



208 Kimberly Dr  
Cleburne, TX 76031  
Phone: (817) 556-2299  
Fax: (817) 556-2305  
[www.prairielandsgcd.org](http://www.prairielandsgcd.org)

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Prairiels GCD Amends Rules for Water Wells in Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell Counties**

January 26, 2023 – For Immediate Release

In a public meeting on January 17, 2023, the Prairiels Groundwater Conservation District (“District”) amended its rules regulating water wells within the boundaries of the District, which include Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell Counties. The amendments provide clarity for well owners and operators on several provisions of the rules and are immediately effective.

Several of the new or revised provisions address the amount of “contiguous controlled acreage” at the location of a well, which must be calculated to determine the amount of groundwater that a well owner can be authorized to produce annually under an Operating Permit from the District. The new rules expand the definition of “contiguous controlled acreage” to include acreage owned by a permit applicant on separate properties divided by a road, utility route, or other type of division specified in the rules, even if the permit applicant does not have the right to produce groundwater from those points. Other amended provisions clarify the method by which a permit applicant calculates contiguous controlled acreage, addressing the unique challenges that sometimes arise for retail public utilities and other political subdivisions seeking permits. These changes take into account existing Historic Use Permits, public water system service areas (CCNs), and other factors that affect the calculation of acreage and ultimately the amount of water authorized to be produced annually under a permit.

The rules’ amendments also change the exemptions from permitting, water use fee payment, metering, and reporting requirements based on whether the well was drilled before or after January 1, 2023, the well’s production capacity, and the purpose of use of the well. Specifically, the new rules limit the small well capacity exemption—17.36 gallons for new wells—to wells used solely for domestic use, livestock use, or poultry use. Also, new agricultural irrigation wells, which typically produce large amounts of groundwater annually, will be subject to the permitting, fee payment, metering, and reporting requirements of the rules.

The amendments also include new requirements for open, uncovered, abandoned, or deteriorating wells, which can cause groundwater pollution and can be safety hazards, for which failure to comply is a violation of the rules resulting in the imposition of penalties. In addition, the new rules authorize the District to impose penalties for failure to comply with requirements relating to water meter logs and metering.

Well owners and operators are encouraged to read the rules carefully and to contact the District with any questions to ensure their well is in compliance with the applicable requirements.

The adopted amendments to the District Rules are necessary to support the District's efforts in managing the groundwater resources within the boundaries of the District. Information about the public hearing and copies of the amended District Rules are available on the District's website at [www.prairielandsgcd.org](http://www.prairielandsgcd.org), and physical copies can be obtained by visiting the District office at 208 Kimberly Drive in Cleburne.

###

Contact: Kathy Turner Jones  
817-556-2299  
[kjones@prairielandsgcd.org](mailto:kjones@prairielandsgcd.org)