

Kansas Wellhead Protection Program

What is wellhead protection?

Wellhead protection is a means of protecting public water supplies by implementing measures to prevent and reduce pollution of surface and groundwater entering the aquifers which serve public water supply wells. The Wellhead Protection Area is the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or wellfield, supplying a public water system through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach such water well or wellfield. Each state is required to have a Wellhead Protection Plan.

What is the Kansas Wellhead Protection Plan?

The Kansas Wellhead Protection Plan will establish standards and procedures by which counties, cities, and rural water districts and other public water suppliers develop local Wellhead Protection Plans. The Kansas Wellhead Protection Program will accomplish this by:

1. Identifying the roles and responsibilities of government and private agencies related to Wellhead Protection Plan activities;
2. Identifying and detailing a planning process to guide development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and revision of local Wellhead Protection Plans;
3. Providing for coordination of wellhead protection program efforts and review of local Wellhead Protection Plans; and
4. Providing informational, technical, and financial assistance and training in support of local wellhead protection program activities.

How will the Kansas Wellhead Protection Program be Implemented?

Implementation of the Kansas Wellhead Protection Program at the state level will be accomplished through the work of the Wellhead Protection Work Group. Kansas Department of Health and Environment Wellhead Protection staff will be responsible for representing the Wellhead Protection Work Group in coordinating with other entities. The Kansas Wellhead Protection Program will be implemented at the local level through provision of educational, financial and technical assistance.

Financial assistance will be available to local entities in counties participating in the Local Environmental Protection Program (LEPP). Use of these funds for Wellhead Protection will require the LEPP to identify Wellhead Protection as an objective in the LEPP Plan and to develop a workplan for supporting Wellhead Protection. Assistance in identifying other funding sources for specific Wellhead Protection activities, such as the use of state Nonpoint Source funds for plugging abandoned wells in Wellhead Protection Areas, will be addressed specific to the needs of individual local Wellhead Protection Plans.

Who are the technical assistance providers in Kansas?

Kansas Department of Health & Environment
Watershed Management Section
1000 SW Jackson, Suite 420 Topeka, KS 66612
Contact: Sheryl Ervin (785) 296-8038

Kansas Rural Water Association
P.O. Box 226
Seneca, KS 66538
Contact: Doug Helmke (785) 233-0385

Kansas State University
Office of Local Government
10E Umberger Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
Contact: Robert Wilson (785) 532-7823

Midwest Assistance Program
P.O. Box 491
Haven, KS 67543
Contact: Phillip Fishburn (316) 465-2780

The Groundwater Foundation
P.O. Box 22558 Lincoln, NE 68542
(800) 858-4844 or (402) 434-2740

Local Environmental Protection Programs See the Watershed Management Section web page:
<http://www.kdheks.gov/nps> for a complete list of county local environmental protection programs.

What are the steps for local Wellhead Protection Planning?

Public input and involvement is crucial and continuous throughout the process of developing the plan. The willingness of local citizens to accept implementation of the Wellhead Protection Plan is a reflection of their understanding of the purposes and involvement in development of the Wellhead Protection Plan.

1. Appoint Local Wellhead Protection Committee

Local entities appoint a committee to develop a Wellhead Protection Plan (WHPP). This committee seeks input from the public, water suppliers and other concerned interests to define the goal of the WHPP.

2. Obtain Wellhead Protection Area Delineation

The committee arranges to have a Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA) or Areas delineated. This delineation defines the specific area where management of potential sources of pollution is crucial to protecting or enhancing the quality of groundwater serving the wellfield. Local committees may use the 2 mile fixed radius delineation established during the Kansas Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP), or they may choose to further delineate the wellhead capture zone by using modeling software.

3. Conduct Pollutant Source Inventory

The Pollutant Source Inventory includes studying human activities on the land within the WHPA. A list of these activities is made and each activity is evaluated for its potential to release pollutants which could impair the groundwater under the delineated WHPA.

4. Develop Management Strategies

A strategy is developed to reduce the risks presented by each potential source of pollution. These strategies may use voluntary or regulatory measures to attain more effective management, provide enhanced containment and reduce the quantity of potential sources of pollutants occurring in the WHPA.

5. Conduct a Local Public Meeting on Wellhead Protection Plan

A public meeting or meetings are held to provide an opportunity for anyone in the community to review and comment on any portion of the WHPP. Active public involvement in development of the WHPP is necessary from the formation of the Wellhead Protection Committee on, but the formal public meeting is an invitation for the public to examine and comment on the total proposed WHPP. If issues of significant local concern are raised the WHPP may be revised before being implemented.

6. Implement Actions of Wellhead Protection Plan

The activities detailed as work plans in the management strategies to protect the quality of local drinking water are carried out. As the steps of each work plan are completed, the risks of pollution of the drinking water supply from a particular potential source of pollution will be reduced.