



# FACT SHEET

OFFICE OF DRINKING WATER & MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSISTANCE CENTER 800-662-9278

## SANITARY SURVEYS AT NONCOMMUNITY WATER SUPPLIES

In 1974, out of concern for the quality of the water we drink, congress passed the Safe Drinking Water Act. This Act gave the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) responsibility for establishing and enforcing drinking water quality standards nationwide. The Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act (Act 399) was enacted in 1976 and enables the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to maintain primacy (state authority) over the drinking water program in our state. Local health departments are under contract with the DEQ to conduct periodic inspections and assist noncommunity water supply owners in meeting drinking water requirements.

A noncommunity water supply, otherwise known as a type II water supply, serves any nonresidential facility that provides water for drinking or domestic purposes to 25 or more at least 60 days per year or, has 15 or more service connections. Examples would include motels, factories, schools, restaurants, campgrounds, churches, and businesses that have their own water supply and serve 25 or more people per day.

### What is a sanitary survey?

A sanitary survey is a comprehensive inspection of the well, pumping equipment, distribution, and any treatment equipment to assess the potential for contamination to enter the water system by the local health department. Sanitary surveys are completed at least once every 5 years. Systems found to be in compliance with applicable rules at the time of the survey may receive a reduction in certain required monitoring at the discretion of the department.

An accurate and complete sanitary survey is an essential component of the noncommunity water supply program. The sanitary survey information is needed to determine the overall compliance and maintenance to ensure the provision of safe drinking water to the public.

Sanitary surveys also provide an opportunity for inspectors to establish a field presence with the owners and operators of water systems in order to educate them about proper monitoring and sampling procedures, provide technical assistance, and inform them of any upcoming changes in regulations.

### Elements of a sanitary survey

Overall, the survey consists of a review of past records and documents on the operation of the water system, an on-site inspection of both records and the operation and maintenance of the system, and a determination of potential problems which may affect the quality and/or quantity of water produced in the future.

There are eight minimum elements to be reviewed in conducting a sanitary survey:

- ✓ Source (usually a well): Including source protection, physical components & condition of the source.
- ✓ Treatment
- ✓ Distribution System
- ✓ Water Storage
- ✓ Pumps/Pump Facilities & Controls
- ✓ Monitoring/Reporting/Data Verification
- ✓ Water System Management/Operations
- ✓ Operator Compliance with State Requirements

### Basic Steps of a Sanitary Survey

Below are the basic steps to a sanitary survey.

The local health department reviews documents such as previous surveys, lab sampling history, public notices, complaints, enforcement correspondence, and the water well and pump record.

The LHD contacts the owner to explain the purpose of survey, schedule the survey, and inform the owner of any needed documents.

- ✓ Gather equipment

### Inspection

- ✓ Initial meeting with owner/operator (discuss the purpose, review report/documents)
- ✓ Evaluate the wellhead (including isolation distances)
- ✓ Evaluate the well components (pump, storage/pressure tank, piping, treatment)
- ✓ Evaluate the operation (sample plan, cross connections, etc.)
- ✓ Evaluate on-site records
- ✓ Summarize strengths and deficiencies to owner upon completion of the inspection.

### Follow-Up

- ✓ Write the report
- ✓ Distribute the report
- ✓ Final communication (questions owner/operator may have)

### **How do I find out more?**

Questions regarding sanitary surveys or other information for your supply should be directed to your local health department.