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**Sealing Wells Protects Aquifers;
NRD Seals 1,000th**

Lincoln (NE) March 4, 2019 – The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NRD) has helped landowners decommission a thousand wells. Tim and Dawn Powell, of Powell Properties and Management LLC, of Malcolm, recently had a licensed contractor decommission (fill and seal) an unused well on property the company owns in Malcolm. The NRD sent its 1,000th decommissioning reimbursement check to Powell Properties in February.

The NRD has been averaging 37 such cost-share payments to district landowners each year, since its Well Decommissioning Program began in October of 1990. Under the program, landowners hire a licensed contractor to complete the decommissioning, and the NRD reimburses landowners year-round. Because the Powell Properties well was within the designated community water system protection area for Malcolm, the 1,000th decommissioning reimbursement from the NRD was for 100% of the cost. The amount of reimbursements vary, depending on the location, depth and diameter of the well and what materials and procedures were necessary to decommission the well properly. Suzette Buls, of Waverly Plumbing and Well Co., which decommissioned the well, said the Powell Properties well was a routine decommissioning. The former domestic well was 4 inches in diameter and 41 feet deep.

Powell Properties and Management, LLC, according to Dawn Powell, recently bought the property in Malcolm, and then learned from the Village of Malcolm a well on the property would have to be decommissioned. If a well is abandoned without being properly decommissioned, any contaminants that get into the well go directly into the aquifer. Decommissioning also includes cutting well casings off below ground level, protecting people and animals from injuries. Powell said the company was impressed with the efficiency of the process.

Landowners with wells on their land they no longer intend to use should contact the NRD, in Lincoln, at 402-476-2729.

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