



# Small Scale Solutions for your Farm

## Abandoned Well Plugging

### Do You Have Problems with:

- An abandoned well is a well or cistern that is no longer used for clean water supply or storage
- Drilled, hand dug wells and cisterns are a safety threat to people and animals
- The groundwater can become polluted by surface water runoff from oil or fuel leaking from vehicles and equipment, fertilizers and pesticides or animal waste
- The water in your new well can become contaminated if the old well is not plugged

### Purposes and Benefits of Plugging an Abandoned Well:

- Keeps animals and debris out of the well
- No longer dangerous as an open hole to people, animals, and farm machinery
- Prevents contaminated surface water from entering the well and contaminating groundwater
- Protects other wells in the area from contamination
- Eliminates the chances for well from being used for any other purposes
- Protects the ground water and aquifers from further pollution

### Well Plugging

Well plugging or decommissioning a well seals and permanently closes a water well that is no longer in use.



Water well provide clean and reliant water supply.



Well decommissioning requires professional help.





## How to Plug a Well

1. Contact the appropriate state agency for their well plugging requirements.
2. Measure the well to estimate how much material is needed to fill the well and to document the current condition of the well.
3. Clean the well of all equipment such as pumps, valves, pipe, casing, liners, screens, grease, oil, and debris.
4. Disinfect the well with bleach.
5. Remove at least 3 feet of the casing or side wall.
6. Fill the well with materials such as cement slurry, bentonite, or clay soil.
7. Record the well plugging with the appropriate state agency.



Keep livestock and children out of well. It's dangerous!

## Costs Associated with Well Plugging

The cost to apply this practice will depend on the size and depth of the well. The major costs are for:

- Equipment, well casing and debris removal
- Fill materials
- Equipment and labor costs of well driller



Well decommissioning.





## Technical and Financial Help Is Available

Whether you measure your farm in terms of feet or acres, your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office has experienced conservationists that can help you develop a Conservation Plan to conserve, maintain, and restore the natural resources on your land and improve the long-term health of your operation.

There is no charge for our assistance. Simply contact your local office to set up an appointment. You may also be eligible to receive financial assistance. Your NRCS office will explain any programs that are available so you can make the best decision for your operation. All NRCS programs and services are voluntary.

## For More Information

Visit the [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#) or visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator) to find your local NRCS office. You can also check with your local USDA Service Center, then make an appointment to determine next steps for your conservation goals.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



NRCS conservationist assisting small scale farmer with developing a customized conservation plan.

