



Virginia Master Well Owner Network

Virginia Household Water Quality Program

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Virginia Tech

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Volunteer Policy Statement

Purpose:

Virginia Master Well Owners are volunteers who support the Virginia Household Water Quality educational programs in private well management. They develop their expertise through participation in educational programs conducted by the Virginia Household Water Quality Program. Diagnostic support for water protection issues and questions to Master Well Owner volunteers is provided by the Virginia Household Water Quality Program and its partners. Virginia Cooperative Extension publications, teaching materials, and/or other program support materials are provided as deemed appropriate by Virginia Tech faculty and county Extension staff responsible for leading and supervising the Virginia Master Well Owner Network (VAMWON). Information presented by Master Well Owners must be consistent with the Virginia Household Water Quality Program's recommendations concerning various aspects of private water systems.

The Virginia Master Well Owner Network is designed to train volunteers throughout Virginia on the proper management of private water wells. Trained individuals will receive a certification that is valid for two years. In return, each trained volunteer is required to make their best effort to educate a minimum of 100 people and obtain contact information for 20 of those people during the two years they are certified.

Qualifications:

1. Willingness and availability to undertake one seven hour training session conducted by VAMWON staff and educators.
2. Strong interest and knowledge in protection of private water systems as evidenced by scoring a minimum of 70% on an exam administered by the Virginia Household Water Quality Program after the training workshop.
3. Dedication and willingness to provide general private water system education to a minimum of one hundred (100) people within Virginia.
4. Ability to communicate effectively and diplomatically with others either by telephone, personal contact, group contact, and/or in writing.
5. Willingness to have personal contact information displayed on the VAMWON website.
6. Master Well Owners may not own or work at a business that is affiliated with private water systems (e.g., well drillers, water testing).

Expected Commitment:

1. Attend required one-day training session.
2. Make your best attempt to educate 100 people over two years in management of private water systems.
3. Complete the simple one-page summary via hardcopy or on the VAMWON website at least once each year.
4. Cooperate with other volunteers and extension staff involved in the program.
5. Be accountable to the Virginia Master Well Owner Coordinator.
6. Provide own transportation to any Virginia Master Well Owner educational event that volunteer chooses to participate in.

Training:

Regional Master Well Owner programs will offer a **minimum** of one full day of training.

Core Topics: 7 hours

Proper Well Location & Construction

Wellhead Protection

Landuse Impacts

Springs & Cisterns

Drinking Water Standards

Water Testing & Interpretation

Solving Water Problems

Water Quality Resources for Private Water Supplies

Certification:



Virginia Cooperative Extension
Knowledge for the Commonwealth



A Master Well Owner must attend the full day training workshop and score above a 70% on the post workshop examination before becoming a certified Master Well Owner. Upon completion he/she will be awarded a Virginia Master Well Owner certificate. This certification is restrictive in nature in that it is valid only during the two year time period that the individual is participating in the Virginia Master Well Owner Network activities. At the end of two years, interested individuals may apply to receive the necessary training that will allow them to be recertified for an additional two years. Recertification is allowed indefinitely for any individual that has a sincere interest in the program and has documented their outreach to the Master Well Owner Coordinator at least one time per year. When individuals cease active participation, then their designation as Master Well Owner becomes void. Those not continuing in the program should be aware that if they represent themselves as Master Well Owners, they are violating their original commitment to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Water Program.

Recertification:

A Master Well Owner may recertify for participation in the program for another two years by:

1. Committing to make their best effort to educate a minimum of 100 people over the two year period in which they are certified,
2. Completion of a VAMWON recertification training, and
3. Scoring a minimum of 70% on a recertification exam that will be available at all training workshops and on the Master Well Owner website.

Inactive Status:

An inactive Master Well Owner is one who is unable to commit to educating an additional 100 contacts over two years and they cannot take the recertification training, but would like the opportunity to be recertified in the future. The following policies apply:

1. An inactive Master Well Owner is one who is in good standing, having **completed** the original commitment of training, exam, and volunteer service.
2. An inactive Master Well Owner may be recertified within three (3) years as long as the above criteria are met. Individuals on inactive status for more than three years are required to retake the basic training for new Master Well Owners.

Fees:

No fee will be assessed to new Master Well Owners during their first 8 hours of training. A nominal fee may be charged to cover the cost of training manuals, supplies, meeting room rental, travel expenses for instructors, or other costs associated with recertification after the first two years of service. These charges will be itemized and kept to a minimum.

Guidelines:

The title "Virginia Master Well Owner" is to be used only and exclusively by individuals trained and certified to assist the Virginia Household Water Quality Program and the program's project partners. The title is valid only when the volunteer is participating in activities of the Virginia Master Well Owner Network. The title Master Well Owner is to be used only when doing **unpaid, volunteer** work pertaining to private water system education.

Master Well Owners are not to advertise their name or their place of business nor be listed on the advertisements of business places as Virginia Master Well Owners. Because the Master Well Owner Network is a public service providing unbiased research-based information, appearing as a commercial activity, having association with commercial products, or implying the Virginia Household Water Quality Program endorsement of any product or place of business is improper and grounds for dismissal from the program.

The training and experience gained by participating in the Virginia Master Well Owner Network are valuable, and may rightfully be listed as qualifications when seeking employment. Once employed and while serving as a paid employee, or if self-employed, Master Well Owners should not display credentials or give the appearance of being a Master Well Owner at the place of business.

When Master Well Owners speak before groups on private water system topics it is permissible for them to accept unsolicited reimbursements or gifts. It is inappropriate, however, to seek paid speaking engagements while participating in an authorized extension function and while using the Master Well Owner title. Volunteers may not sign contracts or leases assuming liability responsibility on behalf of other organizations or groups.

Master Well Owners may only provide general education regarding management of private water systems that follow the Virginia Household Water Quality Program's recommendations. **Volunteer Master Well Owners may not at any time make specific recommendations or give professional advice.** This program is intended for general educational purposes only, no services will be



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provided to the public via the Master Well Owners. Private water system problems which are not specifically covered by general recommendations should be referred to a qualified professional associated with the Virginia Household Water Quality Program.

I have read and understand the Virginia Master Well Owner Policy Statement and agree to comply with the guidelines and fulfill the commitments required. I also understand that failure to comply with the above guidelines and policies may result in expulsion from the Virginia Master Well Owner Network at the discretion of the Virginia Household Water Quality Program.

Signature of Master Well Owner

Date

County

Print Name

revised: 9/08



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