

103G.295 IRRIGATION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND.**Subdivision 1. Recommendation and information for waters of the state appropriation.**

(a) If an application is made for a permit to irrigate agricultural land from waters of the state, the soil and water conservation district may make recommendations to the commissioner regarding the disposition of the application and its compatibility to a comprehensive soil and water conservation plan approved under section 103C.331, subdivision 11. The recommendations must be made within 30 days of the receipt of the application.

(b) Within 30 days of receipt of the application, the commissioner may require additional specific information from the applicant.

Subd. 2. Issuance or denial of permit for appropriation from waters of the state.

After receiving all requested information, the commissioner must review the application and information, consider the soil and water conservation district's recommendations, and issue or deny the permit within 60 days. If the commissioner orders a hearing, the permit must be issued or denied within ten days after receiving the report of the hearing officer. For an application for a permit to irrigate agricultural land, failure of the commissioner to issue or deny a permit within the time specified under this subdivision is considered an order issuing the permit as applied for. The order is effective ten days after the applicant has given written notice to the commissioner stating an intention to proceed with the appropriation of water to irrigate agricultural land.

Subd. 3. Groundwater appropriation permit classification areas. (a) Water use permit applications required for appropriation of groundwater for agricultural irrigation must be processed in the order received and designated as either class A or class B applications. Class A applications are for wells located in areas for which the commissioner has adequate groundwater availability data. Class B applications are for wells located in other areas.

(b) The commissioner must evaluate available groundwater data, determine its adequacy, and designate class A and B application areas for the entire state. The commissioner shall request, obtain, and evaluate groundwater data from soil and water conservation districts, and where appropriate revise the class A and B application area designations.

(c) The commissioner shall file a commissioner's order with the secretary of state defining class A and B application areas by county and township. Additional areas may be added by a later order of the commissioner.

Subd. 4. Class B permit requirements. (a) Class B groundwater use permit applications are not complete until the applicant has supplied:

(1) a summary of the anticipated well depth and subsurface geologic formation expected to be penetrated by the well, including for glacial drift aquifers, the logs of test holes drilled to locate the site of the proposed production well;

(2) the formation and aquifer expected to serve as the groundwater source;

(3) the maximum daily, seasonal, and annual pumpage expected;

(4) the anticipated groundwater quality in terms of the measures of quality commonly specified for the proposed water use;

(5) the results of a pumping test supervised by the commissioner or a designee of the commissioner, conducted at a rate not to exceed the proposed pumping rate for not more than 72 continuous hours for wells under water table conditions and not more than 24 continuous hours for wells under artesian conditions; and

(6) when the area of influence of the proposed well is determined, the location of existing wells within the area of influence that were reported according to section 103I.205, subdivision 9, together with readily available facts on depths, geologic formations, pumping and nonpumping water levels, and details of well construction as related to the water well construction code.

(b) The commissioner may in any specific application waive any requirements of paragraph (a), clauses (4) to (6), or (c) if the necessary data are already available.

(c) Before, during, and after the pumping test required in paragraph (a), clause (5), the commissioner shall require monitoring of water levels in one observation well located at a distance from the pumping well that the commissioner has reason to believe may be affected by the new appropriation. The permit applicant is responsible for costs of the pumping tests and monitoring in the observation well. The applicant is responsible for the construction of one observation well if suitable existing wells cannot be located for this purpose. If the commissioner determines that more than one observation well is needed, the commissioner shall instruct the applicant to install and monitor more observation wells. The commissioner shall reimburse the applicant for these added costs.

Subd. 5. Issuance of permits for groundwater appropriation. The commissioner may issue water use permits for irrigation appropriation from groundwater only if the commissioner determines that:

(1) proposed soil and water conservation measures are adequate based on recommendations of the soil and water conservation districts; and

(2) water supply is available for the proposed use without reducing water levels beyond the reach of vicinity wells constructed in accordance with the water well construction code in Minnesota Rules, parts 4725.1900 to 4725.6500.

History: *1990 c 391 art 7 s 32; 1993 c 186 s 16; 1995 c 218 s 12*