

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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North Kings GSA to Require Well Registration for Fresno-Area Well Owners, Part of Local Groundwater Management under State Law

FRESNO, CA — Following a year of voluntary well registration, the North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) has introduced a requirement to register all wells starting May 1, 2025 with a November 30, 2025 deadline. All wells within the agency boundaries must be registered by November 30, 2025 to avoid the \$100 late registration penalty fee per well. This includes agricultural, industrial, private domestic (household), school district, and public water system wells. The policy was unanimously adopted at the April 24 North Kings GSA Board of Directors meeting.

Over the next six months, the GSA will host workshops, attend community events, and offer support through a dedicated team to assist with registration efforts.

The first public announcement on well registration was published in November 2022 on the North Kings GSA's website and in its email blast to stakeholders, recapping the Board's approval of a contract to develop the Well Registration Portal. Since that time, the GSA has continued to publish and distribute updates and information about registration, including in person at Fresno Irrigation District's 2024 annual grower meetings.

The North Kings GSA was established through a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) in 2016 under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), a package of laws signed in 2014 that set out to make California's water supply sustainable due to groundwater overdraft. GSAs are responsible for implementing their Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP) to balance groundwater levels. Following state approval of North Kings GSA's GSP in August 2023, the agency continues to enforce SGMA locally with jurisdiction in parts of Fresno County, including cities of Fresno, Clovis, and Kerman.

By registering wells, landowners help keep decisions about how groundwater is managed in local hands, rather than in the hands of State regulators.

“Our GSP was approved by the State on the condition that North Kings GSA continues to implement its plan and make course corrections along the way as needed. Our next steps involve filling data gaps through well registration to keep sustainability local,”

Kassy Chauhan, North Kings GSA Executive Officer.

If a subbasin cannot implement its GSP under state guidelines, the state will intervene and has shown by example in other regions that it will not hesitate to impose harsh pumping limitations, fees and reporting requirements.

“Registering wells now helps us avoid those same consequences and protect our landowners’ interests,” said Chauhan.

While some landowners already completed registration during the voluntary period that opened March 2024, more participation is needed to set the area up for future success.

“Success in our world means that we can manage our groundwater supply under local leadership so we can preserve the future of our region. It requires all hands on deck to reach sustainability, so we are keeping a proactive approach to groundwater management,” said Chauhan.

Managing the groundwater supply requires ample data. Well registration helps technical experts understand the data gaps necessary for State-required studies. Demonstrating this level of management effort to the State is critical to protect local decisions and policymaking.

Without knowing where wells are located, what depths they are drilled and perforated to, and other construction information, the North Kings GSA cannot effectively assess the impacts of groundwater level declines on well owners. This information is essential for the continued reliability of both domestic and production wells.

Access to well data provided by landowners will be limited to the North Kings GSA management and its technical consultants conducting analysis on meeting sustainability criteria. The information will be used for the purpose of managing groundwater resources locally and addressing data gaps in the GSP. Well information remains anonymous and is not tethered to individual landowners.

Landowners can register their wells through the online registration platform, Subcurrent, at northkingsgsa.org/wellregistration. The North Kings GSA has a support team available to help landowners. Email at wells@northkingsgsa.org or call the agency at (559) 693-5119 to receive assistance. Community residents who are part of a public water system do not need to register. Community water system managers should contact the North Kings GSA to discuss registering any wells used for public water system supply.

Visit northkingsgsa.org/wellregistration and use the mapping tool to search and find out if your well is within the boundaries.

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The North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) is a Joint Powers Authority formed in December 2016 through adoption of a Joint Powers Agreement by the following public agencies: Fresno Irrigation District, the County of Fresno, the City of Fresno, the City of Clovis, the City of Kerman, Biola Community Services District, Garfield Water District, and International Water District. Following adoption, these founding members approved membership of Bakman Water Company and the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District through separate binding agreements. You can find out more about North Kings GSA at northkingsgsa.org/about.

North Kings GSA is one of seven GSAs located in the Kings Subbasin. The Kings Subbasin GSAs have developed GSPs as a unified effort and operate under a Coordination Agreement to achieve groundwater sustainability together by 2040 under SGMA.

