



USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference

[Tools for Educating Private Well Owners in Colorado](#)

New and long-time rural residents in Colorado are usually responsible for managing their own onsite water and wastewater treatment systems. Without some basic knowledge regarding these systems, the quality and/or quantity of their water supply can be comprised. We developed a package of educational materials to educate private well owners. The audience for these materials includes county extension educators and the well owners themselves. The water protection package elements for public consumption include: a comprehensive bulletin entitled Protecting Your Private Well; a series of water, well, and water quality fact sheets; two Recordkeeping Folders for private well and septic system records that were developed in cooperation with the N. Plains and Mountains Regional Water Quality Program; a website - the Water Quality Analysis Interpretation Tool that guides users in properly interpreting their laboratory water analyses; and a DVD from American Ground Water Trust on private wells. Materials produced to help county educators conduct programming include eight PowerPoint Presentations shows with notes and resource lists covering: Well water systems; Irrigating small acreages; Septic systems; Water treatment; Home water quality; Landscape and crop water quality; Water use and conservation; and Livestock and water quality protection. We also put together a Colorado-based educational curriculum to demonstrate ground water principles and protection using purchased ground water models. These models and curriculum have been distributed to county educators across the state. Training on this educational package is being offered to extension educators. Based upon web site hits and initial feedback from county educators and other users, our educational materials are impacting decisions made by private well owners. Additionally, upon learning of our educational package, the Colorado Water Well Contractors Association has proposed a partnership to help deliver the educational program to their clientele, the private well owner.

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