



# Nonpublic Household Water Well Recommendation #11: Track and Provide Information about Abandoned Wells in Property Transactions

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## Proposed Action

1. When a new or existing well is being inspected for the first time, the local environmental health professional will inspect the property for abandoned wells.
2. KDHE will maintain a record and map of abandoned wells as they are identified; they will make this information available to local environmental health professionals and to the public.
3. KDHE will develop a regulation to require information about abandoned wells located on a property to be provided at the time of sale or transfer of property ownership.

## Potential Funding

Funding to support this recommendation would most likely come from a combination of sources, including: state funding, permit fees, and nonpublic well users.

## Background Information

Kansas state law requires abandoned wells to be plugged by a licensed water well contractor as follows:

*All water wells abandoned by the landowner on or after July 1, 1979, and all water wells that were abandoned prior to July 1, 1979 which pose a threat to groundwater supplies, shall be plugged or caused to be plugged by a licensed water well contractor or the landowner as required by Kansas state law.*

## Why This Action Is Needed

Wells that have been abandoned or not properly plugged are common sources for groundwater contamination. Although no one (including KDHE, counties, and often well owners) knows how many abandoned wells there are in Kansas, there are estimates by Kansas State University Extension staff that 250,000 to 500,000 abandoned or improperly plugged water wells exist in Kansas. Without knowing where these potential sources of contamination are, state and local environmental health professionals are unable to protect nonpublic water well users.



### For more information contact:

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