FACT SHEET

Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division

**CLASS IV GROUNDWATER**

**What is Class IV Groundwater?**

Class IV Groundwater is an area where groundwater has been classified and mapped by the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) as non-potable. Under Vermont regulations, "non-potable" means groundwater that is contaminated and expected to exceed enforcement standards for at least five years. Groundwater may have been rendered non-potable by land use activities or due to its natural chemical composition. In some cases, Class IV Groundwater may be suitable for some agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses and may only be considered for a potable water supply when the site-specific reclassification order conditions are met.

# What is the Purpose of a Class IV Groundwater Designation?

Classifying groundwater as Class IV is a tool the ANR uses to protect public health. Class IV designation provides warning to landowners, well drillers and to permitting agencies that groundwater beneath a Class IV Groundwater Area should not be used for potable water supplies (unless authorized by the Secretary).

# How is a Class IV Groundwater Area Created?

The boundaries of proposed Class IV Groundwater Areas are developed and reviewed under a remediation or corrective action plan based on documented contamination that exceed any Groundwater Enforcement Standards. These standards are based on public health risk and other factors for specific chemicals of concern. Affected landowners and members of the public are provided a 30-day comment period. The approval or denial of a reclassification proposal will be made by the Secretary of the ANR. If approved, the mapped area will be posted to the ANR Natural Resources Atlas. The Atlas is available online at:

<https://anr.vermont.gov/maps>

# How are Class IV Groundwater Areas Managed?

The ANR management goals for Class IV groundwater areas are to ensure groundwater enforcement standards are met at the Class IV boundary and to improve groundwater quality within the area over time under a remediation or corrective action plan.

# What Activities are Prohibited in Class IV Groundwater Areas?

Permits for drinking water sources will not be issued within a Class IV Groundwater Area, unless permitted by the Secretary on a site-specific basis. Applicable new ANR-permitted 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 uncontaminated 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 *Procedure for Class IV Groundwater Reclassification* are also resources. These documents are available online at: http://dec.vermont.gov/water/groundwater

If you have questions, please call the Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division at 802-828-1535 or Waste Management and Protection Division at 802-828-1138.

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