

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

A public hearing will be held by the Middle Republican Natural Resources District to receive testimony on proposed changes to the Ground Water Management Area rules. The hearing will be at the Middle Republican NRD Office, at 208 Center Avenue, in Curtis Nebraska on May 13, 2025, at 9:00 AM. Written testimony may be sent to the Middle Republican Natural Resources District at PO Box 81, Curtis, Nebraska, 69025, jrussell@mrrnr.org and sowens@mrrnr.org; or, faxed to 308-367-4285. Written testimony will be accepted until the close of the hearing on May 13, 2025. The proposed changes will be considered at the regular board meeting following the hearing.

The authority for these rules and regulations is the authority granted in the Nebraska Ground Water Management and Protection Act. The changes to the Rules and Regulations for the Ground Water Management Area update the language relating to flow meters.

The geographic area is the entire Middle Republican Natural Resources District.

The purpose and geographic area of the Management Area have not changed.

The major changes are listed below:

CHAPTER 5 – FLOW METERS

Rule 5-1 FLOW METERS

- 5-1.1 Flow meters meeting accuracy specifications ~~established in Rule 5-1.2~~ shall be installed on all regulated wells except;
- 5-1.1.1 Before any inactive wells are placed in service, a flow meter shall be properly installed, the District shall be notified of the well's status change, and the status of the well in the well registration records of the Department of Natural Resources shall be updated to reflect its active status. No regulated well shall be operated without a properly installed and operational flow meter.
- ~~5-1.2 All meters shall be tested for accuracy using recognized industry testing methods and be certified by the manufacturer according to those standards. At any rate of flow within the normal flow limits, the meter, except as noted in Rule 5-1.1, shall register not less than ninety-eight (98) percent or more than one hundred two (102) percent of the water passing through the meter. All meters shall have a register or totalizer and shall read in U. S. gallons, acre-feet or acre-inches.~~
- 5-1.3 Installation – ~~The operator shall, on forms provided by the District, report the location, by legal description, and certify the proper installation of flow meters.~~ Flow meters ~~and FS-100~~ shall ~~will~~ be installed so that all water pumped by a regulated well passes through a meter. The District may, at a time of its own choosing, verify the location and proper installation of flow meters. The proper installation of a meter is such that it meets the manufacturer's specifications and/or more restrictive specifications developed by the District.
- ~~5-1.3.1 In no case may a meter be installed with less than five (5) unobstructed pipe diameters upstream of the meter or less than one (1) unobstructed pipe diameter downstream of the meter.~~
- ~~5-1.3.2 If the meter is installed downstream of a mainline check valve, there must be at least ten (10) pipe diameters upstream of the meter. If there are not at least ten (10) pipe diameters upstream of the meter, straightening vanes must be installed.~~
- 5-1.3.3 Meters must be located so as to prevent damage to the meter from excessive vibration.

- ~~5-1.3.4 Meters must be installed so that the removal of the meter for service or maintenance can be performed with the use of normal tools and does not require excessive or unusual removal of hardware or other appurtenances.~~
- 5-1.3.5 The District may establish a method by which the installed meter is tagged, sealed, marked or otherwise protected from tampering.
- 5-1.3.6 New installations or changes to the location of currently installed meters shall be permanent ~~and shall be mounted no higher than six feet above ground level.~~
- ~~5-1.3.7 Electronic meters or any meter with a digital readout must have an uninterruptible power supply. (10/03/2006)~~
- 5-1.3.8 All meters including previously installed meters must be located in compliance with District standards.
- 5-1.4 Service - It shall be the responsibility of the District to provide for service and maintenance of the flow meter according to manufacturer standards. Each flow meter shall be maintained ~~by a technician approved~~ by the District at least once every ~~three (3)~~ four (4) years. ~~The owner of the flow meter will be required to pay for the expense of maintaining the flow meter.~~ This service will be provided in the off-season and will not interfere with the normal operation of the meter or the well. The District may enter onto property to provide this service.
- ~~5-1.4.1 The owner of the flow meter may also be granted permission to obtain service from an authorized service provider. A list of authorized service dealers is available at the District office. The District office must be notified when the meter has been re-installed so that arrangements can be made to seal the meter and to record the reading. The District may enter onto property to provide this service.~~
- 5-1.5 The District may establish a spot check program to inspect the serviceability and verify use of a meter and FS-100. ~~The District may correct discrepancies noted at the time of the inspection. Discrepancies that require the repair of a meter may be performed by the District, at a cost to the well owner. Random independent full system checks may also be conducted on irrigation systems located within the District.~~
- ~~5-1.6 The District may require that meters that have been repaired two (2) out of the last five (5) years, or more frequently, for vibration damage to be moved to a location where vibration damage is minimal or modifications are made to the meter register that are more resistant to vibration damage.~~
- 5-1.7 All meters and FS-100 will be permanently mounted in the irrigation distribution system.
- 5-1.8 If the District questions the accuracy or validity of a meter reading, the landowner shall provide sufficient evidence to verify the reading on the meter. For electric wells, power records may serve this purpose. If any power source on a well or irrigation system within the Management Area is equipped with an hour meter, the District may require the landowner to provide appropriate readings from said hour meter. If requested records are not available, county average will be applied.
- 5-1.9 Improperly Installed Meters – The installation of meters that do not meet manufacturers' or District standards must be corrected. -Failure to provide for proper installation may result in the loss of allocation for the next crop year.
- 5-1.10 Inoperative Meters – Landowners will notify the District of an inoperative meter within one (1) working day from the time the defect is noted. The District will repair or temporarily replace the inoperative meter ~~meter and charge the well owner for the service~~. Failure to report inoperative meters may result in the loss of allocation for the next crop year.
- 5-1.11 Tampering with an installed flow meter – ~~Following a hearing before the Board, if~~ if it is found that tampering so as to affect the accuracy or true use of the meter has occurred, that may result in the loss of allocation for the next crop year or potentially decertification could occur, the District shall ~~decertify the acres served by that meter and permanently reduce the allocation based on that decertification.~~
- 5-1.12 Backflow Preventer Required – Prior to the installation of a new meter, the discharge piping from any pump and pumping requirement must be equipped with a backflow preventer. A backflow preventer must be placed before any other device or branches in the distribution piping. Check

valves must not be buried at the well for backflow prevention. The backflow preventer must be located within 1 foot of the discharge head and prior to other devices.

5-1.13 The District may require that meters that have been damaged due to neglect whether that be from livestock, equipment, or other operator neglect may be liable for the cost to replace it.

5-1.14 The landowner will notify the District before any changes or repairs can be done if it is going to involve removing the meter from the pipe and will need to be immediately reported to the District when the changes are done for inspection and resealing. Failure to provide notice may result in the loss of allocation in the next crop year.

This notice is only a general description of the contents of the proposed rules and regulations. The full text of these rules and regulations are available on the district website at mnrnd.org or may be obtained by contacting the Middle Republican NRD, PO Box 81, Curtis NE, 69025 or at 308-367-4281.

Publish for three consecutive weeks. The first publication shall be the week of April 21, 2025, the second publication the week of April 28, 2025, and the last publication shall be NO LATER THAN May 6, 2025.