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PROTECTING GROUNDWATER IN THE LOWER YAKIMA VALLEY WHO TO CALL FOR HELP

If you have questions about your groundwater, which is also your source of drinking water, who do you call? Unfortunately, there isn't one phone number for all groundwater problems. It depends on the situation and the question you have. Responsibilities are split between local, state, and federal governments. Below is a list of contacts listed by agency and responsibility. We hope this will help you get the help you need.

PUBLIC DRINKING WATER WELLS

The following contacts are for Yakima County residents who get their drinking water from a public water supply.

Agency	Responsibilities	Contact	Website
Yakima County Public Services – Utilities Division	Operation and development of Group A & B Water Systems	Joe Stump, (509) 574-2300	http://www.yakimacounty.us/publicservices/Utility_main.htm
Yakima Health District: Drinking Water Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well site inspections for Group B water systems• Assistance to the public in submitting applications for approval of new/existing water systems• Group B public water systems• Sanitary survey inspections of public water systems in Yakima County• Assistance with questions regarding water quality	John Wilson, (509) 249-6568 Ryan Ibach, (509) 249-6521 Ted Silvestri, (509) 249-6562	http://www.yakimacounty.us/health/eh/dwoverview.htm
Washington Department of Health	Regulates public drinking water systems	Ginny Stern, (360) 236-3134	http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/default.htm

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Evergreen Rural Water	Training and technical assistance for rural water system operators and managers	Charles Brown, (360) 880-3365 General info, (800) 272-5981	http://www.erwow.org/
Environmental Protection Agency	Drinking water systems on Yakama Reservation	Lisa Jacobsen, (206) 553-6917 Dale Becker, (206) 553-6235	http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/WATER.NSF/Drinking+Water/Tribal+DW
Indian Health Service	Provides health services including drinking water technical assistance to Yakama Nation and Native Americans	Norm Hepner, (509) 685-1775	http://www.ihs.gov/FacilitiesServices/AreaOffices/Portland/portland-tribe-yakama.asp

PRIVATE DRINKING WATER WELLS

The State of Washington and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) do not have the authority to regulate private drinking water wells. **If you get your water from a private well, you are responsible for regularly checking the quality of your well water.** Listed below are contacts and websites that can help you with your private wells.

Agency	Responsibilities	Contacts	Website
Homeowner	Individual wells are the responsibility of the homeowner. To help protect your well you can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Test every year for total coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids, and pH levels. ♦ Consult local expert such as Local Health Department, agricultural extension agent, nearby public water system, geologist at a local university 		http://www.doh.wa.gov//ehp/dw/Publications/331-349.pdf This Washington State Dept of Health brochure has information and resources on how to maintain your well; including well water testing; potential contaminants; how to interpret test results and treating contaminated water and links for additional information.

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Washington Department of Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for well log reports. • Well construction and licensing. 	<p>Erin Guitierrez, (509) 454-7206</p> <p>Avery Richardson, (509) 575-2639</p>	<p>http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wells/wellhome.html http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/welllog/</p> <p>https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/wrx/wrx/wcl/query_pages/base_page.asp</p>
Environmental Protection Agency	General private wells information		http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw000/privatewells
Indian Health Service	Provides health services including technical assistance to Yakama Nation and Native Americans	Norm Hepner, (509) 685-1775	http://www.ihs.gov/FacilitiesServices/AreaOffices/Portland/portland-tribe-yakama.asp

QUESTIONS ABOUT CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS (CAFO)

Agency	Responsibilities	Contact	Website
Washington Department of Ecology	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) CAFO permits	Jon Jennings, (360) 407-6283	http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/permits/cafo/index.html
Washington Department of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dairy Inspections • Dairy Nutrient Management • Dairy Farms & Milk Processing Plants • Fertilizers; chemigation/fertigation technical assistance programs 	<p>Eric Bair, (509) 969-7140</p> <p>Nora Mena, (360) 902-1982</p> <p>Claudia Coles, (360) 902-1876</p> <p>Tom Hoffman, (509) 766-2574</p>	<p>http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Livestock-Nutrient/Inspections.aspx</p> <p>http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Livestock-Nutrient/</p> <p>http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Dairy/</p> <p>http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/ChemFert/default.aspx</p>

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South Yakima Conservation District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Oversees Irrigation activities ♦ Irrigation Management ♦ Dairy/Livestock Nutrient Management Technical Assistance ♦ Water Quality 	General info, (509) 837-7911	http://syecd.scc.wa.gov/
Environmental Protection Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates CAFO activities in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington 	Nick Peak, (208) 378-5765	http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=7

QUESTIONS ABOUT AGRICULTURE

Agency	Responsibilities	Contact	Website
South Yakima Conservation District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Oversees Irrigation activities ♦ Irrigation Management ♦ Dairy/Livestock Nutrient Management Technical Assistance ♦ Water Quality 	General info, (509) 837-7911	http://syecd.scc.wa.gov/
Environmental Protection Agency	Coordinates agricultural activities in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington	Karma Anderson, (206) 553-1647	http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/ecocomm.nsf/Agriculture/R10-Ag
Washington State Dept of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal services • Commodity inspection • Food safety & consumer services • Plant protection 	Comprehensive contact list	http://agr.wa.gov/ http://agr.wa.gov/ContactUs/Docs/WhoToContact.pdf

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QUESTIONS ABOUT PESTICIDES

Agency	Responsibilities	Contact	Website
Environmental Protection Agency	Regulation of Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. Most requirements have been delegated to States through cooperative agreements.	NPIC, (800) 858-7378 Sandra Halstead, (509) 786-9225	http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/ECOCOMM.NSF/Pesticides/Pesticides+Homepage
Washington Department of Agriculture - Pesticide Management Division	Provide cost efficient and effective services for the regulation of pesticides, feed, and fertilizers.	Gary Buckner, (509) 575-2210	http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/
Washington State University	Pesticide Safety Programs tools to mitigate risks from pesticide use	Dept of Entomology, (509) 335-2830	http://pep.wsu.edu/

QUESTIONS ABOUT SEPTIC TANKS

Local, tribal, and state governments are responsible for regulating individual septic (onsite) systems.

Agency	Responsibilities	Contact	Website
Washington Department of Ecology	Regulates active underground storage tanks	Christina Zerby, (509) 454-7833	http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/ust-lust/tanks.html
Yakima Health District: On-site Sewage Program	Ensures that threats to public health from sewage exposure are kept to a minimum.	Ranulfo Perez, (509) 249-6553	http://www.yakimacounty.us/health/eh/wwprojects.htm
Washington Dept. of Health	Septic system program – undergoing rule development process	Denise Lahmann, (360) 236-3348	http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/WW/tanks/tanks-rap.htm

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Indian Health Service	Health services for the Yakama Nation and other Native Americans	Norm Hepner, (509) 685-1775	http://www.ihs.gov/FacilitiesServices/AreaOffices/Portland/portland-tribe-yakama.asp
Environmental Protection Agency	Guidance and technical assistance for the development and enhancement of septic (onsite) programs.		http://cfpub.epa.gov/owm/septic/index.cfm

QUESTIONS ABOUT ABANDONED WELLS

Agency	Responsibilities	Contact	Website
Washington Department of Ecology	Publication on abandoned wells problems and solutions	Yakima Regional Office, (509) 575-2490	http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/96br097.html

QUESTIONS ABOUT HEALTH CONCERNS RELATED TO TOPICS ABOVE

Health Concerns related to Drinking Water

Agency	Responsibilities	Contact	Website
Yakima Health District: Drinking Water Program	Protects the health and safety of the community by assuring safe and reliable drinking water.	John Wilson, (509) 249-6568 Ryan Ibach, (509) 249-6521 Ted Silvestri, (509) 249-6562	http://www.yakimahealthdistrict.org/eh/dwoverview.htm
Washington Department of Health	Protect the health of the people of Washington by assuring safe and reliable drinking water.	General Info: (360) 236-3100 Jan Naragon, (360) 236-3189	http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/Programs/nitrate.htm

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	General information and fact sheets on private ground water wells and the health risks of drinking water contamination	General info, (800) 232-4636	http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/wells/index.html
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry	Serves the public by using the best science, taking responsive public health actions, and providing trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and diseases related to toxic substances.	Richard Robinson, (206) 553-5114	http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/
Indian Health Service	Provides health services to Yakama Nation and Native Americans	Norm Hepner, (509) 685-1775	http://www.ihs.gov/FacilitiesServices/AreaOffices/Portland/portland-tribe-yakama.asp
Environmental Protection Agency	Information on potential sources of contaminants in drinking water		http://www.epa.gov/safewater/privatewells/health.html

WHO TO CALL ABOUT ENFORCEMENT

Agency	Responsibilities	Contact	Website
Washington Dept. of Health	Ensure water systems comply with state and federal drinking water regulations that protect public health.	Chris McCord, (360) 236-3135	http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/our_main_pages/enflink.htm
Environmental Protection Agency	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) CAFO Enforcement	Steven Potokar, (206) 553-6354	http://www.epa.gov/compliance/monitoring/programs/cwa/cafos.html
Washington Department of Agriculture	Inspects agricultural activities as well as dairy nutrient practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dairy Inspections Dairy Nutrient Management 	Eric Bair, (509) 969-7140 Nora Mena, (360) 902-1982	http://agr.wa.gov/Portals/Insp/ http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Livestock-Nutrient/Inspections.aspx http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Livestock-Nutrient/

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dairy Farms & Milk Processing Plants 	Claudia Coles, (360) 902-1876	http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Dairy/
Washington Dept. of Ecology	Summaries of Ecology's enforcement actions for selected time periods		http://www.ecy.wa.gov/enforce.html
	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) CAFO permits	Jon Jennings, (360) 407-6283	http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/permits/cafo/index.html

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT GROUNDWATER

One person can make a difference. By making small changes, we can make our environment better. We can also encourage our friends, co-workers, and neighbors to help prevent pollution. Some of the things you can do to protect groundwater in your community are listed below.

In Your Community	<p>Learn more about where your water supply comes from, potential sources of contamination, and local and state water protection efforts. http://www.yakimacounty.us/publicservices/Utility_Wellhead_main.htm</p> <p>Organize a groundwater forum, community water festival, water testing or other educational event.</p> <p>Support groundwater education in local schools.</p> <p>Volunteer to help develop and implement your community’s Drinking Water Protection Strategies.</p> <p>Find out about the source water protection strategies in your community. Get a copy of any source water protection assessments that have been done in your area. For the state contact Dept of Health’s Source Water Assessment Program at (360) 236-3113. http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/swaphome.htm</p> <p>Contact the Groundwater Foundation for more information at 1-800-858-4844 or visit: http://www.groundwater.org.</p>
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In the Home	<p>Properly dispose your household hazardous wastes. Take toxic chemicals like weed killer, pesticides, paint, thinners, strippers, wood preservatives, furniture polish, cleaning chemicals, and bleach to a hazardous waste collection center. Do not dump toxic chemicals down the drain or on the ground. Call your local garbage hauler for more information. For household hazardous waste information in Washington visit: http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/default.htm</p> <p>http://www.yakimacounty.us/publicservices/solidwaste/hazardous_waste.asp</p> <p>Find out if you have underground storage tanks (USTs) or above ground storage tanks (ASTs) on your property. Residential USTs and ASTs typically are used to store heating oil. Rural properties and farms may have USTs or ASTs for gasoline, diesel, chemical, and waste oil storage. Active USTs and ASTs should be checked for leakage, which can increase with tank age. EPA strongly recommends inactive USTs be properly removed or closed in place to prevent expensive leaks that endanger public health or damage the environment. http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/WATER.NSF/UST/UST+LUST+Home</p>
In the Yard For Well & Septic Systems Owners	<p>Never store pesticides, fertilizers, and other chemicals adjacent to your well to avoid direct well contamination.</p> <p>Regularly test your well water for nitrates, bacteria, and other contaminants, as necessary.</p> <p>Properly maintain your septic system by having the septic tank pumped out every 2-3 years.</p> <p>Do not put improper materials down the household drains. These include garbage disposal food wastes, drain cleaners, household chemicals, and other toxic-cleaning agents.</p> <p>Here's a good website for general info: http://wellwater.orst.edu/</p>

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