

Who Can Seal an Abandoned Well?

- Abandoned wells can only be sealed by an Illinois licensed water well contractor or a property owner. There are risks involved when a property owner seals his or her own well, so we work closely with any owner that chooses to do so.
- A permit must be approved by the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) before a well can be sealed. An application along with the appropriate fee is required. Additionally, if a well is to be sealed on a property where the **building it serves is to be demolished**, a scaled drawing or plat of survey showing the location of the well must be submitted. A well owner applying to seal his or her well must also submit a written description of how the well is to be sealed, including the materials to be used.
- The licensed contractor or well owner must contact the LCHD at least 24 hours before the well sealing is to take place.
- If the well is in a pit, the pit must be eliminated by breaking up or removing the floor or one wall, and then filling the pit with compacted soil.

Lake County
Health Department
Population Health Services

Located at:

**Lake County
Central Permit Facility**

**500 W. Winchester Road
Libertyville, IL 60048**

847.377.8020 (phone)

847.984.5622 (fax)

Visit our website at:

[http://health.lakecountyil.gov/Population/
EnvironmentalServices/Pages/Water-Wells.aspx](http://health.lakecountyil.gov/Population/EnvironmentalServices/Pages/Water-Wells.aspx)



Abandoned Water Wells

*Knowing About Wells is
Well Worth Your Time*



 **LakeCounty**
Health Department and
Community Health Center

**Water Well Program
Assuring Safe Drinking Water**

What is an Abandoned Well?

- An abandoned well is a well that no longer is used to supply water, is in such a state of disrepair that the well creates the potential for transmitting contaminants into an aquifer, or otherwise threatens the public's health or safety.
- The most obvious evidence of an abandoned well is a metal or plastic pipe sticking out of the ground.
- A metal manhole cover and/or a concrete slab may also indicate there is a pit with an abandoned well inside.
- Each year many wells are abandoned when they are replaced with new wells or when homes are connected to community water systems. These wells, if no longer used, must be sealed. If an owner wishes to keep a well for outdoor use when he or she has another primary water source, he or she must obtain approval from the Lake County Health Department.

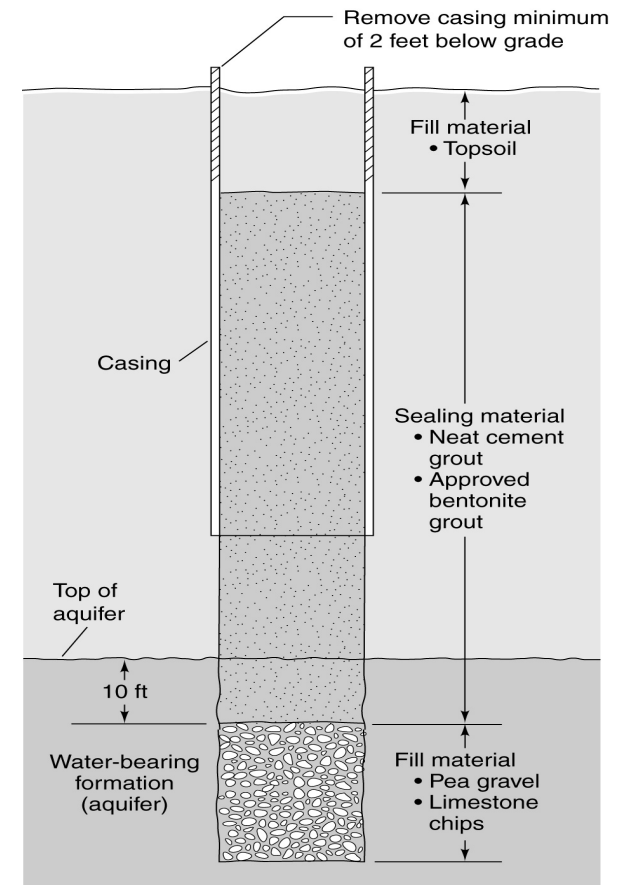
Why Seal Abandoned Wells?

- Abandoned wells provide a direct pathway for contaminants to get into aquifers. Contaminated surface water, agricultural runoff, and effluent from septic systems can enter groundwater through an open or submerged well casing, potentially contaminating other wells in the area used for drinking water.
- Sealing these pathways is important in order to protect the quality of our groundwater resources.
- About 90,000 Lake County residents rely on groundwater from aquifers to supply their private wells, and another 146,000 rely on groundwater from community water systems supplied by water wells.
- Abandoned wells are also a safety hazard, especially larger diameter wells and wells located in well pits. Children, pets, livestock and wild animals have fallen into these larger diameter wells and pits.

How is a Well Sealed?

The illustration below depicts how a drilled water well is typically sealed.

Sealing an Abandoned Drilled Well



- The desired outcome of sealing an abandoned well is to restore the geological condition that existed before the well was drilled.
- Properly sealed and documented wells remove safety, liability and contamination hazards or concerns.