

An Arizona Guide to Domestic Well Registration and Record-keeping

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The purpose of this article is to assist well owners to check the registration of their well by searching the ADWR imaged records files, and how to keep well installation and maintenance records current.



Figure 1. Example of well casing, pressure switch and pressure tank in Arizona. photo: G. Hix.

All water wells in Arizona must be registered with The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) as per the Arizona Revised Statute A.R.S. §Title 45. The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) further regulates public water supply wells. Domestic (private and shared) wells, however, are not overseen or regulated by any state, county or local agency. The well owner or manager has the full responsibility for maintaining the ownership status of the well with the ADWR, the operating performance of the well, and for the checking the quality of the water that comes from that well.

There are a few minimum well construction standards mandated by ADWR for domestic well construction (A.R.S. §45-594) and the initial reporting by the well driller. Water well drillers are licensed by the ADWR by (A.R.S. §45-595) and they are required to submit only basic well construction information, see website link. There are no regulations, or standards of performance, or previous work experience requirements by the ADWR, however, for the well and pump contractors who equip and service private wells in Arizona. Maintaining well ownership, performance and equipping records with the ADWR is the sole responsibility of the registered well owner.

If your water well is not registered in your name, you may not have a known or definable source of water for your home. Arizona does not consider groundwater to be private property

belonging to the landowner. Exempt well water rights are more like an operating permit to withdraw a state managed natural resource. Additionally, the State of Arizona cannot notify you of pending changes in groundwater law that might affect you water rights. The last section details a few easy steps that you can use to maintain complete well records with the ADWR. Moreover, maintaining accurate well records can help you to reduce your well maintenance costs. The section below titled “Arizona Has Public Access to Water Well Records” will show you how to access your private well record.

Private well owners, estimated to be as many as 120,000 in the State of Arizona, are left strictly on their own to manage and protect their only source of potable water, their well. Therefore, keeping your well records current with the ADWR and up to date for your own personal use is important to protecting your domestic water well. There are no standards for the performance of private or shared water wells during the sale and transfer of the real estate upon which the well is constructed. Nevertheless, it is important to have your well information current and accurate for maintaining your water rights and for any future real estate sales and re-financing transactions. Buyers and lenders will be asking for it.

Well Registration Requirements

The Arizona Groundwater Management Act of 1980 mandated that everyone register their wells with the newly formed ADWR even though they may have been wells that were legally permitted by previous Arizona well management authorities. All wells, public, domestic, agricultural, mining, etc. were to have been registered with ADWR and accounted for during the early 1980's. A large majority of the wells were registered by 1985. Since that time, however, many of the properties that these wells were located on were sold and transferred without informing ADWR that there was a change of registered well ownership. The recording of a deed of title transferring the real estate did not notify ADWR that the well ownership was transferred. Therefore, there are many registered wells in Arizona that are still listed with ADWR as being owned by the person who first registered the well in 1981 through 1985 as the law required.

Verifying the Registration of a Well

The first thing that any private well owner should do is check with ADWR to see if their well is indeed registered in their name. You can do this by logging on to the ADWR Imaged Records web site, (<http://www.azwater.gov/azdwr/>) seeking and verifying your well records. See Arizona Has


 Arizona Department of Water Resources Water Management Division P.O. Box 36020 Phoenix, Arizona 85067-6020 (602) 771-8500 • (602) 771-8690 fax • www.azwater.gov •		Notice of Intent to Drill, Deepen, Replace or Modify a Well (except a Non-Exempt Well in an Active Management Area)		\$150 or \$100 FEE																				
♦ Review instructions prior to completing form in black or blue ink. ♦ You must include with your Notice: • Check or money order in the amount of the appropriate filing fee. • For a well located within an AMA or INA, the fee is \$150.00. • For a well not located within an AMA or INA, the fee is \$100.00 if the well will be used solely for domestic purposes (see page 2 and instructions) and will have a pump with a maximum capacity of not more than 35 gallons per minute. Otherwise, the fee is \$150.00. ♦ Authority for fee: A.R.S. § 45-596 and A.A.C. R12-15-104.		AMA / INA: B SB RECEIVED DATE: WS ISSUED DATE: WGRFP CERCLA LEGAL REVIEW IF APP: REASONING	FILE NUMBER WELL REGISTRATION NUMBER 55 -																					
SECTION 1. COUNTY OR LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITY APPROVAL (if applicable) <i>If water from the proposed well will be used for domestic purposes on a parcel of land of 5 or fewer acres, the applicable county or local health authority must endorse all items in Section 1 within one year before submission to the Department of Water Resources. You must also attach a site plan (pg. 3).</i> CHECK ONE <input type="checkbox"/> County or Local Health Authority Recommends Approval (pursuant to A.R.S. § 45-596 (G) and (F)) <input type="checkbox"/> Field Inspection Performed <input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan Review Only <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Information to Make a Determination COUNTY OR LOCAL AUTHORITY NAME AND TITLE TELEPHONE NUMBER DATE COUNTY OR LOCAL AUTHORITY SIGNATURE																								
SECTION 2. REGISTRY INFORMATION <table border="1"> <tr> <td> Well Type CHECK ONE <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt (Pump has a maximum capacity of not more than 35 gpm and water is not used for irrigation purposes inside an AMA.) (See instructions.) <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Exempt (Pump has a maximum capacity of more than 35 gpm and the well is located outside an AMA.) (See instructions.) DESIGN PUMP CAPACITY Gallons Per Minute </td> <td> Proposed Action CHECK ONE <input type="checkbox"/> Drill New Well <input type="checkbox"/> Deepen <input type="checkbox"/> Replace <input type="checkbox"/> Modify If Deepening, Replacing or Modifying: ORIGINAL WELL REGISTRATION NUMBER S5 - MAXIMUM CAPACITY OF ORIGINAL WELL Gallons Per Minute DISTANCE & DIRECTION FROM ORIGINAL WELL Feet </td> <td colspan="3"> Location of Well WELL LOCATION ADDRESS (IF ANY) TOWNSHIP (NS) RANGE (EW) SECTION 160 ACRE 40 ACRE 10 ACRE ¼ ¼ ¼ COUNTY ASSESSOR'S PARCEL ID NUMBER BOOK MAP PARCEL # OF ACRES Place of Water Use (Mandatory information, see instructions.) Is the groundwater basin where the well will be drilled the same as the place where the water will be used? TOWNSHIP (NS) RANGE (EW) SECTION 160 ACRE 40 ACRE 10 ACRE Yes No </td> </tr> </table>					Well Type CHECK ONE <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt (Pump has a maximum capacity of not more than 35 gpm and water is not used for irrigation purposes inside an AMA.) (See instructions.) <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Exempt (Pump has a maximum capacity of more than 35 gpm and the well is located outside an AMA.) (See instructions.) DESIGN PUMP CAPACITY Gallons Per Minute	Proposed Action CHECK ONE <input type="checkbox"/> Drill New Well <input type="checkbox"/> Deepen <input type="checkbox"/> Replace <input type="checkbox"/> Modify If Deepening, Replacing or Modifying: ORIGINAL WELL REGISTRATION NUMBER S5 - MAXIMUM CAPACITY OF ORIGINAL WELL Gallons Per Minute DISTANCE & DIRECTION FROM ORIGINAL WELL Feet	Location of Well WELL LOCATION ADDRESS (IF ANY) TOWNSHIP (NS) RANGE (EW) SECTION 160 ACRE 40 ACRE 10 ACRE ¼ ¼ ¼ COUNTY ASSESSOR'S PARCEL ID NUMBER BOOK MAP PARCEL # OF ACRES Place of Water Use (Mandatory information, see instructions.) Is the groundwater basin where the well will be drilled the same as the place where the water will be used? TOWNSHIP (NS) RANGE (EW) SECTION 160 ACRE 40 ACRE 10 ACRE Yes No																	
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Figure 2. Notice of Intent to Drill, Deepen, Replace or Modify a Well. Source: ADWR (2014).

Public Access to Water Well Records section below.

ADWR Forms Mandated by A.R.S §Title 45

DWR 55-40

Notice of Intent (NOI) to Drill, Deepen, Replace, or Modify a Well, see Fig. 2. If your well is a pre 1980 well your file may not have an NOI but it should have a Registration of Existing Wells form completed and filed dated no later than 1985. If you are the first owner of a well then the well was registered in your name when the NOI was received by ADWR, and the well drilling permit was issued to the Arizona licensed well driller.

DWR 55-55

Well Driller Report and Well Log. The well driller must fill out this form and submit it to the ADWR within thirty (30) days of completing the well. It contains the well construction information and a description of the geologic formations encountered while drilling the well.

DWR 55-56

Pump Installation Completion Report. The original well owner must have completed this form at the time the well was first equipped. The original owner has thirty (30) days from the time the well is first equipped to submit this form to the ADWR. It is recommended that a new 55-56 form be re-submitted to the ADWR each time the well pump is replaced and/or the depth of pump setting is changed.

DWR 55-71A

Request to Change Well Information. This form can be used to correct or change well location information, the registered well owner's name and address, the well driller to be used to drill or deepen the well, or any other pertinent item about the well. Escrow officers use this form to record a transfer of well ownership with the ADWR at the time of escrow closing.

Note: Any of these four forms can be found and downloaded by going to the Permits/Reporting option pull down on the ADWR Main Menu. Look for Forms and Applications and

click on it. Scroll down to the line Well Permitting/Notice of Intent and click on it.

Statement of Claimant Form for either Domestic or Irrigation Use. This form should be completed and filed with ADWR to protect your water right in your well as may be adjudicated in a lawsuit filed by the Gila River Indian Nation, which may not be settled for many years and to protect your right to continue to use your domestic well. Notices of the recommendation to file a Statement of Claimant were mailed to the then registered well owners in certain areas (watersheds) of southern Arizona based upon the ADWR registrations at that time. If you were not the proper registered owner of your well at the time you may not have received this notice.

Note: This form can be found by going to the Permits/Reporting option pull down on the Main Menu and then select Permits/Forms/Applications and click on it. Scroll down to the line ...Statement of Claimant... and click on it. For domestic use, select the Statement of Claimant Forms for Domestic Use and choose the appropriate watershed your well is located within. For example, if you are located in the Upper Santa Cruz watershed, choose Statement of Claimant for Domestic water use for the Upper Santa Cruz. Print and complete the form and submit it to the ADWR with the appropriate fees (see instructions section on the same page).

Arizona Has Public Access to Water Well Records

On June 29, 2012 the ADWR implemented new methods of accessing their Imaged Records well files. There are now three different ways to locate water well records. You can access well file data in the ADWR Imaged Records Data Base the following ways; a) using the well registration number (55-000000), b) by entering the file or cadastral (registry of real state property) designation of your well as explained below, or c) by finding and clicking on a red dot a topographic map (see An alternative way to locate records section) of the state of Arizona where your well is located. After locating your well records, you can download them in a pdf file format to save or print. The first step is logging on to the ADWR web site as explained below.

Log on to <http://www.azwater.gov> Home Page and scroll down to Quick Links: and click on the Imaged Records logo, which will direct you to a page with a box named Search ADWR's Imaged Records. Change the Imaged Record: field from "Groundwater Document" to "Well Record Document" using the scroll down menu on the right. The Search ADWR's Imaged Records box should now look like Fig. 3

Note that the **Imaged Record:** pull down menu window currently has eleven options; choose the second option: "Well Registry Document" to access well files starting with 55-. Wells 55 files contain all the wells registered with the ADWR since 1980. There is also an optional pull menu for locating files starting with 35-. "Wells 35 Document" has files for wells permitted by the State Land Department before 1980.

Registry ID: This is where you can enter the well's 55- registration number (beginning with 55 followed by a dash and six unique numbers. Example: 55-123456) It is not necessary to enter the 55- prefix portion of the registration number. Enter just the unique six digits for the well, if you know it. If you don't know the registration number you can still find the well by entering the well's location identifier, or cadastral, discussed next.

Search ADWR's Imaged Records

Select type of imaged record and complete the search criteria below. [?](#)

Imaged Record:	<input type="text" value="Well Registry Document"/>
Registry ID (55-)	<input type="text"/>
Location	<input type="text"/>

Figure 3. View of Search ADWR Records box set to look for well registry documents. Source: ADWR.

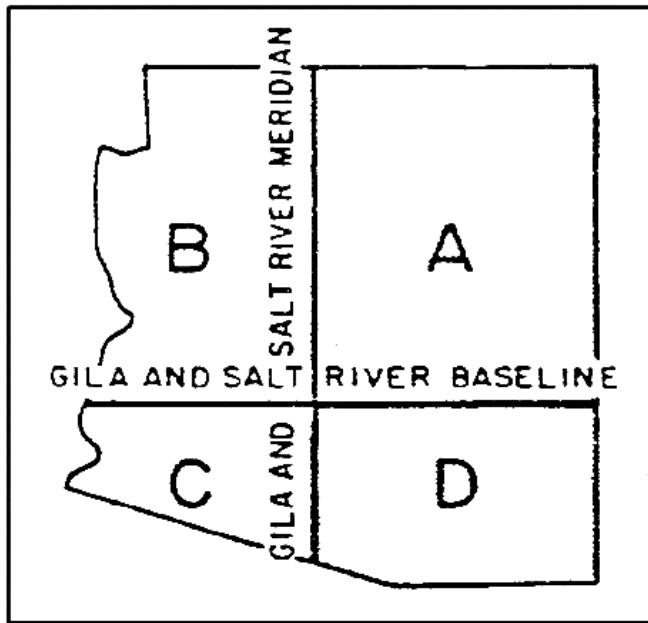


Figure 4. Arizona State Baseline and Meridian line that dissect the state into four quadrants.

Well Location Cadastral: You can enter the cadastral location of your well in the Location box under Image Record drop down of Well Registry or Wells 35 document. The steps below illustrate how to enter the location of a well located in Section(S) 21 of Township(T) 13South(S) and Range(R) 15West(W), which is usually abbreviated: S21, T13S, R15W.

- Enter the cadastral location first choosing the letter of the quadrant of the state your well is located, designated by "A,B,C or D" letters as shown on the map, Fig. 4. Note that the quadrant letter may be determined using the Township and Range: Township 13S means the location is South the Baseline, and Range 15W mean the location is West of the Meridian, thus, in quadrant D.
- Next, enter the first digit is the Township number located North or South of the Gila & Salt River Baseline (Baseline Road). This example indicates Township 13 South because the quadrant initially chosen is D (the south-east portion of AZ).
- Enter the half Township number if known (there are very few). If the half Township is not known or does not exist, enter "0" as the default value.

- Enter the Range number. This example indicates Range 15 East (recall that the D quadrant is the south-east portion of AZ).
- Enter the half Range if known, otherwise type in "0" as the default value.
- Finally, enter the Section number (1-32) where the well is located and add an "*", which asks the program to search for all wells in the one square mile area of Section 21.

In this example the Location search field should be entered as: D-13-0-15-0-21*

If you know the 160-acre quarter, quarter, quarter Section the well is located, instead of the "*", you may enter one or more letters "A, B, C or D" (corresponding to the letters "a, b, c, or d" shown on Fig. 5 map on the right in the same manner as the state map quadrants and shorten the list of possible wells. Following the example in figure to the right: in this case the well being located in the Southwest. of the Southeast. of the Southeast. of section 21, the Location search field should be entered as: D-13-0-15-0-21DDC

Once you have entered the Register ID or Cadastral in the Location search box, click the Search button. If you have entered the unique six-digit 55- Registration number, you should be seeing a single Adobe logo pdf file format for that Registration number. Click on the Adobe logo to download the well file.

If you entered a cadastral location number then there may be several Adobe logos to search through for the correct well file. Click on each of the pdf file logs to view the entire imaged records file and look for a way to associate this record with your well of interest. You may have to search through a number of imaged record files to find your well.

An alternative way to locate the records of a particular well is to use the ADWR home page <http://www.azwater.gov/azdwr/> pull down under Data Center and choose the Well Registry Data (Wells 55) under the third pull down choice. This will direct you to an image of a topographic relief map of the State of Arizona. Clicking on this map will direct you to either a Search Wizard or a Map box or symbol.

If you choose the Wizard method, you are given three choices of methods to search for your well records, Well Registry number, Owner Name Search, Location Cadastral, Basin or Sub Basin. Fill in the appropriate box and click on Search.

If you choose the Map method of searching, you will see a map of the State of Arizona with thousands of little red dots that indicate the approximate location of a registered well, see Fig 5. A sliding scale on the left side of the map allows you to zoom into a location on the map that may contain a red dot for your well. When you think you have located your well, click on the center of the red dot and this will allow you to get to the same Adobe imaged record file as the methods described above.

Maintaining Your Own Well Records

In addition to keeping copies of all the well record forms submitted to ADWR, well owners should keep at hand a summary of their well construction and maintenance activities. To assist in this task a form (Private Well Installation & Maintenance Record) can be found at cals.arizona.edu/cochise/forms/well-maintenance-record.pdf. This form lists and groups the types of information necessary for the efficient up-keep and repair

of a well. One or more copies of this form may be needed to record maintenance activities, as needed. Having up-to-date information about well construction, pump type, pressure tank replacement date, etc. at hand will save the well owner valuable time and costs, should the need for repair/replacement of well components arise.

A.R.S. §45-600 requires the registered well owner to complete and file a Pump Installation Completion Report form (ADWR 55-56) with the ADWR within thirty (30) days of the of the installation of the pumping equipment. Although not specifically stated in the A.R.S. it is the authors' recommendation that this form be completed and filed by the each time the pump is installed, replaced or its setting in the well has been modified.

Maintaining Your Water Quality

Although there is no requirement to test the quality of the water coming from your well it is highly recommended that you do so and keep the data close at hand for future reference. No state, county or local agency in Arizona is routinely checking the quality of the water coming from your well. Making sure that your water is safe and healthy to drink is left strictly up to individual well owners. Previous publications and videos listed below reference the need and the methods by which private well owners can sample, test, and evaluate their well water periodically.

Summary and Conclusions

Private wells in Arizona must be registered with ADWR. Getting and keeping your Arizona water well records current with ADWR can be accomplished by anyone with nominal computer skills and a little effort. However, private well owners are free from reporting ground water pumpage, free from regulations of well management and water quality testing. They are free from having to meet specific standards if or when they choose to sell their property supported by a domestic water well to another person. With that freedom, comes the responsibility to document, manage, and protect your most precious possession and resource, your domestic water well.

This publication should assist private well owners and shared well managers in obtaining and maintaining accurate well records with ADWR. If additional assistance is needed you may contact the ADWR directly at www.azwater.gov or 1-800-352-8488.

References

- ADWR. 2014. Arizona Well Registry Interactive Map. <https://gisweb.azwater.gov/WellRegistry/Default.aspx>
- Hix, G. 2012. Are your well records up to date? Arizona Well Water Association Publication.
- Hix, G. and J.F. Artiola. 2012. Accessing ADWR Imaged Well Records. Arizona Well Water Association Publication.
- Other Suggested Reading (UA-CALS Publications)
- Artiola, J.F. and K. Uhlman. 2009. Arizona Well Owner's Guide to Water Supply. University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Publication AZ1485.
- Artiola, J.F., K. Uhlman, G. Hix. 2012. Arizona Wells: Maintaining and Troubleshooting Wells. University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Publication AZ1581.
- Uhlman, K, J. F. Artiola, and G. Hix. 2013. Arizona Well Owners Video Series. University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Publication AZ1595(a,b,c,d), available on YouTube. http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLk4rXk_uk7PkbZivdzVaZRbOMolwhVd5Q

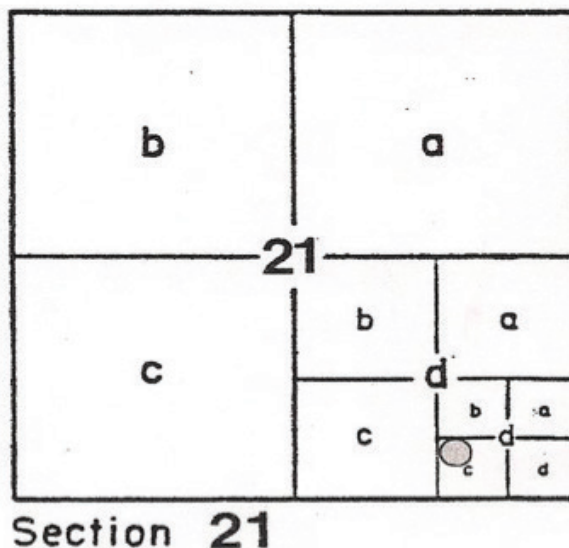


Figure 5. Illustration of one Section divided into quarter, quarter, quarter parts. Note that each Township is 6x6 miles and has 36 sections.

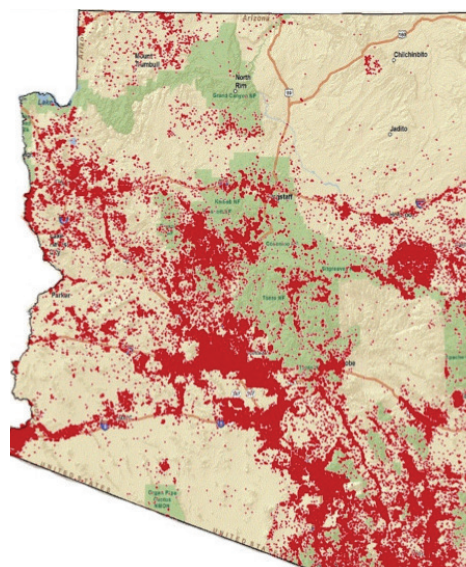


Figure 6. Arizona Well Registry. ADWR Interactive Map. Adapted from ADWR (2014).

Helpful Websites

- Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) <http://www.azwater.gov/azdwr/>
- Arizona Water Well Association, (AZWWA) <http://www.azwwa.org>.
- A.R.S Title 45. <http://www.azleg.state.az.us/ArizonaRevisedStatutes.asp>
- University of Arizona CALS Publications <http://cals.arizona.edu/pubs/>
- Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), Water <http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/index.html>

Frequently Used ADWR Forms

- DWR 55-40 – Notice of Intent to Drill, Deepen, Replace or Modify a Well
- DWR 55-55 – Well Driller Report and Drillers Log
- DWR 55-56 – Pump Installation Completion Report
- DWR 55-71A – Change of Well Information

