



## What is this guide for?

Snohomish County Health Department is responsible for making sure residential wells will be adequate and potable (in other words, will provide enough water that is safe to drink). Use this guide to learn about the steps to getting your well approved as a drinking water supply. You can use this guide if you plan to:

- Drill a new well that will serve one residential connection
- Drill a new well that will serve two residential connections (ex: a house with an accessory dwelling unit)

This guide is **not** for wells that will serve more than two residential connections. If you have an existing well and need to meet requirements for a building permit or to turn an existing well into a two-connection well, you may not need to complete all steps.

## What steps do I need to take?

Below are the three main phases you'll need to go through to get your new well approved and accepted as a drinking water supply by the Health Department. This guide contains steps for each part with checkpoints listed so you can mark off completed tasks as you go.



## How do I submit forms to the Health Department?

As you go through these steps, you can submit required Health Department forms through our online portal. To create an account:

1. Visit: <https://snohomishonline.envisionconnect.com/Login#/>
2. Click the green text that says "I want to register".
3. Enter your info and click "Register". Verify your account and then you can login.
4. Once you are logged in, navigate to the "Drinking Water" tab in the left-hand menu. You will use the first two online forms listed during Health Department steps.

You can also submit forms over email, by mail, or at the front counter. Forms available to print can be found online at <https://www.snohd.org/1795/Well-Site-Applications-Review>.

## Questions along the way? Contact us!

**Snohomish County Health Department**  
Environmental Health Division  
3020 Rucker Ave | Suite 104  
Everett, WA 98201

 [www.snohd.org](http://www.snohd.org)  
 [SHD-EHQ@snoco.org](mailto:SHD-EHQ@snoco.org)  
 **425-339-5250**



# Get the location of your well approved

## 1 | Submit an “Application for Individual Water Supply Site Inspection”

The purpose of this step is to make sure your proposed well will be in a suitable location. Most of the fields on this form ask for general property and contact information, but with the application you will need to attach a site plan that shows:

- Your first choice for the well location (and if practical, a second location). Give distances from the well site(s) to at least three property lines or other permanent points of reference.
- A one hundred (100) foot radius around the well.
- Any adjoining properties and associated development within 200 feet of the well location.
- Existing and proposed septic tanks, drainfields, reserve areas, and privies within 200 feet of the well.
- Existing and proposed buildings, roads, and all easements within 200 feet of the well.
- Lakes, streams, and detention/retention ponds within 200 feet of the well.
- Existing and/or abandoned landfill properties within 1,000 feet of the well.
- Floodway and/or floodplain areas (if applicable).

**Lend a hand, if you can!** It’s helpful if the front corners of your property are flagged and labelled, along with a trail to the proposed well site(s) or actual well site(s) to help our staff find the location when they go out to do their review.

- Checkpoint:** I have submitted the Application for Water Supply Site Inspection with a site plan attached.

## 2 | Pay the application fee

An invoice to pay the application fee will be sent to you after the application has been submitted. Fees can be found on our online fee schedule (visit <https://www.snohd.org/270/Permits-Fees> and select *Septic, Water, Land Use*. See the fees under *Well Site Review*.)

**Money-saving tip!** If you also need to submit an On-Site Sewage System Application, submit it at the same time and the fee will be less than if it’s submitted on its own!

**Check your application status online!** Visit [www.snohd.org](http://www.snohd.org), click the “Check Application Status” button, and enter your information.

- Checkpoint:** I’ve paid the application fee.



Fee  
Schedule



Check App  
Status

## 3 | The Health Department will review your application

Once the fee has been paid, your application will be assigned to our staff. To complete their review, a Health Department staff member will go out to your property and look up other



# LAST



# Get your well accepted as a drinking water supply

## 1 | Submit a “Request for Review: Individual Water Supply”

After the well has been drilled, submit a “Request for Review: Individual Water Supply” form to the Health Department. This is to verify your well was: Constructed according to state code, will provide enough water, and will provide safe drinking water. With the form itself, you’ll need to attach additional documents. Listed below are the **required** documents, as well as some you *may* need to include depending on your situation.

### ALWAYS REQUIRED with your Request for Review

#### Bacteriological and Primary Inorganic Chemicals Tests

For your well to be approved as a drinking water supply, it needs to be at or below the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for the contaminants listed here. The MCL is the highest level of a contaminant allowed in drinking water and is set as close to the Maximum Contaminant Level Goals (MCLGs) as possible. MCLGs are the levels at which there are no known or anticipated health risks.

The well driller may do this step for you after they construct the well. If they did not, see the FAQ section for information on finding a lab that tests drinking water. Typically, you’ll need to do a bacteriological analysis to test for coliform bacteria and a primary inorganic chemical test for the remaining contaminants on the list.

**Checkpoint:** My well water has been tested for the required contaminants and I have lab results ready to submit with my Request for Review.

Required Contaminants for Testing	Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)
Arsenic	0.010 mg/L
Barium	2.0 mg/L
Cadmium	0.005 mg/L
Chromium	0.1 mg/L
Coliform Bacteria*	0
Fluoride	4.0 mg/L
Lead**	0.015 mg/L
Mercury	0.002 mg/L
Nitrate	10.0 mg/L
Selenium	0.05 mg/L
Silver	0.05 mg/L
Sodium**	No standard established

\*Zero present using presence/absence method. | \*\*In absence of an MCL established by the State Board of Health & EPA for lead and sodium, Snohomish County Health Department applies the EPA Action Level of 0.015 mg/L for lead. For sodium, it must be tested and an advisory will be sent if levels exceed 20mg/L.

## ALWAYS REQUIRED with your Request for Review (cont.)

### Water Well Report (well driller's log)

The well record or "well log" has important information about the construction of your well. This is normally provided by your well driller and will need to be submitted with your Request for Review. Contact your well driller if they did not provide you a copy, or search for your well log online with the Department of Ecology's Well Report Viewer (<https://apps.wa.ecology.wa.gov/wellconstruction/map/WCLWebMap/default.aspx>).



DOE Well  
Report Viewer

- Checkpoint:** I have a copy of the Water Well Report (well driller's log) ready to submit with my Request for Review.

## MAY BE REQUIRED with your Request for Review

### Declaration of Covenant for Two-Connection Wells

This only applies to a well that will serve **two connections on the same property**, such as a house with an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). This is a legal document that must be notarized and then recorded with the county Recording Office.

- Checkpoint:** I have a signed, notarized, and recorded Declaration of Covenant ready to submit with my Request for Review **OR** not applicable.

### Two-Connection Individual Water System Easement & Agreement

This only applies to a well that will serve **two connections on separate properties**, such as one well that serves two neighboring properties. This is a legal document that must be notarized and then recorded with the county Recording Office.

- Checkpoint:** I have a signed, notarized, and recorded Easement & Agreement ready to submit with my Request for Review **OR** not applicable.

#### Check with us first!

To help avoid wasting time and money, you can reach out to the Health Department staff member you've been working with to review either of these forms to make sure it is complete and correct before getting it recorded with the county Recording Office.

#### Snohomish County Recording Office

Note that there are **fees** to record documents with the Recording Office. Documents must also meet specific formatting to avoid extra fees.

 <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/5839/Record-a-Document>

 Recording@snoco.org

 425-388-3483

 Drewel Building, First Floor  
3000 Rockefeller Ave | M/S 204  
Everett, WA 98201

Once you have all the supporting documents that are required for your situation, submit them with your Request for Review form to the Health Department.

- Checkpoint:** I have submitted my Request for Review form with all supporting documents required for my situation.

## 2 | The Health Department completes your Request for Review

The Health Department will review the info submitted with your Request for Review, and will send a notice stating that your water supply is either accepted or not accepted as a drinking water supply. If it is not accepted, reach out to the Health Department staff member who completed the review for options on how to resolve any issues if you are unsure how to fix them.

**A note on arsenic levels:** If the water tests you submit with your Request for Review show any level of arsenic, even if it is at or below the Maximum Contaminant Level, you'll need to record an "Arsenic Disclosure Statement" onto your property title. Arsenic is very common in our region, so this requirement comes up frequently! This statement will be sent to you by the Health Department if it needs to be recorded onto your property title in order for your well to be accepted as a drinking water supply. Have this statement recorded with the County Recording Office (see page 5 for Recording Office info). If your water tested above the arsenic MCL of 0.010mg/L there will be additional steps you'll need to take to get your well accepted as a drinking water supply aside from the disclosure statement.

- Accepted:** Great! Move on to the last step.
- Not accepted:** Address any issues and resubmit info to the Health Department.
- Checkpoint:** My well was accepted as a drinking water supply.

## 3 | Finally, take care of your well!

Once your well has been accepted as a drinking water supply, you are all done! You'll want to check out our well maintenance webpage for information on how to maintain and care for your well. This is important to ensure your well water remains safe to drink and to prevent contamination (<https://www.snohd.org/710/Maintaining-Your-Well>).



*Caring for  
your well*

- Final Checkpoint:** I've reviewed information on how to maintain my well.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## I am trying to get a building permit, when will it be issued?

A building permit from Snohomish County Planning and Development Services (PDS) will NOT be issued until an adequate and potable water supply as required by the state Growth Management Act has been met. Unless you are sourcing your water from a public water supply, you'll need to have met all the requirements listed in this guide. If you have an existing well, check to see what forms are already on file with the Health Department.

## How do I know when the Health Department will come out to my property after my application is submitted?

The Health Department staff member will be an Environmental Health Specialist (EHS). They can enter your property for the purposes of reviewing your application at any time per Snohomish County Board of Health Code (SCBHC) 1.05.080. They will knock to see if someone is home, notify you of their presence and reason for visiting, and request access to your property. However, if no one is home they will still proceed with their review. They may need to walk around areas of your property to check site conditions and look for possible contamination sources.

## How do I test my well water?

A map and list of labs accredited to test drinking water can be found on Washington State Department of Ecology's website at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Water-supply/Wells/Testing-drinking-water>. Alternatively, you can contact staff from Ecology's Lab Accreditation Unit by calling 360-227-9420 or 360-871-8840.

Typically, you'll need to order two different tests to cover all the contaminants listed on the Request for Review form. One will be a bacteriological test to cover the coliform bacteria requirement, and the other will be a primary inorganic chemicals test to cover the remaining contaminants on the list. Prices of tests can vary between labs. In 2019 costs ranged from \$25-\$30 per test for coliform bacteria. For an analysis of all required inorganic chemicals on this list, costs were around \$200-\$300.

The lab you choose for testing should provide instructions on taking a proper water sample. It is important to follow all sampling and handling procedures, keeping in mind they may not be the same for each test. Only use the sample containers provided or specified by the lab to collect your water. It's also important to note that samples often have a time limit on them, meaning you must collect your sample and drop it off within a certain time frame, otherwise the results may not be accurate.

## How do I appeal a decision made by the Health Department?

To appeal application decisions, please refer to chapter 1.20 Snohomish County Board of Health Code (SCBHC) (<https://snohomish.boardofhealth.codes/SCBHC/1.20.010>). An administrative appeal must be filed in writing with the Environmental Health Division Office within twenty-one (21) calendar days from the date of your application decision.

Download, complete, and save the "Request for Appeal" form to your computer/device ([www.snohd.org/DocumentCenter/View/15170/Request-for-Appeal](http://www.snohd.org/DocumentCenter/View/15170/Request-for-Appeal)). Send an email, attaching your completed Appeal Request and supporting documents, to [SHD-EHQ@snoco.org](mailto:SHD-EHQ@snoco.org).

## How long is an approved well site application good for?

Approved applications are valid for two years from the date approved. Once the two years is up, you may renew for an additional two-year period by following these steps.

1. Within 30 days of expiration, resubmit a well site application with the Health Department.
2. Pay the renewal fee.
3. The Health Department will review and approve for renewal if everything looks good.
4. You can continue renewing for two-year periods, following steps 1-3 as needed.

## **Where can I find detailed well requirements?**

**Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 173-160:** Minimum standards for construction and maintenance of wells (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=173-160>).

**Snohomish County Board of Health Code (SCBHC) 6.05.030:** Individual water supplies - Assessments, policies, and procedures.