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Ground Water Rule Factsheet / General Rule Requirements:

WHAT IS THE GROUND WATER RULE?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published the Ground Water Rule (GWR) on November 8, 2006, with implementation starting January 1, 2010. One goal of the GWR is to provide increased protection against microbial pathogens, specifically bacterial and viral pathogens, in public water systems (PWSs) that use ground water. The GWR requires systems at risk of microbial contamination to take corrective action to protect consumers from harmful bacteria and viruses.

TO WHOM DOES THE GWR APPLY?

The GWR applies to all PWSs that:

- ⊗ rely entirely on one or more ground water sources,
- ⊗ are consecutive systems receiving ground water, or
- ⊗ mix surface and ground water, where ground water is added directly to the distribution system and delivered to consumers without treatment equivalent to the treatment provided for surface water.

Although all of these Ground Water Systems (GWSs) are subject to the GWR provisions, systems that have been identified as at-risk for contamination (by inspection or based on monitoring results) will account for most of the systems that have to take corrective action to comply with this rule.

WHAT ARE THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE GWR?

The basic requirements of the GWR include:

- ⊗ Sanitary surveys.
- ⊗ Triggered source water monitoring.
- ⊗ Corrective actions.
- ⊗ Public notification.

Sanitary surveys are primarily the responsibility of the states, while GWSs are responsible for other requirements.

WHAT ARE THE SANITARY SURVEY REQUIREMENTS?

The GWR requires states to conduct sanitary surveys of all GWSs in order to identify significant deficiencies, including deficiencies that could make a system susceptible to microbial contamination. Systems must provide the state with any information that will enable the sanitary survey to be complete and accurate. Each survey must include, but is not limited to, an onsite review and evaluation of eight elements:

- ✿ Source
- ✿ Treatment
- ✿ Distribution system
- ✿ Finished water storage
- ✿ Pumps, pump facilities, and controls
- ✿ Monitoring, reporting, and data verification
- ✿ System management and operation
- ✿ Operator compliance with state requirements

If a state identifies a significant deficiency during a sanitary survey or at another time, the system must take corrective action. A significant deficiency may include defects in design, maintenance, or operation of the water system. A significant deficiency may also include the failure or malfunction of the source, treatment, or distribution system that may cause contamination of water delivered to consumers.

WHAT IS TRIGGERED SOURCE WATER MONITORING?

Triggered source water monitoring is required for any GWS with a positive total coliform result under the Total Coliform Rule (TCR) routine sampling. Triggered source water monitoring is used to determine if fecal contamination is present in the ground water source. If a triggered source water sample is positive for a fecal indicator, the state will require that the system take corrective action.

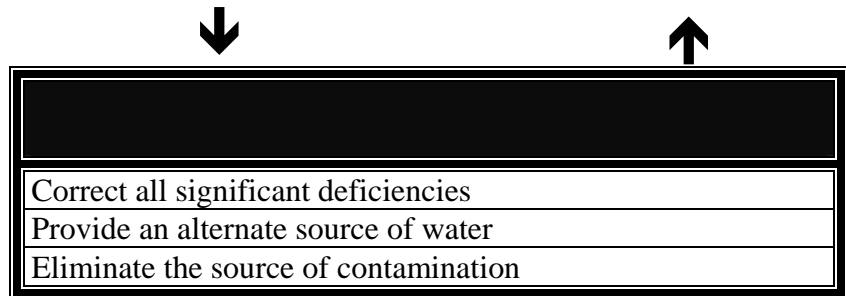
GWSs must collect at least one ground water source sample from each source in use at the time the total coliform-positive sample was collected. The triggered source water sample must be analyzed for the presence of a fecal indicator as specified in the rule. If the triggered source water sample is fecal indicator-positive, the GWS must take corrective action as directed by the state.

WHAT ARE THE CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIREMENTS?

Corrective action is required for any GWS with a **significant deficiency**. Systems with fecal indicator-positive results from their triggered source water monitoring may be required to take corrective action. As the figure below shows, systems have three corrective action alternatives:

Notice of significant deficiency OR Notice from the lab of fecal indicator-positive sample from triggered source water monitoring	→ → →	System consults with state to determine corrective action OR State specifies corrective action	System must complete corrective action plan OR System must be in compliance with state approved corrective action plan and schedule
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**Based on date of notice*



WHAT PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE GWR?

If a system is in violation of a GWR requirement, the system must report the problem to the state and notify the public.

Source water monitoring sample fecal indicator-positive for <i>E. coli</i>	Within 24 hrs.	Within 24 hrs.	1	TV, hand-delivery, public postings, or other state-approved methods
Failure to complete required corrective action	Within 48 hrs.	Within 30 days	2	Hand-delivery, direct mail, public postings, newspaper, or radio announcements.
Failure to comply with a state approved corrective action plan and schedule	Within 48 hrs	Within 30 days	2	Hand-delivery, direct mail, public postings, newspaper, or radio announcements