by email [jthi461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:jthi461@ecy.wa.gov).