

FACT SHEET

Lance D. Gaebe, Commissioner

SEALING ABANDONED WATER WELLS

Abandoned wells have the potential to contaminate ground water aquifers. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides cost share funds for the practice of "Sealing Abandoned Water Wells". The purpose is to preserve the quality of the ground water resource, to protect public health, and to eliminate unsafe conditions.

The NRCS EQIP program allows 50% cost share to seal abandoned wells. The average maximum cost share per foot of well depth is variable and dependent on well pipe diameter. The cost share amounts for different well depths can be obtained by contacting your local NRCS office. The average total cost to seal an abandoned well usually runs between \$500 and \$600.

Lessees who receive a permit from the Department of Trust Lands to seal a well are required to seal the well in accordance with NRCS specifications. Up to 50% of the cost is eligible for a rent credit to a maximum of \$700. The remaining cost, less any cost share assistance from other sources, is the lessee's expense and will be depreciated in equal annual installments over a ten-year term with a maximum of \$700. For more information regarding this topic, contact Mike Humann at mhumann@nd.gov or call (701) 328-1917.

TRASH CLEAN-UP UPDATE

To improve the quality of school trust lands, the Department of Trust Lands requires the removal of all trash from school trust land. Prior to leasing a tract at the fall auction, the tract is inspected for special conditions, including trash dumps. These dumps need to be cleaned up to protect livestock and the public from injury.

Discarded fencing material is considered trash. If a lessee loses a lease and decides to take the fence, they must take the entire fence.

If there is any trash on tracts you lease, please remove it or you can expect to see an additional lease provision requiring trash clean-up in the advertisement the next time it is up for renewal. For more information regarding this topic, contact Jerry Saude at jsaude@nd.gov or call (701) 328-1919.

FEEDING GROUNDS PROHIBITED

A number of feedlots and spring feeding grounds are showing up on school lands. State school lands are leased for pasture and hayland purposes. Continuous feeding in the same general location destroys the native vegetation and can spawn noxious weed infestations. Such feeding is not authorized by the lease. For more information regarding this topic, contact Mike Humann at mhumann@nd.gov or call (701) 328-1917.

HAYLAND RENOVATION

Some lessees have hay acres specifically listed on their lease. If those acres are producing poorly, lessees are encouraged to renovate these hayland acres. Renovation is accomplished by breaking up the stand and reseeding legumes and tame grass. Economic incentive is provided for the lessee to renovate the stand. One or more of the following incentives are used:

- ◆ Allowing one or more years of annual crops (at hayland rental rates).
- ◆ Providing rent credits.
- ◆ Depreciating out-of-pocket expenses with required reimbursement if the lease changes hand.

Prior to renovating a hayland stand, lessees must obtain a letter of permission from the Department of Trust Lands. The letter of permission would stipulate the method of economic incentive approved for the renovation project. For more information regarding this topic, contact Mike Humann at mhumann@nd.gov or call (701) 328-1917.

