

Yard Hydrants

March 2026

A yard hydrant is a piece of plumbing hardware that attaches to buried water supply pipe outside of a well. It can be turned on and off to provide water from a private water supply system. Yard hydrants are typically used to irrigate lawns and gardens, provide water to wash cars or on farms to provide water for livestock.

When a yard hydrant is located between the well and the main water supply shutoff valve or pressure tank (upstream of the pressure tank), it is regulated by the DNR and a licensed pump installer may install, repair or evaluate it for compliance with Ch. NR 812, Wis. Adm. Code. In addition, the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) designates yard hydrants that drain to soil as not compliant with plumbing code. If a yard hydrant is installed downstream of the pressure tank or building shutoff valve, it must be serviced or evaluated by a licensed plumber. For more information about the DSPS approach to regulating yard hydrants, see the [DSPS brochure](#).

Important Facts About Hydrants

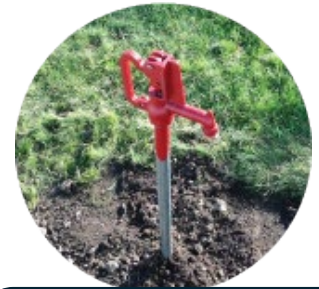
- **Cannot Be Located On Or In A Well**
- **Must Meet DSPS Plumbing Code SPS 382 And 384 Requirements** - Hydrants draining internally to a subsurface chamber are compliant, but those that drain to soil are not. The drain valve is buried so it cannot be visually inspected. Unless the manufacturer and model number are visible on the hydrant, and you have manufacturer's information that specifies what type of drain valve is used for that specific hydrant, the compliance of the hydrant cannot be determined.
- **For Threaded Spouts** - Hydrant spouts that are threaded to accept a garden hose need an approved vacuum breaker installed. As stated in the yard hydrant DSPS guidance brochure, it is recommended that the vacuum breaker comply with American Society of Sanitary Engineers ASSE 1011 or ASSE 1052. These standards can be found stamped on the vacuum breaker.
- **For Unthreaded Spouts** - Hydrant spouts that are threaded to accept a garden hose need an approved vacuum breaker.

Please Note:

If a hydrant is leaking at the spout, it is likely to be leaking below ground at the drain valve as well. Underground valve leaks may cause contaminated water to be drawn into the plumbing system by the hydrant when it is turned on. The DNR recommends repair or replacement of leaking yard hydrants to eliminate this potential source of contamination of the water supply system.

This document is intended solely as guidance and does not contain any mandatory requirements except where requirements found in statute or administrative rule are referenced. Any regulatory decisions made by the DNR in any matter addressed by this guidance will be made by applying the governing statutes and administrative rules to the relevant facts.

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Is your Yard Hydrant location compliant?

Outside Faucet



NR 812.35 Compliance for Yard Hydrants

