

# Air Force Real Property Agency

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## Groundwater Monitoring Wells

### WHAT ARE THEY?

A monitoring well is a well used to collect groundwater samples used to check groundwater flow and quality. Checking these wells regularly tracks the extent and concentration of groundwater contamination.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

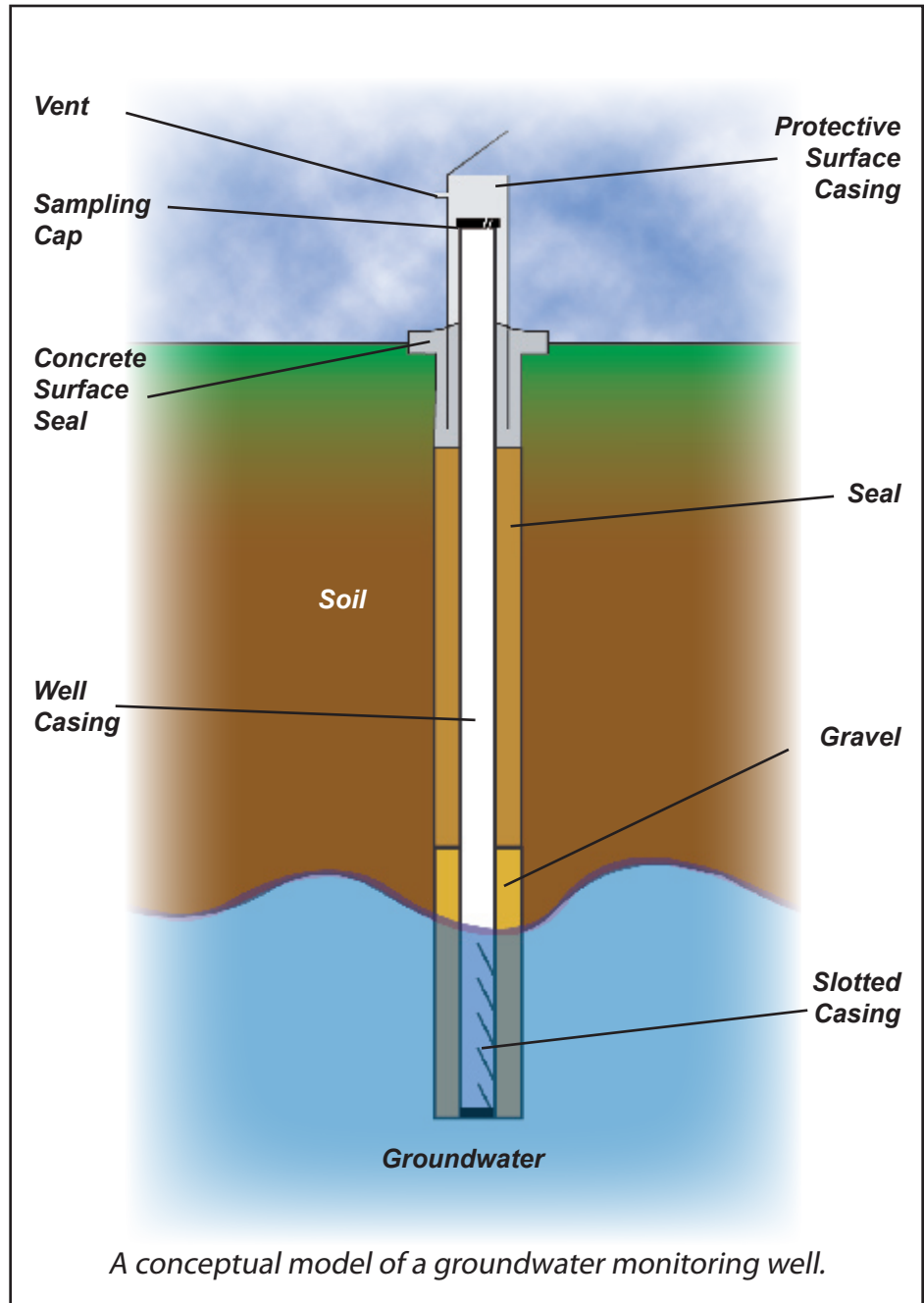
Groundwater monitoring wells collect groundwater through tiny slots at the bottom of the well. Environmental scientists use pumping equipment to take groundwater samples from these wells. Before taking their samples, scientists clear the wells of stagnant water containing sediment and other elements that can affect the samples. Water samples are then sent to independent and qualified laboratories for analysis. The lab results can then be used to help make cleanup decisions or sent to state or federal regulatory agencies for review.

### HOW ARE THEY INSTALLED?

Monitoring wells are built solely for the purpose of gathering groundwater samples and are smaller than regular water wells. They are installed by drilling a hole into the ground where the well is to be located. A well casing is inserted into the hole and sealed with gravel, sand and concrete. Vents in the sampling cap and the casing allow gases to escape into the air and allow water levels to respond to natural barometric pressure changes.

### WHY DO WE NEED THEM?

The Air Force relies on monitoring wells to tell them the extent and concentration of groundwater contamination and the effectiveness of cleanup systems installed at the site. These wells are inexpensive and provide quick and easy access to groundwater samples.



### ABOUT AFRPA

The Air Force Real Property Agency oversees the environmental cleanup activities at former Air Force bases throughout the United States. Our goal is to complete cleanup actions needed to protect human health and the environment and to transfer property for reuse. AFRPA also plays a key role in property reuse/privatization and serves as the Air Force liaison supporting interim property leases.

For more information, please call our public information line toll-free at 1-866-725-7617 or visit us at [www.safie.hq.af.mil/afropa](http://www.safie.hq.af.mil/afropa).