



**For immediate release:**

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## **New Rules and Regulations for Domestic Wells in New Mexico are Posted for Public Review and Comment**

**(SANTA FE, New Mexico)** — The Office of the State Engineer today released a draft version of the **New Domestic Well Rules and Regulations** for the State of New Mexico.

The agency released the draft regulations to allow the public to review and comment on the regulations before they are finalized.

"We encourage all water users affected by the regulations to comment on the draft during public meetings that will be announced in January and February," said State Engineer John D'Antonio. "It is important that all water users are involved in the process so these regulations meet the needs of the users."

The draft regulations will govern diversion rates, domestic well management areas, expedited water transfers, and domestic well fees in the state.

"These rules and regulations are important because they protect senior water rights, and they protect existing users," said D'Antonio. "In certain areas where we have compact delivery obligations, even a small measure of water pumped by domestic wells becomes critically important."

Prior New Mexico regulations provide that anyone wishing to drill a well for domestic water use could acquire a permit for a \$5 fee. It is the only use of public water in the state for which no notice or hearing is required to protect existing senior water rights. Concentrations of domestic wells can affect the flows in adjacent streams, including those with interstate compact delivery requirements.

Under the proposed new regulations, the schedule of fees will increase. Existing uses of domestic wells will not be affected by these rules and regulations. Livestock wells and temporary wells will not be affected by these rules and regulations.

**(MORE)**

The State Engineer plans to adopt a final version of the regulations after a hearing in Santa Fe, which will be scheduled in April of 2006.

Fees for domestic well permits in New Mexico were extremely low in comparison to other states. For example, the fee for a permit in Arizona is \$150, in California is \$170, and in Colorado is \$480.

The proposed revisions to the New Mexico Domestic Well Rules and Regulations can be downloaded from the Office of the State Engineer website at: [www.ose.state.nm.us](http://www.ose.state.nm.us)

Written comments should be e-mailed to [paul.wells@ose.state.nm.us](mailto:paul.wells@ose.state.nm.us), or mailed to:

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The Office of the State Engineer is charged with administering the state's water resources. The State Engineer has power over the supervision, measurement, appropriation, and distribution of all surface and groundwater in New Mexico, including streams and rivers that cross state boundaries. The State Engineer is also Secretary of the Interstate Stream Commission and oversees its staff.

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