

## Alaska Hydrologic Survey

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### ***What is the purpose of the Alaska Hydrologic Survey?***

The objective of the Alaska Hydrologic Survey (AHS) is to provide technical scientific hydrologic information to ensure proper and accurate management of the State's water resources for the benefit of the people of the State of Alaska. Hydrologic data are provided to state, federal, and municipal governments, as well as industry and the general public.

### ***What statutes and regulations govern the Alaska Hydrologic Survey?***

The statutory basis for the AHS existence and programs are under AS 41.08. Under those guidelines, AHS is specifically charged with "the systematic collection, recording, evaluation, and distribution of data on the quantity, location, and quality of water of the state in the ground, on the surface of the ground, or along the coasts, are in the public interest and necessary to the orderly domestic industrial development of the state."

### ***What specific functions are covered by Alaska Hydrologic Survey statutes and regulations?***

- Collect, record, evaluate, and distribute data on the quantity, quality and location of underground, surface, and coastal water of the state.
- Publish, or have published data on the waters of the state.
- Require the filing of the results and findings of surveys of water quality, quantity, and location.
- Require of water well drilling contractors, the filing of basic water and aquifer data, including but not limited to well location, estimated elevation, well drillers logs,

pumping tests and flow measurements and water quality determinations.

### ***Who are the users of hydrologic data, and for what purpose are these data used?***

- Federal, state, and local governments are users of hydrologic data to fulfill their mandated duties regarding management of resources, stimulating and permitting of local development, and protection of the health and welfare of all Alaskans. AHS supplies hydrologic data in assessment and preparation for such projects as development of rural hydroelectric installations, development of public/community water supplies, well head protection planning, and support for state's assertion of title to lands beneath navigable waters.
- Industrial entities, including mining, petroleum, logging, fishing, and others require an adequate supply of water for most industrial activities. Environmental protection legislation also requires documentation of water quality/quantity prior to permitting, and continued monitoring during production.
- Homeowners, and small contractors and developers often seek data on likely ground water conditions prior to purchase or construction. Development costs associated with finding adequate potable water supplies can be substantial. Data contained within AHS databases can be used to more accurately predict expected conditions, and save development costs.
- Individuals and local communities faced with unexpected hydrologic problems often first seek help from AHS hydrologists. Issues that arise in this

category include real or perceived threats to groundwater aquifers, threats to water quality, threats of erosion to river and coastal areas, and flooding potentials from high-water events.

***What types of hydrologic data are available in computerized databases through the Alaska Hydrologic Survey?***

- **WELTS** (Well Log Tracking System) contains water well drillers logs collected throughout the state. Currently there are approximately 25,000 entries into this system.
- **AKWUDS** (Alaska Water Use Data System) contains data on known water usage collected at locations throughout the state. This database has more than twenty years of data, at hundreds of sites, totaling thousands of station years of record.
- **ARID** (Alaska Rivers Information Database) is a card-catalog system of geomorphic data and location of additional information on rivers and streams throughout the state. Currently there are over 14,000 entries in this system.

***What other water resources database is available through the Department of Natural Resources?***

Water right records are updated and maintained in a state-wide computer system. This system contains data on customers, water right status, water source (well depth or water body name), type of water use, water quantity, period of water use, water right priority date, and legal description (meridian, township, range, section, quarter sections, latitude and longitude, subdivision name or survey number, tract, block, and lot). Currently, the water right database has over 23,000 records.

***What types of other services are available through the Alaska Hydrologic Survey?***

AHS hydrologists provide technical assistance to individuals, contractors, and government

agencies that have need for hydrologic data. Through cooperative agreements AHS will establish project level status investigation areas as warranted. The objective of these intensive limited area projects is to present scientific technical data designed to meet the specific requirements of the hydrologic problem encountered.

***Where can I get more information on the Alaska Hydrologic Survey Program, and access to the data contained within?***

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