

### **Interim Groundwater Withdrawal Permit Program**

In Spring 2006, the State legislature passed Act 144, *An Act Relating to Groundwater Management*. This Act includes a new permitting program for commercial and industrial withdrawals of groundwater greater than 50,000 gallons per day. The purpose of the new permit program is to ensure that large industrial and commercial withdrawals of groundwater do not interfere with pre-existing water supplies or cause adverse environmental impacts. The Department of Environmental Conservation Water Supply Division, in consultation with the Vermont State Geologist, has been tasked with administering this new permitting program. Some basic questions about the program are answered below.

**When does the permit program take effect?** July 1, 2006

**Who must obtain this type of permit?** Anyone withdrawing more than 50,000 gallons of groundwater per day from a well drilled after July 1, 2006 for commercial or industrial purposes.

**What types of businesses are likely to be affected?** Any that use large quantities of water, including ski areas, country clubs, wineries and breweries, beverage companies, car washes, commercial laundries, large manufacturing facilities, paper & wood products companies, food manufacturers & processors, fish hatcheries, electric plants, sand & gravel pits, mines and rock quarries.

**Are any types of groundwater withdrawals exempt?** Yes. The following are exempted from this program: groundwater withdrawals for fire safety, agriculture, dairy & agriculture processing, dewatering operations during building construction, geothermal energy production, and public sanitation.

**What are the permit requirements?** Most of the permit requirements are similar to those for a public community drinking water source. They include, but are not limited to:

- Well design details must be provided to ensure the well will be constructed properly to prevent contaminant migration into the aquifer and cross-contamination of aquifer units.
- Aquifer characteristics must be tested to establish whether the proposed source will be capable of yielding the desired amount of water without causing adverse impact.
- Water quality testing is required to determine whether the proposed withdrawal may cause unfavorable changes in groundwater quality. (For example, pre-existing contamination may be spread to new locations in the aquifer, or naturally-occurring radioactive elements may be drawn into the well and discharged to another aquifer as waste products.)

The Act also requires submittal of the following:

- Groundwater contour maps of the appropriate monitoring radius for the proposed withdrawal under non-pumping conditions and pumping conditions; and
- A minimum of two geological cross sections bisecting the monitoring radius for the proposed withdrawal.

These maps and cross sections are intended to both enhance our ability to assess the impact of the proposed withdrawals and to provide the State Geologist with data on Vermont's groundwater resources.

**Is there a permit fee?** Yes, \$960.00; \$110 for permit amendments.

**Where do I get a permit application?** Permit applications are available on the Water Supply Division's homepage or by contacting the Water Supply Division using the information below.

Honorable Jim Douglas, Governor    George Crombie, ANR Secretary    Laura Pelosi, DEC Commissioner  
This (fact sheet/form/application) and related environmental information are available electronically via the internet. For information visit us through the Vermont Homepage at <http://www.vermont.gov> or visit VT WSD directly at <http://www.vermontdrinkingwater.org>

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