

~~NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION~~

~~TITLE 259 — RULE REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE
ADMINISTRATION OF THE
WATER WELL DECOMMISSIONING FUND~~

~~NEBRASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE~~

~~NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION~~

~~TITLE 259~~

~~RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE WATER
WELL DECOMMISSIONING FUND~~

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TITLE 259—NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
RULES GOVERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE WATER WELL
DECOMMISSIONING FUND

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~~LAST ISSUE DATE: OCTOBER 16, 2001~~

TITLE 259 ~~DNR~~ ADMINISTRATION OF WATER WELL DECOMMISSIONING FUND

CHAPTER 1 – ADMINISTRATION OF WATER WELL DECOMMISSIONING FUND
GENERAL PROVISIONS

001 General Provisions.

001.01 Purpose of Rules. These rules ~~and regulations~~ are adopted for the purpose of administering the Water Well Decommissioning Fund ~~(Fund)~~ created by Neb. Rev. Stat. §section 46-1403, R.R.S.2004 as amended.

001.02 General Availability of Funds. Financial assistance from the Fund shall be available only to ~~natural resources~~ districts ~~which that~~ have cost-sharing programs for decommissioning water wells consistent with Neb. Rev. Stat. §§sections 46-1401 to 46-1405, R.R.S.2004 as amended and these rules; ~~and regulations~~ and ~~which~~ have entered into a contract ~~ual arrangement~~ with the Department setting forth the terms for providing such financial assistance.

001.03 Definitions. As used in these rules ~~and regulations~~, unless the context otherwise requires:

001.03(A)1 ~~“Decommissioning”~~ “Decommissioned” or ~~or~~ shall ~~“Decommissioning” means the act of filling, sealing, and plugging a water well in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Department of Health and Human Services, Regulations and Licensure; is defined under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1206.01;~~

001.03(B)3.02 ~~“Department”~~ shall mean the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources ~~created by Section 81-101, R.R.S.2003 as amended;~~

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~~0013.03(C) - "Director" shall mean the individual holding the position of the Director of Natural Resources created by section 81-102 the Department, R.R.S. 2003 as amended;~~

~~001.003(D).04 - "District" or "Natural Resources District" shall mean a a Natural Resources District; created and operating in accordance with Chapter 2, Article 32, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska;~~

001.03(E) "Fiscal Year" means July 1 of any calendar year through June 30 of the next calendar year;

~~0013.03(F)5 - "Fund" shall mean the Water Well Decommissioning Fund created by section Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1403, R.R.S. 2004 as amended;~~

~~0013.03(G)6 - "Licensed pump installation contractor" shall mean an individual as defined is defined under in section Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1209, R.R.S. 2004 as amended and holding a current license issued in accordance with Chapter 46, Article 12, Nebraska Revised Statutes;~~

~~0013.07-03(H) - "Licensed water well contractor" shall mean an individual as is defined in under section Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1213, R.R.S. 2004 as amended and holding a current license issued pursuant to Chapter 46, Article 12, Nebraska Revised Statutes;~~ and

~~0013.0803(I) - "Water well" it is as defined in under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1212 shall mean any excavation that is drilled, cored, bored, washed, driven, dug, jetted, or otherwise constructed for the purpose of exploring for ground water, monitoring ground water, utilizing the geothermal properties of the ground, obtaining hydrogeologic information, or extracting water from or injecting water into the underground water reservoir. Water well shall not include any excavation made for obtaining or prospecting for oil or natural gas or for inserting media to repressure oil or natural gas bearing formations regulated by the Nebraska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission.~~

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001.004 Access to Files and Compliance with Agreement and Rules ~~AND~~
REGULATIONS. The files of each participating ~~natural resources~~ District shall be available for inspection by ~~personnel of the~~ Department personnel and by representatives of the State Auditor's Office during normal business hours of the District. ~~In the event that~~ the Director becomes aware of a violation of the contract between the District and the Department or of these rules ~~and regulations~~, the Director may terminate the contract and/or demand reimbursement of any State funds related to such violation.

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CHAPTER 2 — QUALIFIED COST-SHARING PROGRAMS.

002 Qualified Cost-Sharing Programs.

002.01 Program Eligibility. For a District to be eligible for reimbursement from the Fund, it must establish a water well decommissioning cost-share program ~~which is~~ consistent with the ~~following~~ requirements as set forth in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1405.:

~~001.01. The district program must apply only to water wells which are decommissioned in accordance with all applicable state laws, standards, rules, and regulations and by a licensed water well contractor or licensed pump installation contractor.~~

~~001.02. The program must not exclude any category of water wells from cost-share eligibility.~~

~~002.01(A)3. For purposes of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1405 (3), The program must be available for at least thirty water wells per year. the program will be considered in compliance with this requirement if the~~ To establish and maintain eligibility, a district does not have to provide cost-share assistance to at least thirty water wells each year. For a given fiscal year a program that is otherwise consistent with these rules will be consistent with this requirement if the District has budgeted at least \$10,000 for ~~that the~~ program that Ffiscal Yyear. ~~-If a natural resources~~ District produces sufficient evidence to document that it can cost-share the decommissioning of at least ~~thirty~~ 30 water wells for less than \$10,000, the Director may determine that such District's program is eligible if the amount budgeted for decommissioning is equal to or greater than that lesser amount.

~~002.01(B)4. The district program must provide at least 60% of the cost of decommissioning water wells, except that a district may establish a maximum cost share amount of no less than \$500 for all water wells other than hand dug~~

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~~water wells and no less than \$700 for hand-dug water wells.~~ For purposes of ~~these rules~~ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1405 (4), the cost of decommissioning a water well does not include the cost of removing any exposed or buried pipes, tanks, or pumps; or any tower, wellhouse, or other apparatus or obstruction around or in the water well that might interfere with the process of decommissioning.

002.02 Program Certification by District. -Each ~~natural resources~~ District desiring reimbursement from the Fund ~~must~~ shall complete a program certification form provided by the Director. -The form ~~must~~ shall be completed and returned by July 15 of each year the ~~D~~istrict wishes to receive reimbursement from the Fund.

002.003 Approval of Programs. -The Director ~~is~~ shall be responsible for determining whether a ~~natural resources~~ District cost-sharing program for decommissioning water wells complies with the requirements of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1405 and this Section chapter. - Before making ~~any~~ such determination, the Director may request additional information from ~~any~~ the ~~D~~istrict.

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Allocation of Funds.

Chapter 3—ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

003.014 Allocation of Funds. The Director willshall allocate funds only to Districts which-that have entered into a contractual arrangement with the Department and have a water well decommissioning cost-sharing program consistent with the requirements of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 46-1405 and Chapter 2 of these rules and regulations. -Each participating District's percentage of the funds available for a Ffiscal Yyear will be determined by the Director on or before August 1 of that year and willshall be based upon that participating District's proportion of the wells decommissioned statewide with natural resource-District cost-share assistance. Each District's proportion willshall be determined as follows: (1) for any District that has had a qualified program for at least the previous three consecutive Ffiscal Yyears, the average number of wells decommissioned with assistance from that program in the three previous Ffiscal Yyears willshall be determined; (2) for any District that has had a qualified program for only the last Ffiscal Yyear or the last two consecutive Ffiscal Yyears, the number of wells decommissioned with assistance from that program in the previous Ffiscal Yyear willshall be the number used for that District; (3) all average numbers determined in accordance with (1) above willshall be added to all numbers determined in accordance with (2) above to produce the total number of wells that have been decommissioned statewide with qualified District cost-share assistance programs; and (4) each District's number as determined in accordance with (1) or (2) above willshall then be divided by the total derived in accordance with (3) above to produce that District's proportion of the funds to be allocated for the then current Ffiscal Yyear. -Funds willshall be allocated to participating Districts from those available in the Water Well Decommissioning Fund on at least a quarterly basis. -Except as provided in Rule Subsection 003.03 of this Chapter each District's share of each allocation willshall be based upon the percentages determined in accordance with this Subrulection.

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003.02002 Certifying Wells Decommissioned. -On or before July 15 of each year, each District ~~which-that~~ desires to be reimbursed from the Fund willshall certify the number of wells decommissioned with cost-sharing assistance the previous Ffiscal Yyear in accordance with this Subsection-chapter.

003.03003 Revising Allocations. ~~The percentages determined pursuant to rule 001 of this chapter may be adjusted by the Director after March 1 if the Director determines that one or more districts cannot reasonably be expected to use their full percentage of the funds available for that fiscal year.~~ To assist the Director in making ~~such~~ determinations on revising allocations, each participating District ~~shall provide~~will provide the Director with a report by March 1. -The report willshall indicate the number of wells ~~which-that~~ ~~that-the~~ District has approved for cost-share assistance and ~~which-that~~ are expected to be decommissioned and cost-shared by the District before July 1 and any other information the District desires to indicate the demand for funds in that District. ~~-If such report provides adequate evidence that the district is likely to provide sufficient decommissioning cost-share assistance to utilize all of the district's percentage of the available funds by July 1, that district's percentage will be maintained.~~ If any-the District does not provide the report, or if any-district'sthe report indicates that it cannot be expected to utilize all of its percentage by July 1, the Director may reduce that District's percentage and distribute these any-funds ~~thus made available~~ to Districts ~~which-that~~ have documented the need for additional funds in that Ffiscal Yyear.- Such distribution willshall be based on the Director's determination of the proportionate number of well decommissionings that could still be cost-shared within those Districts in the remainder of the Ffiscal Yyear.

003.04004 Expiration of Allocation. ~~Except to the extent that the Department encumbers funds at the end of the fiscal year to reimburse districts for cost share assistance paid by them in that fiscal year,~~ Allocations willshall not be carried over from one Ffiscal Yyear to the next. ~~Any unexpended but~~ Re-appropriated funds will be included in the amount allocated for the next Ffiscal Yyear. -Funds encumbered by the Department at the end of the Ffiscal Yyear willshall ~~also~~ be released if a request for reimbursement ~~for such funds~~ has not been received by the Director by July 15.

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FUND004 Reimbursement to Districts.

Chapter 4 -- REIMBURSEMENT TO DISTRICTS

004.01001 Limit on Reimbursements. Actual reimbursements to the District for each water well decommissioned with District cost-share assistance in accordance with these rules ~~and regulations~~ will~~shall~~ not exceed the lesser of: -(1) 75 ~~percent%~~ of the cost of such decommissioning; (2) \$500 for all water wells other than hand-dug wells; (3) \$700 for hand-dug water wells; or (4) the actual amount of the cost-share assistance paid by the District.

004.02002 Requesting Reimbursement. A participating District may request reimbursement no more often than monthly, except as necessary to avoid a loss of encumbered funds in accordance with ~~Rule 004 of Chapter 3 Subsection 003.04. of these rules and regulations.~~ To be eligible for such reimbursement, the District must certify the following information for each water well for which cost-share reimbursement is being sought: -(1) the total cost of decommissioning the well; (2) the cost-share amount paid by the District; and (3) that District cost-sharing for the well was in compliance with Neb. Rev. Stat. §§sections 46-1401 through to 46-1405, R.R.S.2004, as amended, and with these rules ~~and regulations~~.

Enabling Legislation: Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 46-1401 to 46-1405