



Maine Center for
Disease Control and Prevention

An Office of the
Department of Health and Human Services

Public Water Systems and Setbacks from Underground Storage Tanks

Maine CDC Drinking Water Program • 11 SHS Augusta, ME 04330 • 287-2070 • www.medwp.com

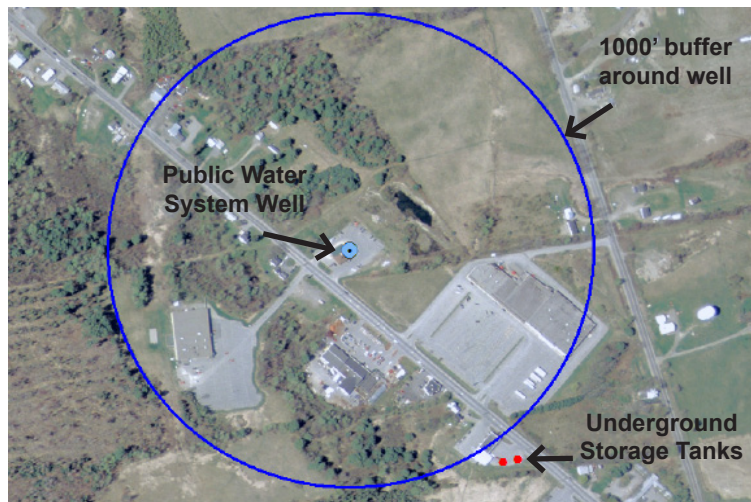
Underground storage tanks (UST) are potential sources of contamination for public drinking water supplies. Existing regulation restricts new USTs within 1,000 feet of a public water supply well.

The Drinking Water Program (DWP) will not approve a new well within 1,000 feet of a UST.

The DWP developed a waiver process to deal with situations where neighboring land uses make this setback difficult to achieve. This waiver works with the existing setback requirement of 300 feet from a subsurface disposal area (leach field). The goal is to help public water systems find a well location with the highest likelihood of providing safe drinking water to their customers. DWP public water system inspectors can assist public water systems in working through the policy to find a safe and secure source of water for their customers.



Significant time and money has been spent treating and replacing public water system wells that have been contaminated by leaks and spills of gasoline and oil. Studies by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection indicate that most wells contaminated by leaks from USTs are less than 1,000 feet from the tank. The setback regulation helps to ensure safe and clean drinking water for the people of Maine.



Existing Public Water Systems Adding Replacement Wells

Existing public water systems that need a replacement well must select a location for well construction on their property that will provide safe drinking water. In such cases where there are nearby UTS, the system will need to monitor its water for oil products and take actions to provide safe water in the event of a leak and well contamination.

New & Expanding Public Water Systems

New and expanding public water systems on small lots in developed areas may face challenges in complying with this requirement. The system should consider adjacent properties for safe locations to install their well and negotiate agreements with the owners of those properties. If there are no practical options for finding a safe location, the DWP requires that the system install and operate treatment capable of removing oil products from the water and monitor treatment performance. In some cases, it may be possible for a geologist to work with the system to locate and construct a well that will provide clean water even in the event of an underground storage tank leak.

For more information, or for a copy of the Policy concerning well to UST setbacks, contact the Maine Drinking Water Program at 287-2070 or visit www.medwp.com.



Keep Your Drinking Water Safe:

✓ Protect Your Source

✓ Take Your Samples

✓ Maintain Your Treatment

✓ Inspect Your Pipes & Tanks