



County of Santa Cruz

Health Services Agency - Environmental Health



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New Procedures Implementing Requirements Under Executive Order N-7-22

On March 28, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Executive Order N-7-22 (Executive Order) in response to extreme and expanding drought conditions which, effective immediately, prohibits Santa Cruz County Environmental Health (EH) from issuing a permit for a new non-de minimis groundwater well pursuant to Chapter 7 of the Santa Cruz County Code unless certain requirements are met or the permit falls within the limited exception to the requirements. [A complete copy of the Executive Order is available here](#) (see Paragraph 9a and b).

Applicability

These requirements do not apply to permits for wells that will provide less than two (2) acre-feet per year (2AFY) of groundwater for individual domestic users or that will exclusively provide groundwater to public water supply systems as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 116275.

Well Application Process

1. Well application must start by submission to Santa Cruz County EH (<https://www.scceh.org/NewHome/Programs/LandUse/WaterWells.aspx>)
 - Submissions can be made electronically or hard copy to the department
 - Fees are due at the time of submission
 - Application is reviewed by staff for accuracy, completeness, and regulatory compliance
2. If the application is for a well subject to Executive Order Paragraph 9b, the applicant must additionally provide:
 - A report signed and stamped by a California licensed geologist or engineer with demonstrated competency in hydrogeology, such as a Certified Hydrogeologist, that determines and concludes extraction of groundwater from the well "is not likely to interfere with the production and functioning of existing nearby wells" (paragraph 9b of the Executive Order).
 - Anyone completing the report that does not meet the qualifications described above must be pre-approved by County Environmental Health staff.
 - Guidelines for completing this report can be found at [Water Wells \(scceh.org\)](http://www.scceh.org)
3. If the application is for a well subject to Executive Order Paragraph 9b and within the Santa Margarita, Santa Cruz Mid-County, or Pajaro Valley Basins (Paragraph 9a), use the Groundwater Basin layer under Biotic and Water Resources at <https://gis.santacruzcounty.us/gisweb/> to verify:
 - Applicant must complete the top section of the Executive Order N-7-22 GSA Compliance Form
 - Staff will review for completeness and then route the complete application as well as the Executive Order N-7-22 GSA Compliance Form to the appropriate GSA for review
 - The GSA must sign the form to indicate that groundwater extraction by the proposed well would not be inconsistent with any sustainable groundwater management program established in any applicable Groundwater Sustainability Plan or alternative adopted by that Groundwater Sustainability Agency and would not decrease the likelihood of achieving a sustainability goal for the basin covered by such a plan
 - GSA Compliance Form will be reviewed; if well is deemed consistent with GSP or alternative and adheres to all other regulatory requirements, well application is processed and well permit issued by EH within the 10-day period allowed by the Santa Cruz County Well Ordinance.

