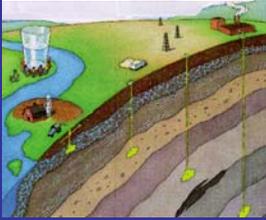


The Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program



1

Purpose of Presentation

- UIC Program overview and SDWA/UIC Basics
- UIC Injection Well Permits
- Aquifer Exemptions

2

Part I: Overview and Basics

3

Underground Injection Control Program

- US Environmental Protection Agency
 - Office of Water
 - Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water
 - » Drinking Water Protection Division
- Authorizing legislation
 - Safe Drinking Water Act
- Mission: to **protect underground sources of drinking water** (USDW) from contamination by regulating the construction and operation of injection wells.

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SDWA Provisions: UIC

- SDWA (1974) requires that EPA determine the need for, and promulgate, **minimum** requirements for State and Tribal regulations sufficient to protect underground sources of drinking water.
- Requires that injection activities must not endanger an underground source of drinking water.
- Establishes a process for delegating primary enforcement authority to States and Tribes.
- Authorizes EPA to directly implement the UIC program in States that do not receive primacy.
- Authorizes EPA to provide grants to the States (and Tribes) in support of essential program functions.

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Definition: USDW

- Underground source of drinking water:
 - An aquifer or portion of an aquifer that supplies any public water system *or* contains a quantity of ground water sufficient to supply a public water system, **and**
 - Currently supplies drinking water for human consumption, **or**
 - Contains fewer than 10,000 mg/L total dissolved solids *and* is not an exempted aquifer

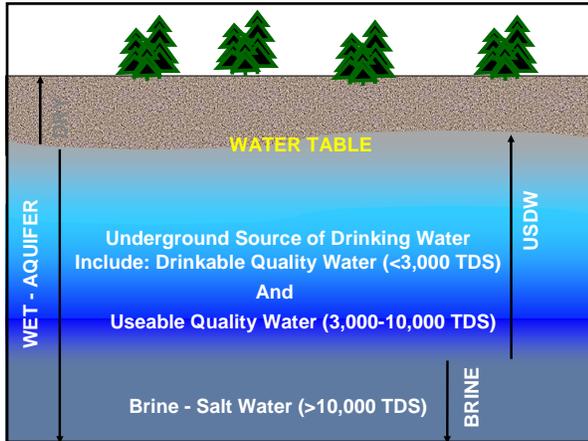
6

Non-Endangerment Standard

Endangerment occurs if the introduction of any contaminant results in a violation of any drinking water standard, or otherwise endanger human health.



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Federal UIC Regulations

- Part 144: UIC Program
- Part 145: State UIC Program Requirements
- Part 146: UIC Program: Criteria and Standards
- Part 147: State UIC Programs
- Part 148: Hazardous Waste Injection Restrictions

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Classes of Injection Wells

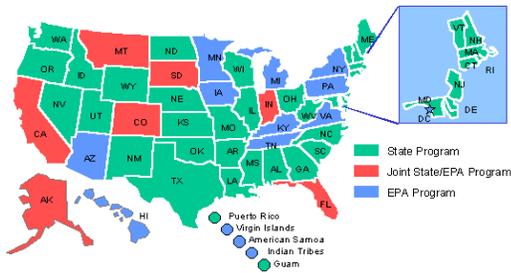
Class I Class II Class III



Class V



UIC Program Delegation Status



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Why is the UIC Program Relevant at ISL Facilities?

- Underground injection wells have the potential to contaminate USDWs.
- UIC Program regulates injection at ISL facilities
- UIC Program requires an injection well permit at ISL facilities
- UIC Program has authority to require cleanup or closure to prevent "endangerment" of USDWs

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Part 2: Permit Application

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The image shows a detailed EPA Permit Application form. Key sections include:

- Header:** EPA logo, 'Permit Application' title, and 'Underground Injection Control' subtitle.
- Applicant Information:** Fields for name, address, phone, and email.
- Well Information:** Fields for well name, location, and depth.
- Permit Details:** Fields for permit number, expiration date, and TDSR number.
- Classification:** Sections for Class I, II, or III wells, and whether it's a new well or an existing well.
- Signatures:** Fields for the applicant's signature and date.

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Application Attachments

- Provide the details needed to determine if the site and well meet Federal criteria
 - Class III Wells -- Details are provided in attachments:
 - III new well A, B, C, D, F, H, I, J, K, M – S, U
 - Existing A, B, C, D, F, H, J, K, M – U
 - Class I Wells -- Details are provided in attachments as above plus
 - For new wells, Attachment L
 - For existing wells, Attachments I, L and T

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Permit Attachments

- APPLICANT SUBMITS:
 - A. AREA OF REVIEW METHODS
 - B. MAPS OF WELL/AREA AND AREA OF REVIEW
 - C. CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN AND WELL DATA
 - D. MAPS AND CROSS SECTION OF USDWs
 - F. MAPS AND CROSS SECTIONS OF GEOLOGIC STRUCTURE OF AREA
 - H. OPERATING DATA
 - I. FORMATION TESTING PROGRAM
 - J. STIMULATION PROGRAM

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Permit Attachments (cont'd)

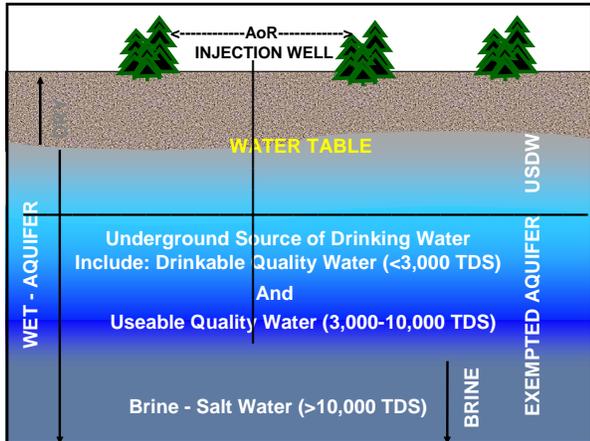
- K. INJECTION PROCEDURES
- L. CONSTRUCTION PROCEDURES
- M. CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
- N. CHANGES IN INJECTED FLUID
- O. PLANS FOR WELL FAILURES
- P. MONITORING PROGRAM
- Q. PLUGGING AND ABANDONMENT PLAN
- R. NECESSARY RESOURCES
- S. AQUIFER EXEMPTIONS
- T. EXISTING EPA PERMITS
- U. DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS

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Area of Review

- The Area of Review (AoR) of a well may be considered the “Area of Most Detailed Study,” or the “Area of Greatest Concern” regarding a UIC permit.
- Area around the well where injection pressures in the injection zone may cause fluids to migrate upwards to a USDW.
- A primary concern of the UIC program is the potential for waste excursion from the injection zone due to the presence of conduits or other pathways.

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Area of Review Methods (Attachment A)

- Radius of the AoR
 - Determined by either:
 - Fixed radius not less than ¼ mile
 - unless a calculation is approved by Director
 - Zone of Endangering Influence

Maps of Well, Area and Area of Review (Attachment B)

- Map of well, area and AoR depicting:
 - facility and potential conduits for upward migration of injection fluid
 - nearby land uses and operations that could be impacted by, or could impact, the injection well
 - public water systems and other pertinent information
 - wells (including drinking-water wells), springs, surface water bodies

Attachments D and F

- ATTACHMENT D
 - Maps and cross sections indicating the vertical limits of all underground sources of drinking water within the area of review
 - USDW position relative to the injection formation and, if possible, the direction of water movement, in all USDWs which may be affected by the injection
- ATTACHMENT F
 - Maps and cross sections detailing the geologic structure of the local area
 - Generalized maps and cross sections illustrating the regional geologic setting

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Monitoring Requirement Attachment P

- Include maps showing the number and location of monitoring wells
- Monitoring includes but may not be limited to:
 - The nature of injected fluids Monitoring injection pressure and either flow rate or volume semimonthly, or metering and daily recording of injected and produced fluid volumes as appropriate;
 - Demonstration of mechanical integrity (Class I);
 - Fluid level in the injection zone
 - Monitoring of the water quality in the monitoring wells

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Plugging and Abandonment (Attachments Q and R)

- Attachment Q: Information on cement, plugs and method to place plugs
- Attachment R: Permit application required to include documentation of financial assurance

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Part 3: Aquifer Exemptions

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Aquifer Exemptions
(Attachment S)

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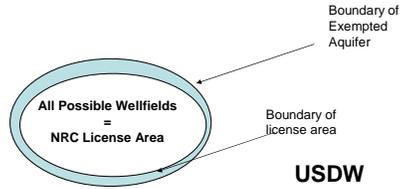
What is an aquifer exemption?

- The aquifer-exemption process occurs where an aquifer that is considered an underground source of drinking water is “exempted” from SDWA protections forever, according to specific criteria in §§ 144.7 and 146.4.
- The exemption is a separate process from the permit process, but can be done simultaneously with, or after, the permit process.
- **If the USDW is used as a source of drinking water, it can not be exempted.**

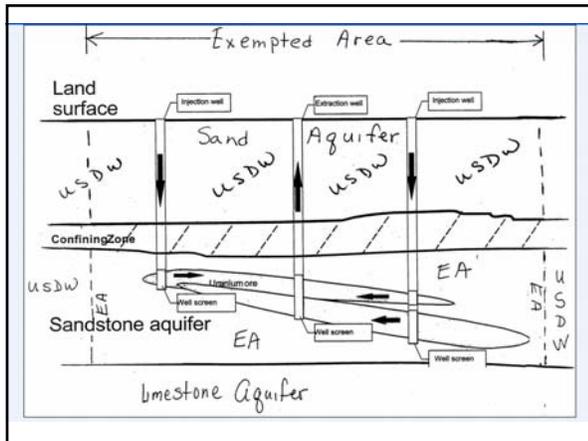
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Birds Eye View of Hypothetical Wellfields, License Area and Exempted Aquifer

USDW



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Why an Exemption?

- All USDWs are to be protected, except exempted aquifers
- Most mining could not take place without an exemption
- If injection is to occur into a formation that technically meets definition, but practically is not a potential drinking water source, then the exemption process is available

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Basis for Exemption

- Criteria for exemptions in 40 CFR 146.4
 - (a) Not currently serving as source of drinking water **and**
 - (b) Cannot now and will not in future serve as source of drinking water **or**
 - (c) TDS >3,000 mg/l and <10,000 mg/l, and not reasonably expected to supply public water system

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Determining If the Aquifer Cannot Now and Will Not in the Future Serve as a Drinking Water Source

- Consider:
 - Mineral or hydrocarbon resource?
 - Depth and location compared to technology and economics?
 - Contamination?
 - Subsidence or collapse likely from Class III UIC mining? [Note: Not relevant to ISL]

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Procedure for Exemptions

- Administrator and Regional Administrators have authority to approve exemptions
 - Exemptions are either “Substantial” -- need EPA Administrator’s approval or
 - “Non-substantial” – need Regional Administrator’s approval
- Exemptions subject to public input

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Public Participation in the Permitting Process

- EPA's policy is to inform, and maintain open communication channels with the public
- The permit application is advertised in a manner, such as a newspaper, that makes it widely known
- Anyone can comment during the permitting process
- Anyone can request a public hearing
- However, the ultimate decision is based on the applicable regulations

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Chronology: ESTIMATED Timeframe

- Aquifer Exemption for aquifer with >3000 ppm
 - Region approves/disapproves: 6 months - 1 year
- Aquifer Exemption for aquifer with <3000 ppm (or other criteria of concern)
 - EPA HQ approves/disapproves: 1 - 2 years
- Class I or Class III well permit : 1 -2 years

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Chronology: Process

- Similar for Aquifer Exemptions and Permits:
 - Application is submitted
 - EPA perform a completeness review
 - EPA notes deficiencies in application
 - Applicant addresses deficiencies
 - Notice of public hearing
 - Public hearing; comments received
 - EPA addresses comments, with input from applicant as needed
 - Permit approved with conditions (or disapproved)

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Part 4: Further Information

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Informational resources

- UIC web site (<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/uic>) has information on:
 - Regulations
 - Guidance (esp. aquifer exemptions in Guidance #34)
 - General program details
 - 7520-6 application form:
<http://www.epa.gov/r5water/uic/pubpdf/7520-6.pdf>
- The UIC Permit course materials are available at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwa/electronic/emaerials.html#UIC>

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EPA Regional Contacts

- Region 1: David Delaney (617-918-1614, delaney.david@epamail.epa.gov)
- Region 2: Luis Rodriguez (212-637-4274, Rodriguez.Luis@epamail.epa.gov)
- Region 3: Stephen Platt (215-814-5464, Platt.Steve@epamail.epa.gov)
- Region 4: Nancy Marsh (404-562-9450, March.Nancy@epamail.epa.gov)
- Region 5: Rebecca Harvey (312-886-6594, Harvey.Rebecca@epamail.epa.gov)

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Regional Contacts (cont'd)

- Region 6: Ray Leissner (214-665-7183, Leissner.Ray@epamail.epa.gov)
- Region 7: Patrick Costello (913-551-7939, Costello.Pat@epamail.epa.gov)
- Region 8: Wendy Cheung (303-312-6242, Cheung.Wendy@epamail.epa.gov)
- Region 9: David Albright (415-972-3971, Albright.David@epamail.epa.gov)
- Region 10: Kirk Robinson (206-553-2104, Robinson.Kirk@epamail.epa.gov)

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