

## ADMINSTRATOR'S MEMORANDUM

To: Water Management Division

Miscellaneous Memorandum #15

From: Gary Spackman, *Gary*

Date: June 4, 2007

Re: **Multiple Pumps in a Single Well for Domestic Purposes**

This memorandum explains the Department's standards for considering an application for drilling permit to drill a single well in which multiple pumps will be placed, and where each pump is intended to supply an individual domestic ground water use as defined in Idaho Code § 42-111.

### **Regulatory Authorization**

Idaho Code § 42-235 states:

Prior to beginning construction of any well, or changing the construction of any well, the driller or well owner shall obtain a permit from the director of the department of water resource to protect the public health, safety and welfare and the environment, and to prevent the waste of water or mixture of water from different aquifers. There shall be a seventy-five dollar (\$75.00) charge for the permit if the well is to be used for domestic or monitoring purposes. If the well is to be used for other than domestic or monitoring purposes, the charge for the permit shall be two hundred dollars (\$200).

Idaho Code § 42-111 defines whether the well proposed by the drilling permit application is "to be used for domestic . . . purposes." Section 42-111 defines "domestic purposes" as:

- a) The use of water for homes, organization camps, public campgrounds livestock and for any other purpose in connection therewith, including irrigation of up to one-half (1/2) acre of land, if the total use is not in excess of thirteen thousand (13,000 gallons per day.) or
- b) Any other uses, if the total use does not exceed a diversion rate of four one-hundreds (0.04) cubic feet per second and a diversion volume of twenty five hundred gallons per day."

Domestic purposes or uses do not include water for multiple ownership subdivisions, mobile home parks, or commercial or business establishments unless the use meets the diversion rate and volume limitations listed in part b, above.

Idaho Code § 42-227 provides that the use of wells for domestic purposes will not be subject to water right application and permit requirements.

The Idaho Code does not expressly state whether a single well with multiple pumps in the well providing water to separate uses, each of which would qualify as a domestic use, is a well drilled for “domestic purposes.”

The Department will interpret an application for drilling permit to construct a single well that will house separate pumps and associated separate delivery systems as an application to drill a well for domestic purposes provided each individual pump and delivery system satisfies the limitations of Idaho Code § 42-111.

Applicants seeking a drilling permit for a domestic well that will house more than one pump must obtain written approval from the Department to construct the well (Start cards cannot be used as the drilling permit for these wells).

Idaho Well Construction Rules establish minimum construction standards to prevent the waste and contamination of water. Installation of multiple pumps in a well elevates the possibility of violation of the standards. For instance, multiple holes in the casing for pitless adaptors and electrical supply for each pump may compromise well seals or the integrity of the well casing.

The Department will not authorize installation of more than two pumps in an individual well unless the users petition the Department for approval and are able to document that:

1. The multiple pumps will not create a waste or contaminant the ground water.
2. The multiple pumps will not compromise the well construction and/or the well casing.
3. The use of the well for multiple users does not violate Idaho Department of Environmental Quality standards for public drinking water systems.

**Drilling Permit Conditions:**

The following Permit Conditions should be part of any drilling permit where two pumps will be installed in a single well for two separate domestic water users as described above.

- 1) The permit holder assumes the risk that uses of ground water through multiple, independent diversion and delivery systems installed in the well may not each be recognized as separate domestic uses.
- 2) No more than two users may divert water from this well.
- 3) Each user must have their own pump, pitless adaptor, and power source. Each domestic use is limited to the use as defined under Section 42-111a, *Idaho Code*.
- 4) Each user is limited to irrigation of one half (1/2) acre of lawn and garden.
- 5) DEQ and the local Heath District prohibit cross connection between private wells and dwellings supplied by public water systems. If the water users plan to connect the private shared well to their homes, the homeowners must disconnect from the public water system.
- 6) Connecting to this well does not relieve one of any charges that may be levied by the public water system.
- 7) The Department of Water Resources holds the applicant or property owner upon whose property the well resides responsible for upkeep and maintenance of the well.
- 8) Any disputes regarding the use of the well, maintenance of the well or pumps, easements or access to the well are civil matters between the well users.

*Note – If the use is does not qualify for domestic purposes under Idaho Code § 42-111(1)(a), conditions 3 and 4 would be modified to limit diversion from each system to 0.04 cfs and 2500 gpd.*