

## 2024 Spring Water Levels

This spring the water levels were measured in the month of April. The map above shows the changes between Spring 2023 and Spring 2024. This map shows a large majority of the district with declines. Hydrogeologic Area 1 was down -2.14 feet on average. Some of the hardest hit towns were Davenport, Oak, and just east of Clay Center. Hydrogeologic Area 2 went down -1.30 feet. Some of the hardest hit areas were around Reynolds and Fairbury. In Hydrogeologic Area 1 with a drop of -2.14 feet, the weighted district average has dropped below the trigger level, which has led the Little Blue Natural Resources District (LBNRD) Board of Directors to impose an immediate stay, beginning May 14th, 2024, on the construction of all high-capacity irrigation wells and expansion of irrigated acres in Hydrogeologic Area 1. (See map of Stay Areas on next page.) Such a stay shall remain in effect indefinitely unless specific action of the Board dictates otherwise. Inactive wells, or wells that have no associated certified acres and are shown on LBNRD records as not having been in use for the previous three years may not be brought back into service. However, a variance can be requested to have an inactive well be considered as a replacement well.

Exemptions for replacement wells include wells that pertain to human health, safety and welfare, or range livestock, or injection wells, including heat pump installations and groundwater remediation systems.

Irrigation projects for which the owner/operator have substantially completed may be allowed to be completed. Notification and documentation of substantial completion are required as proof of such completion.

During the time that a stay is in place, if the water source for certified irrigated acres is lost due to landownership changes, disputes, or other reasons, and no new acres will be irrigated, the affected landowner may apply for a permit to construct a well to serve the formerly certified acres, with no increase in acres.

In Hydrogeologic Area 2 with a drop of -1.30 feet, the weighted district average is sitting just 6 inches above the trigger level. Currently Hydrogeologic Area 2 has not gone into a stay, except for "Unit 8," which went into a stay on March 17th, 2006.

If the spring weighted average water levels in a water quantity hydrogeologic unit reaches or exceeds the groundwater quantity trigger level for that unit, and the water levels remain below the trigger level in the second consecutive spring measurement as well, mandatory groundwater allocations shall begin immediately for the then-current crop year for all high-capacity irrigation, municipal, industrial, recreational, and fish & wildlife users. If the second year's spring reading is above the groundwater quantity trigger level, the allocation

of water will not be imposed for that year's crop season. Livestock users shall be exempt from allocations.

The full text of the Groundwater Rules and Regulations, can be found on the next page or LBNRD website at [littlebluenrd.org](http://littlebluenrd.org). and at the Little Blue NRD office at 100 East 6th street, Davenport, Nebraska, 68335. (402) 364-2145.

