



Wasco County Soil & Water Conservation District

2325 River Road, Suite 3

The Dalles, OR 97058-3551

Tel: (541) 296-6178 ext. 3, Fax: (541) 296-7868, E-mail: wasco.swcd@oacd.org

September 23, 2013

Dear Mosier Area Resident,

As you know, water for city residents, rural homes, and farms in the Mosier-area comes from groundwater wells. You also may be aware that water levels in some wells have declined significantly over the past 40 years—by about 150 to 200 feet. Because of the declining water levels, some residents are forced to deepen their wells. Not only is drilling deeper wells very expensive, it may not be an effective solution to maintaining a sustainable water supply for you or the community. Scientific studies have concluded that the dominant cause of the declining wells is due to faulty well construction, which basically leak allowing for flow between aquifers. Leaky wells are also called commingling or cascading wells. A leaky well that is deepened will only continue to leak and will likely affect your neighbor's water supply. Please refer to the enclosed brochure for additional information on leaky wells.

A 2012 modeling effort by the US Geological Survey (USGS) identified priority areas where the leaky well problem seems to be most severe. According to the model, your property could be located within a priority area. The enclosed map shows the priority areas. However, actual onsite data is necessary to confirm which wells are actually leaking and to what degree. Starting this fall, the Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will be hiring a contractor to conduct the on-the-ground well evaluations. The evaluation of zone 1 wells is expected to be completed by mid-May of 2014, prior to the irrigation season. The well evaluation data will then be used to prioritize repairs, which the SWCD and the Mosier Watershed Council will incorporate into a restoration plan and seek funding to implement. A report of the USGS study, including the enclosed map, can be accessed on this USGS website: <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2012/5002/>.

The SWCD and the Mosier Watershed Council will be holding an informational meeting on October 15, 2013 at 6:30 PM at the Mosier Grange Hall to share what is currently known about Mosier's groundwater, to explain the upcoming well evaluation process, to answer questions, and to request permission from well owners to conduct the onsite evaluations. Please see the enclosed Agenda for more details. We hope that you are able to attend the meeting. If not, and/or have questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at anna.buckley@or.nacdnet.net or 541-296-6178 x119 or Ron Graves, SWCD District Manager, at extension 114. Additional information can be found on the Mosier Watershed Council's project page at http://wascoswcd.org/wcswcd_025.htm.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Anna Buckley'.

Anna Buckley
Watershed Coordinator