

CLASS IV GROUNDWATER

What is Class IV Groundwater?

Class IV Groundwater is groundwater that has been mapped and classified by the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) as non-potable. Groundwater may be non-potable due to its natural-chemical characteristics, or it may have been rendered non-potable by land use activities. Under Vermont regulations, "non-potable" means groundwater that is expected to exceed health standards for at least five years. While it is not suitable for drinking, Class IV Groundwater may be suitable for some agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses.

What is the Purpose of a Class IV Groundwater Designation?

Classifying groundwater as Class IV is a tool the State of Vermont uses to protect public health. The Class IV designation serves as a warning to present and future landowners and to governmental permitting agencies that groundwater beneath a Class IV Groundwater Area should not be used for potable water supplies.

What is a Class IV Groundwater Area?

A Class IV Groundwater Area is the land area beneath which groundwater is classified as Class IV. The boundaries of proposed Class IV Groundwater Areas are reviewed by the Vermont Groundwater Coordinating Committee (a multi-agency group). Affected landowners and other members of the public are provided an opportunity comment at a public meeting and 30-day comment period. The ANR Secretary has the ultimate authority to approve or deny a groundwater reclassification. If approved, the boundaries are incorporated into a data layer in the ANR's Geographic Information System. Maps of these areas are available upon request.

How are Areas of Class IV Groundwater Managed?

The State of Vermont's goals for managing areas of Class IV groundwater are to ensure health standards continue to be met at the Class IV boundary and to improve groundwater quality within the Class IV area over time. If a long-term groundwater monitoring and remediation plan has been established for an area of contaminated groundwater, a Class IV designation would not alter the plan.

What Activities are Prohibited in Class IV Groundwater Areas?

The State of Vermont will not issue permits for drinking water sources within a Class IV Groundwater Area. All new ANR-regulated activities proposed within these areas are required to show that the activity will not further degrade groundwater quality or cause the contamination to spread.

Will a Class IV Designation Affect my Property Values?

A Class IV Groundwater classification serves as a formal recognition and public notification of a condition that already exists. Property overlying non-potable groundwater may be of lesser value than property overlying potable groundwater. However, this would be the case regardless of the classification.

Where Can I Get More Information?

Statutory authority for groundwater classification can be found in 10 V.S.A., Chapter 48. Vermont's *Groundwater Protection Rule and Strategy* and *Procedures for Class IV Groundwater Reclassification* are also resources. These documents are available online at www.vermontdrinkingwater.org

If you have questions, please call the DWGWPD at 802-828-1525.