

Pump Installation Contractor Licensing

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Position Paper

Subjects

Pump installation contractor licensing, groundwater use, groundwater protection

Audience

Homeowners, governmental officials, building contractors

Background

The 2007 American Housing Survey shows that 13.249 million occupied households use private wells as their potable water source. Some 88.04 million Americans drink groundwater supplied by 40,301 community water systems using water wells, according to a 2008 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimate.

These wells and pumping systems are constructed by professional water well and pump installation contractors who have specialized knowledge regarding local geology, hydrogeology, construction techniques, and proper sizing of equipment. Recognizing that it takes specialized knowledge to install these systems properly so that the public is protected, 47 states have instituted statewide licensing programs for water well contractors and two states administer statewide registration programs. In addition, at least 26 states also separately license or register pump installation contractors.

Issue

Should states license pump installation contractors to help ensure that homeowners are provided with a safe drinking water supply and the groundwater resource is protected?

Position

An understanding of hydrogeology, the construction of the water well and its operation, and methods for determining the water requirements for a household are prerequisites to selecting and installing the proper pump system. Any regulation of this function should take into consideration the unique qualifications an individual must possess.

In addition, any time the well seal is broken, such as in pump servicing, the potential exists for contaminant introduction into the water source. As such it is imperative that proper disinfection follow to ensure a safe, potable water supply. The pump contractor is a vital factor if this is to be accomplished.

The National Ground Water Association, recognizing the particular skills necessary, administers a certification test for individuals doing pump installation and servicing.



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Safe quality water in ample quantity can be assured through recognition of the interdisciplinary nature of this occupation and the formulation of a licensing program in every state that recognizes this fact.

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Date

Originally adopted by the National Ground Water Association Board of Directors April 22, 1988, NGWA issue briefs are updated as needed to reflect changes in information, as noted here: technical amendments made on August 1, 1991, February 4, 1992, August 3, 1999, July 19, 2005, and September 13, 2005; brief reformatted August 2009.