

# FAQs for Drinking Water Data Gathering and Interim Water Supplies in CV SALTS Early Action Plans

The following list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) answers common questions that have come up in development of Early Action Plans under CV SALTS. It is the hope that these FAQs will provide direction for development of adequate data gathering and interim water supply plans.

- **Data Gathering**

- **What Constitutes the Minimum Requirement for an Adequate Sampling Protocol?**

- Samples must be collected by personnel trained in proper sampling techniques, including proper chain of custody procedures.
- Samples must be analyzed by an ELAP accredited analytical laboratory using approved drinking water methodology.
- Samples must be electronically submitted to the State Water Boards for inclusion in the GeoTracker database in the required format via electronic data transfer (EDT).
- For further information on the GeoTracker database contact [geotracker@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:geotracker@waterboards.ca.gov) or call 1-866-480-1028

- **How Should an Adequate Combination of Physical Sampling Versus Modelled Water Quality Data Be Evaluated?**

- Under CV-SALTS, sampling plans must justify the sampling locations. To do that, Early Action Plans must consider:
  - the State Water Board's Domestic Well Water Quality Tool and associated Aquifer Risk maps ([https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/gama/online\\_tools.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/gama/online_tools.html));
  - the density of domestic well counts and estimated nitrate presence;
  - the boundaries of public water systems ([https://gis.data.ca.gov/datasets/fbba842bf134497c9d611ad506ec48cc\\_0](https://gis.data.ca.gov/datasets/fbba842bf134497c9d611ad506ec48cc_0))
- Sampling locations must also include areas with both existing and estimated nitrate risk.
- Outside public water system boundaries, water quality samples must be collected to ensure sufficient knowledge of the water quality of drinking water sources, so that replacement water solutions are available to impacted domestic well owners and people served by state small water systems. An appropriate approach should include use of both existing

data and newly collected data, and water quality modeling sufficient to ensure that all areas of a basin with domestic water users are adequately accounted for.

- **How should sampling location for domestic wells be identified?**
  - Data collected on domestic wells should be gathered in a format that is compatible with the State Water Board GeoTracker system. A latitude/longitude or another accurate location measurement is needed to enter the water well laboratory test results with the well location. No personal information associated with the well, including well owner name and residence address, will be made publicly available. For assistance with uploading well data into GeoTracker, contact the Help Desk at [geotracker@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:geotracker@waterboards.ca.gov) or call 1-866-480-1028.
  
- **What is the Potential for Cost Sharing When Sampling for Water Quality Analytes in Addition to Nitrate?**
  - There is potential for Early Action Plans to cost share with the State Water Board on sampling data. Early Action Plans that utilize State Water Board-funded technical assistance providers for sample collection that includes household well sampling may be eligible to share analysis and labor costs. The Division of Financial Assistance will work with management zones individually to explore the potential for cost sharing.
  - For more information about cost sharing opportunities, contact: Jeff Wetzel with the Division of Financial Assistance: [Jeff.Wetzel@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Jeff.Wetzel@waterboards.ca.gov).
  
- **Interim Water Supplies**
  - **How Should the Adequacy of Interim Water Supplies Be Determined?**
    - Selection of interim water supplies shall be done with community input guided by appropriate community engagement and planning. It is possible that a combination of the solutions may be necessary to address the needs of a given community.
    - Interim Water Supply Plans may be reviewed by the State Water Board's Division of Drinking Water staff to ensure that the interim water supply plan is protective of public health.
  
  - **What is a Management Zone's Responsibility for Providing Replacement Drinking Water?**

- If nitrate is present above the MCL, management zones will be responsible for the full costs of interim water supplies, regardless of other co-contaminants.
  - There may be opportunities for cost sharing when co-contaminants are present and where treatment for nitrate would still leave other contaminants in the drinking water above the associated MCL. Coordination of cost sharing opportunities should be done with the Division of Financial Assistance.
  - For more information on cost-sharing opportunities contact: Jeff Wetzel with the Division of Financial Assistance:  
[Jeff.Wetzel@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Jeff.Wetzel@waterboards.ca.gov)
- **How Should Individual Interim Drinking Water Options be Evaluated?**
  - **Consolidation:** Consolidation with nearby public water systems should be evaluated as the first alternative for any individual well within 500 feet of a community water system.
  - **Point of Entry (POE)/Point of Use (POU):**
    - POE/POU will require initial testing to determine breakthrough rates of nitrate and plans for operation and maintenance of the devices (including testing and filter replacement).
    - POE/POU devices must have appropriate NSF certification. For more information visit:  
[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/device/watertreatmentdevices.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/device/watertreatmentdevices.html)
    - POE/POU should not be utilized on any well with nitrate concentrations in excess of 20 mg/L (as nitrogen).
  - **Kiosks:**
    - Kiosks must be located at a public water system that is permitted by the State Water Board and complies with all standards.
    - The kiosk must be a certified vending machine. For more information on vending machine regulations visit:  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/Pages/FDBPrograms/FoodSafetyProgram/Water.aspx>
  - **Hauled, Bottled or Vended Water:**
    - Hauled water, bottled water and vended water is regulated by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) . All interim hauled water supplies must meet CDPH's requirements, including ensuring the use of certified water haulers.
    - More information can be found here:  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/Pages/FDBPrograms/FoodSafetyProgram/Water.aspx>
  - **Well Drilling:** Drilling a new well may not always be the best solution to eliminate nitrate contamination because new or extended wells may pull from sources that have different constituents in the water.

- It is advised that prior to drilling a well, samples are taken from the aquifer location and depth first to ensure the water will not have additional contaminants.
- Wells drilled deeper to eliminate nitrate contamination must sample for contaminants associated deeper aquifers, such as arsenic, uranium, and any others known to be present in the basin.
- New or extended wells in areas with existing groundwater contaminant levels in excess of their associated MCL are not considered adequate alternatives.