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GROUNDWATER SAMPLING RULES

- New rules monitor groundwater near oil and gas development by providing:
 - Initial baseline sample to establish pre-drilling condition of groundwater near drilling; and
 - Follow-up sampling to aid in determining whether adverse impacts associated with drilling operations have occurred.
- Groundwater sampling rules augment existing COGCC rules that protect groundwater.
- Operators must sample up to four available water sources within 1/2 mile of drilling location.
 - If more than four sources, criteria determine which locations are to be selected, including proximity, type of water source, radial pattern, relative gradient, and aquifer depth.
- Operators must take one pre- and two post-drilling samples:
 - Pre-drilling sample within 12 months before commencing drilling;
 - First subsequent sample 6-12 months after completion of the well; and
 - Second subsequent sample 60-72 months after completion of the well.
- In the Greater Wattenberg Area:
 - Operators must sample from 1 available water source within the governmental quarter section.
 - An initial baseline and one subsequent sample are required.
 - Operators may rely on prior samples taken within past 60 months for baseline.
- All analytical results are provided to COGCC, posted to the COGCC's website, and provided to local governments upon request.
 - COGCC's sampling database is available to the public and provides access to thousands of water wells sampled in relation to oil and gas development.
- This rule will add significantly to an already robust set of data on water wells adjacent to oil and gas wells:
 - COGCC's groundwater sampling database already contains well over 6,000 such samples.
 - Sampling in SW and NE Colorado shows extremely rare instances of impacts from oil and gas development.
 - In Weld County – one of the most active oil and gas development areas in Colorado – COGCC's program will exist side by side with a county program that offers to test any well if the owner requests it.
- Colorado's groundwater sampling rules are the strongest in the country:
 - None of the three other states with water monitoring rules require post-drilling samples.
 - Provides assurance to water well owners.
 - Though very rare, instances of impact will be identified.