

Introduced by Senator Pavley

February 10, 2016

An act to add Sections 232 and 13801.5 to the Water Code, relating to water quality.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 995, as introduced, Pavley. Well standards.

Existing law requires the Department of Water Resources to investigate and survey conditions of damage to quality of underground waters that are, or may be, caused by improperly constructed, abandoned, or defective wells. Existing law requires the department to report to the appropriate California regional water quality control board its recommendations for minimum standards for well construction in any particular locality in which it deems regulation necessary to protection of quality of underground water.

This bill, on or before January 1, 2019, would require the department to update well standards for certain types of wells based on existing knowledge. This bill would require the department to establish an advisory panel to identify critical gaps in existing knowledge about the best practices for well construction, alteration, maintenance, and destruction for these wells. This bill would, on or before January 1, 2022, require the advisory panel to make recommendations for improvements in well regulations and the department to submit the recommendations to the State Water Resources Control Board.

Existing law requires the State Water Resources Control Board to adopt a model water well, cathodic protection well, and monitoring well drilling and abandonment ordinance implementing prescribed standards of the department.

This bill would require the state board to revise the model ordinance upon the receipt of the recommendations for improvements in well regulations from the department.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 232 is added to the Water Code, to read:
2 232. (a) On or before January 1, 2019, the department shall
3 update the well standards contained in Bulletin 74-81 and Bulletin
4 74-90 based on existing knowledge for the following types of
5 wells:

- 6 (1) Water wells.
- 7 (2) Monitoring wells.
- 8 (3) Cathodic protection wells.

9 (b) (1) The department shall establish an advisory panel to
10 identify critical gaps in existing knowledge about the best practices
11 for well construction, alteration, maintenance, and destruction for
12 the types of wells described in subdivision (a).

13 (2) If the advisory panel identifies knowledge gaps that need
14 further research, the department shall conduct scientific research
15 to address those needs.

16 (3) On or before January 1, 2022, the advisory panel shall make
17 recommendations for improvements in well regulations and the
18 department shall submit the recommendations to the board.

19 SEC. 2. Section 13801.5 is added to the Water Code, to read:
20 13801.5. Upon the receipt of recommendations for
21 improvements in well regulations from the department pursuant
22 to Section 232, the state board shall revise the model water well,
23 cathodic protection well, and monitoring well drilling and
24 abandonment ordinance adopted pursuant to Section 13801.