



Illegal Drilling Protocol

July 1, 2024

This protocol pertains to enforcement for well drilling companies who drill wells within Tulare County without first obtaining a permit from the Environmental Health Division. (Chapter 13, Article 2, Section 4-13-1007 (c)(h) and Chapter 13, Article 3, section 4-13-1022)

1. Staff to obtain images of well drilling operations or completed well with time date and location stamp. Staff issue a **stop order** as prescribed in Chapter 13, Article 3, Section 4-13-1021 in the Tulare County Well Ordinance.
2. Staff to inform supervisor of illegal drilling operation.
3. Supervisor to discuss with DD and obtain an office hearing date for notice.
4. A notice to attend an office hearing with day and time to be sent to well drilling company at the cost of \$402 administrative fee.
 - a. Purpose of the office hearing to discuss the cause of the illegal drilling.
 - b. Education for the well driller to Tulare County Requirements
 - c. Driller to apply and pay for the well permit retroactively.
 - i. This may require CEQA.
 - d. Notification to driller that the illegal drilling operation was reported to the state licensing board.
 - e. Notification to the Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA).
5. Notice of Violation sent to property owner informing them that they have violated Tulare County Well Ordinance (Chapter 13, Article 2, Section 4-13-1007 (c)) and not ensuring that a permit to drill a well was obtained prior to well construction.