

Buying a Home With a Water Well

Questions to Ask the Property Seller

What to Test, Request and Ask

Property address _____ Date _____

Seller or agent contact _____

How to use this: Send the list through your agent before or during the inspection period. Ask for documents, not descriptions. "Unknown" is an acceptable answer. Mark each box, and write the answer or the document name beside it.

This is a guide to assist in evaluating a property with a water well to purchase. If you have concerns about the water or water well on the property, please contact a professional well expert or agency for further guidance.

1. THE WELL ITSELF

- ☐ Where exactly is the wellhead? (Ask to have it pointed out or marked.)
- ☐ What type of well is it: drilled, bored, driven or dug?
- ☐ Do you have the well construction record or well log?
- ☐ When was the well built, and by whom?
- ☐ Has it ever been deepened, repaired or had the casing extended?
- ☐ Is the well shared with a neighbor? Is there a written agreement for maintenance and costs?
- ☐ Are there other wells on the property, active or abandoned? Where?

2. WATER QUALITY AND TESTING HISTORY

- ☐ When was the water last tested by a laboratory?
- ☐ Can I have copies of every test result, including old ones?
- ☐ Who did the testing, and what was tested?
- ☐ Where was the sample taken: before or after treatment equipment?
- ☐ Has any result ever shown a problem? What was done, and was it retested?
- ☐ Have you ever boiled water, used bottled water or disinfected the well? Why and when?
- ☐ Have you noticed changes in taste, color, odor or clarity? Seasonal, after rain, or constant?
- ☐ Do you drink the water?

3. TREATMENT EQUIPMENT

- ☐ What does each piece of equipment treat, and why was it installed?
- ☐ Was it installed based on a water test? Can I see it?
- ☐ When was it installed, and by whom?
- ☐ When was it last serviced? What does routine maintenance involve?
- ☐ Are there manuals, warranties or service records?
- ☐ Is any equipment rented or leased rather than owned?
- ☐ Which company services it? Are you on a service plan?
- ☐ Are there settings or schedules a new owner should know?
- ☐ Is any equipment turned off or not working?

4. PUMP, PRESSURE TANK AND CONTROLS

- ☐ When was the pump last replaced?
- ☐ When was the pressure tank last replaced?
- ☐ Was the pressure switch or control box ever replaced?
- ☐ Who did the work? Do you have receipts?
- ☐ Has the pump ever failed or the water been lost? Cause and repair time?
- ☐ Is there a warranty that transfers to me?
- ☐ Is there a backup power arrangement, such as a generator hookup?

5. WATER QUANTITY AND SUPPLY

- ☐ Have you ever run out of water or seen the well slow down?
- ☐ Does it happen in dry seasons, droughts or heavy use?
- ☐ Do you limit water use (spacing laundry, skipping lawn watering)?
- ☐ Have you ever hauled water or used another source temporarily?
- ☐ How many people lived here while you owned it?
- ☐ Is the flow rate known? Has a flow or yield test been done?
- ☐ Is the well used for irrigation, livestock, a pool or a garden?

6. THE AREA AROUND THE WELL

- ☐ Where is the septic system? When was it last pumped or inspected?
- ☐ Has there ever been a septic backup or failure?
- ☐ Are there fuel tanks on the property, now or in the past?
- ☐ Have livestock been kept near the well?
- ☐ Has the property flooded or held standing water near the well?
- ☐ Were chemicals, fertilizers or pesticides stored near the well?
- ☐ Has there been recent construction, digging or regrading nearby?
- ☐ Are there nearby farms or industry you have had concerns about?

7. REPAIRS, EVENTS AND HISTORY

- ☐ Has the well ever been shock chlorinated? Why?
- ☐ Have there been major repairs to the line between well and house?
- ☐ Has a vehicle, mower or equipment ever hit the well?
- ☐ Any lightning or power surge damage to the pump?
- ☐ Any plumbing leaks, frozen pipes or water damage tied to the system?
- ☐ Has a well professional inspected it recently?

8. RECORDS AND PEOPLE

- ☐ Who is your well contractor or pump service company?
- ☐ Who services your treatment equipment?
- ☐ Will you leave all well and treatment paperwork with the house?
- ☐ Is there anything about the well a new owner should know?

9. ADD IF IT APPLIES

- ☐ Estate or inherited home: How long has it been empty? Was power to the well ever off? Who else knew the system?
- ☐ Seasonal home: How is the system opened and closed? Has anything frozen? Is water tested at reopening?
- ☐ Farm or acreage: How many wells, and what does each supply? Where were animals and manure kept? Are nearby fields sprayed? Are wells connected?
- ☐ Renovated or flipped home: What water system work was done? Receipts and contractor name?
- ☐ Newer construction: Well record, initial water test and contractor warranty?

10. QUESTIONS FOR YOUR OWN AGENT

- ☐ What does the state disclosure form ask about wells?
- ☐ Are local or state well tests or inspections required at sale?
- ☐ How long is the inspection period? How long do lab results take?
- ☐ Can the offer be contingent on a water test or well inspection?
- ☐ Which local well contractors or certified labs do you recommend?

YOUR NEXT STEPS

- ☐ Order your own water test from a state-certified laboratory.
- ☐ Schedule a well professional evaluation, and a flow test if supply is a concern.
- ☐ Keep every answer, email and document in one folder.
- ☐ Confirm local requirements with your health department.

Notes
