

Fees Waived to Plug Abandoned Artesian Wells



PALATKA, Fla., Dec. 8, 2021 — The St. Johns River Water Management District has waived any associated fees to plug eligible abandoned artesian wells within the District’s 18-county region. Prior to Nov. 9, 2021, property owners would pay \$600 for the District to plug a free-flowing well.

An artesian well is a well that has been drilled into an aquifer where the underground pressure causes the water to rise inside the well. Many of these free-flowing wells were used by farmers decades ago but are no longer needed today. These older free-flowing wells are typically in a deeper portion of the aquifer making them susceptible to an increase in salinity. Additionally, as the well ages, deterioration of the well casing can occur, which may allow poor water quality to move into other zones of the aquifer that are used for drinking water supplies. Florida law now requires well owners to control the discharge from artesian wells, limiting flow to only the amount of water needed for an intended use.

“Plugging these abandoned wells speaks to the heart of the District’s mission by not only saving millions of gallons of water every day, but also ensuring that the source of residents’ drinking water is protected from possible contaminants,” said St. Johns River Water Management District Executive Director Mike Register.

With more than 7 million acres of publicly and privately owned land within the District’s boundaries, finding abandoned wells is the biggest challenge. Most free-flowing wells are on private property and the District relies on owners to identify wells and to work cooperatively with the District to permanently halt the waste of water.

“This is something we can do right now that will have an enormous impact on water quantity for future generations,” states Rob Bradley, Chairman of the District Governing Board.

The District's [Abandoned Artesian Well Plugging Program](#) has plugged nearly 3,000 wells since the program was initiated – potentially saving 745 million gallons of water per day.

[Click Here](#) to notify the District of a free-flowing well and/or to see if a well is eligible for the program. Any questions regarding the Abandoned Artesian Well Plugging Program, please contact Jeannine Evans at 386-329-4319.