



Virginia Well Owner Network
Virginia Household Water Quality Program
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Volunteer Policy Statement

Purpose:

Virginia Well Owner Network volunteers support the Virginia Household Water Quality Program 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 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 Well Owner Network (VWON). Information presented by Virginia Well Owner Network volunteers must be consistent with the Virginia Household Water Quality Program's recommendations concerning various aspects of private water systems.

The Virginia 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 work with the local VWON Extension agent in their community to help conduct drinking water clinics and other outreach as needed.

Qualifications:

1. 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.
2. Willingness and availability to undertake one seven hour training session conducted by VAHWQP staff and educators.
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, verbally or in writing.
5. Willingness to have name and email contact information displayed on the VWON website.
6. Well Owner Network volunteers may not own or work at a business that is affiliated with private water systems (e.g., well drillers, water testing). There are opportunities for agency collaborators to participate in training and help accomplish the goals of the program through their normal career responsibilities.

Expected Commitment:

1. Attend required one-day training session.
2. Make your best attempt to support the local Extension agent in conducting drinking water clinics and other outreach efforts as possible.
3. Complete the simple one-page contact summary via hardcopy or on the VWON website at least once each year.
4. Cooperate with other volunteers and extension staff involved in the program.
5. Be accountable to the Virginia Well Owner Network coordinator.
6. Provide own transportation to any Virginia Well Owner Network educational event that volunteer chooses to participate in.

Training:

Regional Well Owner Network 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	



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Certification:

A Virginia Well Owner Network volunteer must attend the full day (face to face or online) training workshop and score above a 70% on the post workshop examination before becoming a Virginia Well Owner volunteer. Upon completion he/she will be Well Owner Network certificate. Reenrollment is required annually. When individuals cease active participation, then their designation as Virginia Well Owner Network volunteers becomes void, and they can no longer represent themselves as Virginia Well Owner Network volunteers.

Recertification:

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

1. Committing to make your best attempt to support the local Extension agent in conducting drinking water clinics and other outreach efforts as possible.
2. Completion of a VWON recertification training, and
3. Scoring a minimum of 70% on a recertification exam.

Fees:

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 certification. These charges will be itemized and kept to a minimum.

Guidelines:

The title "Virginia Well Owner Network volunteer" 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 Well Owner Network. The title Virginia Well Owner Network volunteer is to be used only when doing **unpaid, volunteer** work pertaining to private water system education.

Virginia Well Owner Network volunteers are not to advertise their name or their place of business nor be listed on the advertisements of business places as Virginia Well Owner Network volunteers. Because the VWON 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 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, Well Owner Network volunteers should not display credentials or give the appearance of being a Well Owner Network volunteer at the place of business.

When Virginia Well Owner Network volunteers 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 Virginia Well Owner Network volunteer title. Volunteers may not sign contracts or leases assuming liability responsibility on behalf of other organizations or groups.

Virginia Well Owner Network volunteers may only provide general education regarding management of private water systems that follow the Virginia Household Water Quality Program's recommendations. Volunteer 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 provided to the public via the Virginia Well Owner Network. 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 Well Owner Network 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 Well Owner Network at the discretion of the Virginia Household Water Quality Program.

Signature

Date

County

Print Name