Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP)

Improving Water Quality Through Well Plugging

Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP)

Every day, millions of gallons of water are contaminated or wasted throughout the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) by free-flowing, improperly constructed, deteriorated or abandoned artesian wells. Many of these wells were built before current well construction standards were established. Therefore, many of the wells:

- ▷ Do not have enough casing and expose several aquifers of varying water quality to one another.
- ▷ Have deteriorated well casing, allowing good water supplies to be contaminated.
- ▷ Have uncontrolled water flowing out at the surface, resulting in a significant waste of water.

To address these issues, the District's Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP) provides funding assistance to landowners to properly plug abandoned and deteriorating artesian wells on their property.

Funding Assistance

Funding for QWIP is limited to wells that are:

- ▷ Located in specific artesian well areas (see map on back panel).
- ▷ Four inches in diameter or greater.
- ▷ At least one year old.
- ▷ Drilled for a water supply.
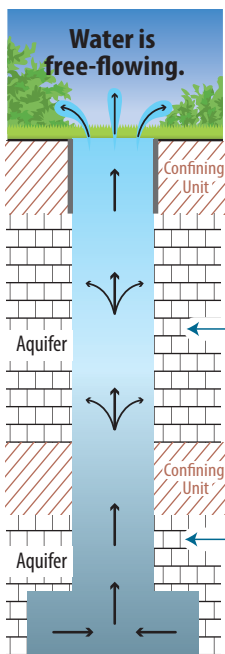
Funding Guidelines

- ▶ If the well meets all criteria, the landowner will qualify for funding.
- ▶ Funding assistance is available only in DeSoto, Hardee, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, Sarasota, and portions of Charlotte, Pasco, Polk and Highlands counties (see map on back panel).
- ▶ Qualified wells will be considered for reimbursement in the order by which they are reported.
- ▶ Reimbursement amounts are based on well depth and average diameter.
- ▶ Reimbursement amounts are not to exceed $6,000 per well and $18,000 annually per landowner.

QWIP Process

1. District QWIP staff inspect the well to determine if it meets all criteria.

2. District QWIP staff will notify the landowner with the amount that will be eligible for reimbursement based on well depth and average diameter.

3. Landowner is then responsible to solicit and negotiate an agreement with a licensed Florida water well contractor to plug the well within 90 days of the claim form date.

4. District staff or other permitting authority must witness the well plugging.

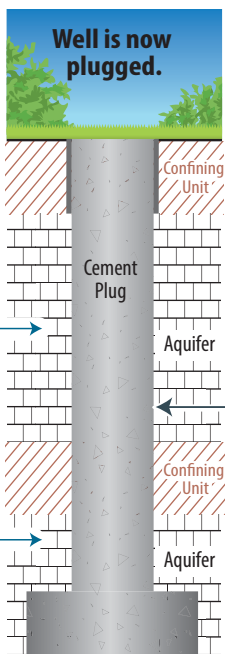5. District issues reimbursement amount or contractor invoice amount, whichever is less.

The Plugging Technique

Abandoned Well Before Plugging

Water is free-flowing.

Confining Unit

Aquifer

Confining Unit

Aquifer

← Good Water Quality →

← Poor Water Quality →

Poor-quality water contaminates good-quality water.

Abandoned Well After Plugging

Well is now plugged.

Confining Unit

Cement Plug

Aquifer

Confining Unit

Aquifer

Contamination is stopped.

The plugging technique involves filling the well with cement or bentonite to stop good water supplies from being contaminated. Before this begins, electronic equipment is lowered into the well to determine if the well qualifies for funding and to record the well's depth and average diameter to calculate the plugging reimbursement amount. Cement or bentonite is placed into the well from the bottom of the well back to the land surface. When completed, the well is plugged and no longer exists. Gradually, through natural recharge, the contaminated groundwater is diluted and flushed from the system. Eventually, water quality improves.

Counties Eligible for Funding Assistance Through the Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP)
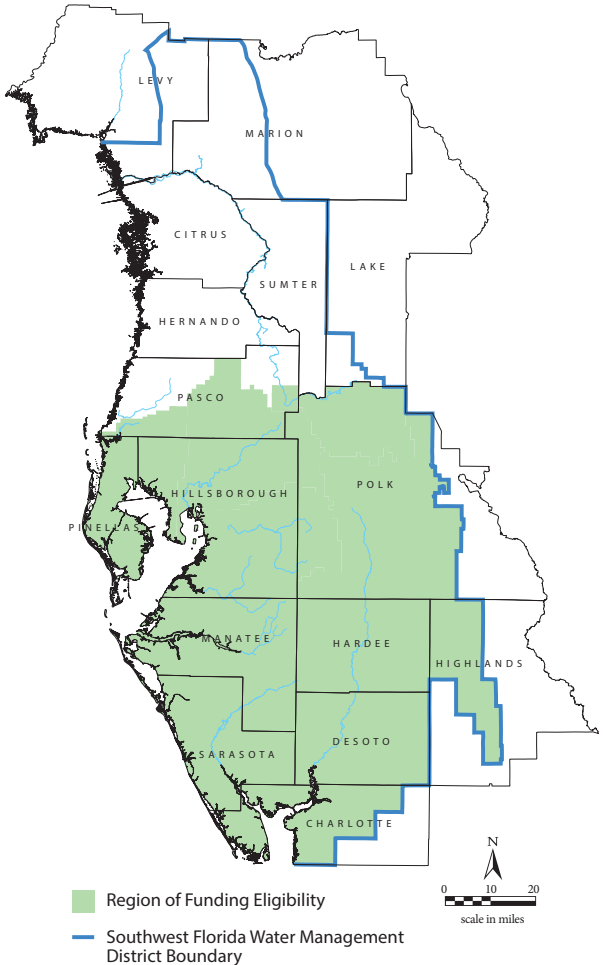
- **Region of Funding Eligibility**
- **Southwest Florida Water Management District Boundary**

N

0   10   20
scale in miles

For more information on the QWIP,
please contact:

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