

STATE OF IDAHO  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

**PROCEDURES FOR PRE-SOLD WELL IDENTIFICATION TAGS**

Updated December 2020

This document updates procedures to Idaho Department of Water Resources (“Department”) staff regarding pre-sold well identification tags (“well tags” or “tags”). This document supersedes similar guidance from 1997 that was included in a Department document titled *Procedures for Utilizing Start Cards and Well Tags, July 27, 2006*. This guidance focuses on procedures for unused or lost/stolen tags, and situations where tags are not required.

**Unused Well Tags**

Tags are nontransferable from one driller or owner to another. The Department will issue a refund for unused tags pursuant to the following conditions.

- A. Requests for refunds of unused tags must be made in writing to the Department at the State Office. A copy of the receipt must accompany any request for unused tags purchased more than twelve (12) months prior to the date of the written request.
- B. Refunds shall not be issued for any tag that is assigned to a well (i.e. the tag number has been submitted on a start card or drilling permit, or data entered to a specific well).
- C. In accordance with standard Department fiscal procedures, refunds will be issued to the person, company or entity listed on the receipt for the purchase of the tags.

Unused tags returned for refund or any other reason shall not be reissued. In some cases, a drilling permit or start card may be canceled. For example, a driller may submit a permit or start card for a well with a well tag number but does not drill the well because the property owner ends up contracting with a different driller. In this or similar canceled permit cases, the permit or start card should be canceled in the Workflow database. The well tag number should remain in the database with the canceled well permit record. The same well tag number shall not be reissued. However, the driller or drilling company may return the unused tag to the Department for disposal and receive a replacement tag free of charge.

In some limited cases, the Department may, on a case by case basis, consider issuing a refund for a canceled permit and unused tag. For example, a driller submits a permit/start card with a tag number but dies or becomes incapacitated prior to drilling the well. In this case, the Department may consider issuing a refund upon return of the tag within one year of the approval date.

**Damaged, Destroyed, or Irrecoverable Well Tags**

Welding a tag on the well casing should be the final process at the well site and accomplished after the seal is placed. If a tag is rendered illegible, is destroyed, or is irretrievably lost during this process, the driller must contact the Department immediately and request a replacement tag in writing. The Department will issue another tag and cancel the non-retrievable tag. There is a nominal processing fee of \$10.00 per tag for all tags which are replaced due to damage, loss, theft etc. Should a canceled tag later be found by the driller, it must be returned to the

Department for disposal.

The tag must be legible on the well head at the time of inspection and maintained throughout the life of the well. If the tag becomes illegible over time, a replacement tag can be issued free of charge with the submission of the damaged tag and a written request for replacement. The written request should include a copy of the well report, start card or drilling permit.

### **Lost or Stolen Well Tags**

Lost or stolen tags may be replaced upon written notification from a well driller or owner. The notification must include the tag identification number(s) which have been lost and include a \$10 processing fee. The lost numbers shall be canceled and not used again. If the canceled tags are found they must be surrendered to the Department for proper disposal. The Department may initiate an enforcement action against any driller who places a canceled tag on a well.

### **Well Tags Not Required for Re-Drill Wells**

If during the process of constructing a well it is determined that the well is not producing the quantity or quality of water required by the customer, the following steps shall be followed:

- A. The well shall be abandoned prior to constructing the replacement well.
- B. The Department shall be notified prior to commencing abandonment.
- C. If the tag is welded to the well proposed for abandonment, the tag shall be left in place and the well properly abandoned per an approved procedure.
- D. If the casing is pulled or cut off below land surface, the tag shall be destroyed. A new tag shall be issued for the new well and welded to the casing of the replacement well. No fee will be charged for this tag.

If necessary this procedure may be repeated until a well has been completed OR the equipment has been moved off-site. After completion of a well or removal of the drilling equipment without the proper notice to the Department that a well is not complete, a new permit and tag is required. A new drilling permit, tag, and fee is required if the well initially drilled is to be kept by the owner (not abandoned by a method approved by the Department).

### **Well Tags Required for Well Modifications**

Changing the construction of an existing well requires a new drilling permit and tag. In some cases more than one tag will be welded to the casing and both will be visible. When deepening or modifying an existing well, the original tag must be left on the casing even if the casing is to be driven deeper, unless the driller has reason to believe it will be a detriment to the procedure being undertaken. If this is the case, the section of casing holding the tag may be cut away prior to adding and driving casing

### **Tags Not Required on Federal Lands**

Pre-sold tags may or may not be utilized on tribal lands, superfund sites, military bases or other federal reservations where a drilling permit is not required. A tag will be issued free of charge for these areas if it is acceptable to the governing agency. A tag issued free of charge will be issued to the driller only with the basic information requested on the start card/permit including owner name and address, well location, license number, and start date.

### **Start Cards**

The use of start cards to obtain approval for the construction of Single Family Residential wells is a privilege extended by the Department only to Idaho licensed well drillers. To be eligible to use start cards, a drilling company's Principal Driller must sign and return to the Department the Statement of Understanding attached to the Department's document titled *Conditions and Procedures for Use of Start Card Drilling Permits and Pre-Sold Well I.D. Tags*, acknowledging that he/she has read the procedures and agrees to comply with the associated requirements.

Drillers must fill out the start card (form 235-3), include the appropriate tag number, and either mail, fax, hand deliver or email the start card to the Department. Department staff shall date stamp start cards upon receipt. Email delivery receipts or fax transmission reports may serve as a date stamp. A fax transmission report or an email delivery receipt may serve as confirmation by the Department that the start card has been received.

### **Start Card Data Entry**

Staff should process start cards immediately upon receipt to facilitate inspections of new wells during sealing or construction phases; in-line with Department inspection goals. Hand delivered, emailed or faxed start cards will be processed at the regional office associated with the well drilling location; start cards submitted to a different region shall be routed to the appropriate regional office for processing. Each tag is automatically assigned a drilling permit number in the data base. IDWR will use the tag number for well/permit tracking purposes.