



## Quick Facts

Well owners who connected to municipal service with assistance from the grant program

**382**

Wells plugged and abandoned

**224**

Well owners who converted landscaping through the Water Smart Landscapes program

**237**

Square footage of grass removed by well owners

**760,000**

Estimated gallons of water saved annually through well-owner landscaping conversions

**41.8 million**

Groundwater Update is published by the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA). Comments or questions should be directed to:

### SNWA Public Information

1001 S. Valley View Blvd.  
Las Vegas, NV 89153

You may also call **258-3930** or log on to [snwa.com](http://snwa.com).

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## Annual workshop informs well users

**W**ell users from around the valley attended the Groundwater Management Program's annual public workshop on Oct. 10. With booths from the State Engineer's office, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, the Southern Nevada Health District and the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA), well users learned about water conservation, health and water quality, and other programs.

During an open question-and-answer forum, representatives from the State Engineer's office and the SNWA responded to inquiries from the well users in attendance. If you were unable to attend the workshop, here are some of the questions that were addressed.

### Q How do well owners know if they are overpumping?

**A** The State Engineer's office reads metered wells two times each year and issues a comprehensive pumpage inventory each spring. You may find out how much water your well used the previous year by calling the State Engineer's office at **486-2770**.

### Q Why isn't overpumping addressed with just those homes on a well that are overpumping?

**A** The State Engineer's authority ends at the wellhead. It is up to the users of a community well to manage their own pumping within the limits of their permits.

### Q How can homeowners on community wells determine which home is overpumping when multiple homes are using one well?

**A** While large amounts of landscaping, especially turf, may be an indication of high water use, the only way to accurately determine the amount of water used at each home is to install sub-meters for each property. A sub-meter also helps monitor for leaks.

### Q What is the cost of a sub-meter?

**A** The typical cost of a sub-meter is around \$200.

### Q Are well owners required to follow the watering restrictions and schedule that is issued to municipal water users?

**A** The SNWA watering restrictions only apply to municipal water customers. However, well owners are encouraged to follow the schedule voluntarily to help conserve their water supply. Visit [snwa.com](http://snwa.com) or call **258-SAVE** for more information.

### Q Do all the homes on a community well have to voluntarily connect to a municipal water system to participate in the well conversion grant program?

**A** Yes. All the homes must choose to connect to participate in the well conversion grant program, which pays up to 85 percent of the costs of connection. Call **822-3317** for more information on the well conversion grant program. As part of the program, the well is plugged at no expense to the homeowners.

### Q Can I build a secondary structure, such as a casita or mother-in-law quarters, on my property?

**A** Under state law, domestic well owners—those with one well serving one property—may not construct a secondary structure on their property. Community well owners can build secondary structures as long as they remain within the terms of their permits. The 2007 Legislature might consider allowing domestic well owners to build secondary structures on their properties, as long as all water uses on the property don't exceed the statutory limit of 1,800 gallons per day.

### Q Can a workshop be conducted to educate Realtors on the issues involved with selling homes on wells?

**A** The Nevada Water Resources Association (NWRA) regularly holds seminars on Nevada Water Law, which Realtors are welcome to attend and receive continuing education credits. For more information regarding NWRA seminars, visit [nvwra.org](http://nvwra.org).

## Water committee finalizes recommendations

**O**n June 21, the Legislative Committee on Water Resources finalized its recommendations to the Nevada Legislature. The recommendations will be submitted as bill draft requests at the 2007 legislative session.

While the specific language and intent of the bills will be developed during the legislative session, the bill draft requests outline the general topics of consideration during the 2007 legislative session.

As part of its recommendations, the committee supported the development of a statewide information management system to gather water resource data from local sources, such as ranches and local water agencies.

In addition, the committee recommended amending state law to allow the State Engineer to impose administrative fines for any violations of Nevada Water Law. The committee asked the State Engineer to

propose a suitable fine structure for water law violations for consideration during the legislative session.

The committee also endorsed funding grant programs for water planning and water system improvements in rural Nevada and suggested that the current interim committee on water resources continue to meet through 2015 to ensure a legislative focus on water issues over the next decade.

## Program earns Groundwater Guardian designation

**F**or the seventh consecutive year, the Groundwater Foundation designated the Las Vegas Valley Groundwater Management Program as a Groundwater Guardian community at its annual conference Nov. 2 in Lansing, Mich.

The Foundation is a national non-profit organization dedicated to groundwater education and protection.

To be designated as a Groundwater Guardian, the Groundwater Management Program completed a number of results-oriented activities designed to educate the

community about groundwater and promote responsible use of this precious resource.

Over the past year, the program continued to administer the well plugging and abandonment program, the well conversion grant program and the Water Smart Landscapes program. Through the Groundwater Guardian designation, the Foundation recognized these activities as beneficial and effective programs for sound groundwater management.

For more about the Groundwater Foundation, visit [groundwater.org](http://groundwater.org).



SNWA Management Analyst Mitch Bishop (second from left) accepts the Groundwater Guardian award. From (left to right) Susan Seacrest, president, The Groundwater Foundation; Bob Swanson, director, U.S. Geological Survey Nebraska Water Science Center; and Jim Nicholas, director, USGS Michigan Water Science Center.

