

# GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS FAQ



## What is a Groundwater Conservation District?

GCDs are political subdivisions of the state created to protect and balance private groundwater interests with the conservation, preservation, protection, recharging, and prevention of waste of groundwater, and the control of subsidence caused by withdrawal.



## HOW DO GCDS ALLOCATE THEIR BUDGETS?

- Education Outreach
- Science & Research
- Operations
- Conservation
- Regional Planning

## HOW MANY GCDS ARE IN TEXAS?

- Currently 100 GCDs
- 2 Subsidence Districts

## Do I have to register my well with my GCD?

Yes, state law requires all wells to be registered with the GCD. This does not mean that all wells require a permit. All domestic wells and livestock wells that produce less than 25,000 gallons per day are exempt from permits. A GCD has the ability to exempt others in their rules.

## What is a management plan?

A management plan outlines a GCD's goals and course of action to achieve those goals. The management plan is submitted to TWDB for approval, and rules necessary to implement the management plan are adopted by each district.

## What is a Desired Future Condition?

The desired future condition is a metric that is established during the joint planning process by GCDs in a common Groundwater Management Area (GMA).

The DFCs provide for consistency in groundwater management in the GMA and a balance between groundwater protection and production.

## How are GCDs funded?

GCDs are funded through property taxes, permitting fees, and/or usage fees.



## Abandoned Wells

There is a high environmental risk associated with abandoned or deteriorated wells, as they are a direct conduit from the surface to our groundwater resources.

Because of this risk, it is highly recommended to have abandoned or deteriorated wells plugged. Some GCDs have established programs to assist landowners in plugging abandoned wells.



## Water Quality

*How often should I have my well water tested?*

It is recommended that well owners have their water professionally tested annually or when an observed change in water quality occurs.

*Who can disinfect my well water?*

It is recommended to contact a licensed water well driller or a pump installer to professionally disinfect your well.

## Groundwater Terms

### Aquifer

An underground geological formation able to store and yield water in usable amounts. Aquifers in Texas can consist of sand, gravel, limestone, granite, and many other rock types that have pores or spaces for water to pass through.

### Aquitard

An aquitard, or confining layer, is a zone within the earth that restricts the flow of groundwater.

### Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)

TDS refers to the total concentration of dissolved constituents in solution. A TDS level of less than 1000 ppm is often considered freshwater, although many Texans' drinking water has a higher TDS.

### Cone of Depression

A cone of depression is a conically shaped area of decreased water level (or pressure) that occurs when water is withdrawn from an aquifer. If wells are too close to each other, these cones may overlap and cause interference resulting in abnormally low water levels in whose wells. In areas that withdraw more water than is recharged or flows to that area, a semi-permanent regional cone of depression may occur.

### Rule of Capture

Grants landowners a legal right to capture the water beneath their property without regard to effects on neighboring wells except in cases of waste or malice.



### Groundwater Ownership

The Texas Legislature and Texas Supreme Court have recognized that landowners have a constitutionally protected property right in groundwater and own the groundwater below the surface as real property, subject to the rule of capture and regulation by GCDs.

### Middle Trinity Groundwater Conservation District

930 Wolfe Nursery Road

Stephenville, TX 76401

254-965-6705

[www.middletrinitygcd.org](http://www.middletrinitygcd.org)

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