



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND ENERGY

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Licensed Louisiana Water Well Drillers
FROM: Keith Lovell, Executive Director, Office of Permitting & Compliance
DATE: June 23, 2026
RE: Required Photograph with Water Well Registration & Plugging & Abandonment

ACTION REQUIRED

Effective **September 1st 2026** every Water Well Registration (C&E-GW-1 or C&E-GW-1S) and Water Well Plugging and Abandonment form (C&E-GW-2) submitted to the Office of Permitting and Compliance must be accompanied by photographs of the completed wellhead and well abandonment. This requirement is issued under La. R.S. 38:3091–3098.8 and supplements the registration program at LAC 56:I.1.§105, §117, §119, §515 and §516.

WHY PHOTOGRAPHS MATTER

The Department recognizes that this requirement is a significant change to the registration and plugging and abandonment process, and that it asks something new of every licensed driller. This requirement ensures that both the driller and the Department maintain a reliable photographic record to serve their mutual interests.

Quality photographs create a permanent, dated record of the wellhead or plugged site as the driller left it; if the well is later found deficient, that record helps the Department determine whether the deficiency existed at completion or arose after the driller left the site, and assign responsibility accordingly. Department staff will use the photographs to verify compliance; wells with missing or unclear photographs may be rejected to request additional photographs and/or will require a field inspection. A complete, clear photographic record is the most direct way for a driller to demonstrate compliance and to reduce the need for follow-up contact or a site visit.

PHOTOGRAPHS MUST SHOW

For a Water Well Registration (C&E-GW-1 or C&E-GW-1S), the photographs must show:

The **sanitary seal** installed at the top of the well casing and that if any vent and/or electrical conduit enter the well are water-tight,

The **cement surface seal** around the casing at ground level; and

The well's immediate surroundings, sufficient to confirm compliance with the well-location requirements of **LAC 56:I.3.5321**: that the well is not located in a pit or basement (below the ground surface) or within the foundation of a building; and, for a rig-supply well, that the required protective corner posts are in place.

The sanitary seal and cement surface seal must appear in the same image; the well's immediate surroundings must be shown in at least one additional photograph. Submit at least two (2) photographs for each new well.

For a Water Well Plugging and Abandonment (C&E-GW-2), the photograph must show:

The cement-bentonite plug brought up to the ground surface, as required by LAC 56:I.5.531.F; and

That the top of the well casing has been cut off at the required level: at or below the ground surface, and a minimum of three (3) feet below the ground surface in areas subject to subsidence or farming; as required by LAC 56:I.5.531.D. Under no circumstances may the top of the casing protrude above the ground surface.

Both features must appear in the same image. Submit at least one (1) photograph for each plugged or abandoned well.

SPECIFICATIONS

The photo must be in color, clear (not blurry), and taken in good light so the details are easy to see. Any standard cell phone photo is large enough (the minimum is 1024 × 768 pixels). Send it as a .JPG, .PNG, or one-page .PDF file.

Taken at completion or within seven (7) calendar days of completion.

Each photo must include a placard, card, or written tag in the photo showing the contractor license number, the date, and the coordinates of the well. The applicant may use a smartphone or other GPS device to obtain latitude and longitude coordinates for location verification. See Exhibit A for an example placard and Exhibit B for a printable placard template.

Where more than one well is on a site, these minimums apply to each well.

SUBMISSION AND DEADLINE

Submit the photographs with the water well registration or plugging and abandonment forms via the Office of Permitting and Compliance's electronic delivery system or by email to Gwater@la.gov. The photographs must be received within the same 30-calendar-day registration or plugging and abandonment window required by LAC 56:I.1.5105, §117, §119, §515 and §516.

NON-COMPLIANCE

A registration or plugging and abandonment form submitted without the required photographs is incomplete and may be rejected and returned for correction and/or require a field inspection. Continuing failure to comply may result in an enforcement action issued by the Department.

QUESTIONS

Direct questions to the Office of Permitting and Compliance, Geology Division, Groundwater Resources, at Gwater@la.gov.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Keith Lovell", is written over a horizontal line.

Keith Lovell, Executive Director
Office of Permitting and Compliance
Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy

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EXHIBIT A

Example Placard

This exhibit shows how to identify each photo with a placard, as required in the Specifications section of this memorandum.

HOW TO MAKE THE PLACARD

Write the information below on a placard, card, paper plate, or any sheet that can be read in the photo. Use large letters and a dark marker. Lay or prop it next to the wellhead or plugged site so the card and the well appear in the same photo. The example below shows sample information only. A blank placard template is provided as Exhibit B.

EXAMPLE:

CONTRACTOR LICENSE NO.: 1234

DATE: 06/15/2026

GPS: 30° 00' 00" N, 91° 00' 00" W

EXHIBIT B**Placard Template**

Using this template is optional; any placard, card, or written tag showing the same information may be used instead. Print this page, fill in the blanks with a dark marker, and place it next to the well so the placard and the well appear in the same photo.

CONTRACTOR LICENSE NO.: _____**DATE:** _____**GPS (degrees, minutes, seconds):**

_____	°	_____	'	_____	"	N
_____	°	_____	'	_____	"	W