



August 22, 2025

## **NOTICE: SPS 385.60(4)(f) - Hydrograph Procedure Update**

The Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS) suspended the use of the Hydrograph Procedure under s. SPS 385.60(4)(f) on April 1, 2024, in response to erratic groundwater levels in the Wisconsin Central Sands Region (parts of Adams, Juneau, Portage, Waushara, and Wood counties) where the procedure had been utilized. Shortly thereafter, the DPS contracted with the Wisconsin State Geologist's Office at the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey (WGNHS) to create a report evaluating the observation wells utilized in the procedure and to develop maps demonstrating depth-to-water in parts of Adams, Juneau, Portage, Waushara, Wood, and Marquette counties. A copy of the report is available on the DPS website and here: [WGNHS Report](#)

On August 7<sup>th</sup>, the DPS received input from the POWTS Technical Advisory Committee and members of the public, on the continued use of the method. Considering this input, the DPS will continue the suspension of the Hydrograph Procedure until such time that adequate controls are created in Chapter SPS 385 to safely allow for the continued use of the method. Currently, there is no timeline for convening code development efforts.

Under Wis. Admin. Code Ch. SPS 385, the hydrograph procedure is one of several methods for certified soil testers to utilize when performing a site and soil evaluation. During this period, where the use of the hydrograph procedure is suspended, certified soil testers may continue to utilize all other methods of performing site and soil evaluations such as a soil morphological evaluation under SPS 385.20, interpretive determinations under SPS 385.60(2), and soil saturation determinations under SPS 385.60(3). No new plan approvals or sanitary permits may be issued utilizing the hydrograph procedure.

Previously issued plan approvals and sanitary permits which utilized the hydrograph procedure remain valid until the expiration date of the approval or permit. No plan approval extensions or sanitary permits which utilized the hydrograph procedure may be renewed until plans are revised utilizing a valid site and soil evaluation method allowed under Chapter SPS 385 at the time of review. This direction supersedes any previous guidance or direction from the DPS.

If you have questions regarding this notice, please contact your area Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Specialist: <https://dps.wi.gov/Documents/Programs/Maps/Wastewater.pdf>

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