

Conservation Practice Standard Overview

Monitoring Well (353)

A monitoring well is designed and installed to obtain representative groundwater quality samples and hydrogeologic information from the area around an agricultural waste storage facility.

Practice Information

A monitoring well can be designed, installed, and developed where contamination of groundwater from an agricultural waste storage facility or treatment facility is a concern or where the monitoring well is a planned component of the agricultural waste management system.

Before a monitoring well, or series of monitoring wells, is installed, a surface and subsurface investigation of the site is conducted to develop a conceptual hydrogeologic model of the site, to identify potential groundwater flow paths, and to determine the location of the target monitoring zone(s). Assistance from a professional geologist is required.

The installation of a monitoring well is similar to the installation of a water well. The main difference is that the well must be built so that the water entering the well is only from the soil or rock layers of interest.

A buffer zone with a minimum 30-foot radius must be established around each wellhead. The buffer must be protected from access by motor vehicles and livestock.



Record keeping is an important component of this practice. The monitoring plan must describe the frequency and method of monitoring and identify the type of water testing to be performed.

This practice has a minimum expected life of 15 years. Operation of a monitoring well will be accomplished in accordance with the planned monitoring. Maintenance will consist of conducting periodic inspections and repairing or replacing damaged components.

Common Associated Practices

When the monitoring well has reached the end of its useful life, close the well in accordance with practice standard Well Decommissioning (351).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.

