

# Working Well Program Update



December 2012

Issue 6



## Clean Water. Well Protected.

For four years now the Working Well program has been delivering community-based workshops and providing well owners with the information and tools they need to properly care for their wells. The Working Well program is helping to ensure safe and secure groundwater supplies for all Albertans.

## 2011-2012 Program Report

The Working Well program includes four elements or tools for extending key messages to water well owners: hands-on workshops for well owners, interactive activities and exhibits, information resources, and community outreach. Workshops are the cornerstone of the program, and the primary tool for engaging well owners. The following is an overview of the information collected and results achieved from the workshops conducted between April 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012.

## Workshop Facts, Figures and Feedback

Evaluation is a key strategic priority of the Working Well program. Workshop statistics, as well as participant and host feedback is collected to:

- Track performance of and improve workshops to help achieve Working Well program outcomes.
- Maintain accountability and credibility through transparent reporting on program performance.
- Provide the rationale for continued program support by partners.

## Workshop Statistics

This section summarizes how many workshops were delivered, total number of participants and average workshop attendance.

| Summary Workshop Statistics        | Total | Average |
|------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Total workshops requested          | 27    |         |
| Total workshops completed          | 23    |         |
| Total number of participants       | 309   |         |
| Average attendance at workshops    |       | 27      |
| Total delivery staff participating | 81    |         |

## Workshop Feedback

Feedback is actively collected at every workshop from hosts and participants alike. Here are the highlights of information collected this past year:

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## WORKING WELL PARTNERS:

Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development  
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Alberta Water Well Drilling Association  
Alberta Health Services (Public Health Drinking Water Project)  
Leduc County

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**WORKING WELL**  
Clean water.  
Well protected.



## Participant Reaction

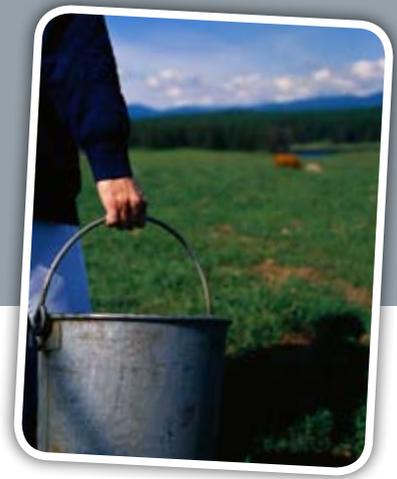
Overall, participants continue to be supportive of the workshops and appreciative of the information provided. Many participants valued the hands-on element of the draw your well exercise, the displays and well model, and the general knowledge they gained about how water wells work.

Overall, participants felt the workshops were thorough and informative, very well prepared, well presented and worth their time to attend.

Most participants felt that the workshop was worthwhile and provided valuable and useful take-home resources (i.e. the workshop binder and fact sheets). They also expressed appreciation for the presence of knowledgeable, experienced staff (including drillers and AHS staff), and recognized the effort that goes into preparing and delivering the workshops.

## Participant Learning

- 65% of participants indicated the workshop increased their understanding of how groundwater works either somewhat or a great deal.
- Slightly more than 63% of respondents felt their understanding of how their well works increased somewhat to a great deal.
- Almost 93% of respondents felt they had 'somewhat' or a 'great deal' better understanding of their drilling report after the workshop.
- Nearly 70% of participants indicated their understanding of common well problems increased a great deal.
- Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents said their understanding of well maintenance, monitoring and management increased a great deal.
- 99% of participants indicated the workshop provided information that will be helpful in maintaining and managing their water wells.



## Participant Action

- A significant majority (91%) indicated the Draw your Well Exercise helped them better understand their drilling report.
- Slightly more than one quarter of respondents (26%) indicated they had old, unused wells on their property. Of those who have old unused wells, 8% indicated that since taking the workshop, they have taken steps to have those old, unused wells plugged.
- Two thirds of participants (67%) said they have not tested their well water since attending the workshop.
- 74% indicated that they had looked at/inspected their well since the workshop.
- 83% of respondents keep records for their well. This is a significant increase over the number of respondents (55%) who, in the pre-workshop checkup survey indicated they did not keep records for their wells.
- Since the workshop, 84% of respondents have checked to ensure their wells are at least the minimum setback distances.
- Slightly more than half (51%) of respondents have shock chlorinated their wells since the workshops. Of those who have not shock chlorinated their wells, 51% indicated they planned on doing so since attending the workshop.
- 100% of participants surveyed indicated they would recommend the workshop to others.
- 82% of participants have shared what they learned at the workshop with others.



## Visit the Working Well Website

The program offers many information resources available free of charge for people interested in learning and promoting how to protect and maintain water wells.

Find the information and resources you need at:

<http://esrd.alberta.ca/WorkingWell>



### Workshop Hosts

Workshop hosts play a very important role by helping to bring the workshops to their communities. Hosts, which include Counties, Municipal Districts and not-for-profit community and agri-environmental organizations, arrange for venues, advertise and promote workshops, and take registrations.

In general, hosts continue to be very supportive and appreciative of the information the program provides and the ability to bring these workshops to their local communities. For the most part, hosts maintain the workshop is pretty good the way it is.

Hosts have also indicated there may be value in including hands-on demonstrations of shock chlorination and/or delivering similar workshops on the topic of septic systems and/or private sewage systems.

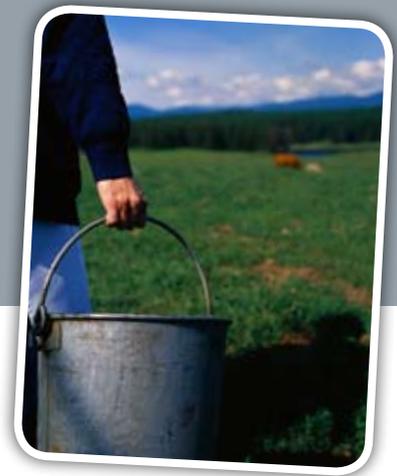
### Delivery Staff

Workshop delivery staff are those staff from Working Well partnering government and non-government organizations including:

- Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Science and Technology Branch)
- Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
- Alberta Health Services
- Licensed Water Well Contractors (Alberta Water Well Drilling Association)

Their participation is critical to the continued success of the workshops and the Working Well Program.

Delivery staff provide help with pre-workshop preparation and organization, they deliver one or more sections of the presentation, and they assist and answer workshop participants' questions.



### Interested in Attending a Workshop?

A workshop is coming to a community near you. Visit <http://esrd.alberta.ca/WorkingWell> for information on upcoming workshops.

Pre-registration is required for all workshops. If you are interested in attending a workshop, please pre-register by calling the workshop host.

### New Working Well Resource

After many months of hard work, the interactive, online version of the 'Draw Your Well Exercise' from the workshop is now available on the Working Well website.

This new, e-Learning module, titled "How Your Well Works", will be especially valuable to workshop participants who want to learn more about and/or practice the 'draw your well' activity they participated in at the workshops. This now gives them the ability to do this from the comfort of their own computers.

You can connect to the e-Learning module from the Working Well home page by clicking on the *Resources and Related Links* page.



### Did you Know?

Since the program started in 2008:

- more than 3,400 Albertans have attended a Working Well workshop.
- 1,062 follow-up surveys have been conducted with those workshop participants who requested a follow-up call.
- 120 workshops have been delivered in 132 communities across the province.