



K-STATE
Research and Extension

Agency Authority and Responsibilities for Water in Kansas

Water is a natural resource vital to life. It is essential to aquatic life support, human and livestock consumption, agriculture, and industry. Water is also important for recreation, energy production, and waste removal. Throughout history, the quality and quantity of water resources available for use have been a determining factor in where communities are located and the type of commerce and land use that can occur in a specific region. It is no wonder such an important resource is so intensely monitored and managed.

More than 20 separate national, state, and local governmental agencies address water or water-related issues in Kansas. The involvement of so many agencies is, in part, a reflection of the many ways in which people use this resource. A single water resource often has multiple designated uses. A reservoir, for example, may simultaneously provide flood control, energy production, wildlife habitat, a recreation resource, drinking water, and an irrigation water supply. Each use has quality and quantity issues relating to it. These use issues often affect each other, and also may be affected by yet other uses both up stream and downstream, such as navigation or waste removal.

When this tangled water-use web is combined with the jurisdictions of local, state, and federal agencies, the clarity of water responsibilities becomes even

more muddled. This publication represents and simplifies the complexity of the many agencies' roles and responsibilities relating to water.

This chart is not a comprehensive listing. The agencies and organizations listed here are represented because of their continuous responsibilities for water resources. Organizations with intermittent or situation-specific responsibilities were omitted for the sake of chart simplification. Examples include: Federal Emergency Management Agency (flood response) and Kansas Corporation Commission (water use in the production of gas and oil).

The data shown here is more thoroughly represented in *Programs Manual; State and Federal Water Programs — 2009*, compiled by the Kansas Water Office. A draft of the chart was provided to each listed state and federal agency for review and correction before final editing.

Revisions to this chart are anticipated. Please send written changes to Daniel Kahl, K-State Research and Extension, 130 Umberger Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506 or by email to: dankahl@ksu.edu. Please include your name and contact information.

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	Water well drilling or plugging	Nonpoint source Surface water quality	Groundwater	Water rights and use	Floodplains	Levees and dams	Drinking water systems	Water supply — storage	Drainage systems	Urban storm runoff	Wastewater	Recreation	Wetland and riparian area	Aquatic life support	Industry/power generation	Confined animal facilities	Agriculture/irrigation	
Federal Agencies	US Army Corps of Engineers 816-389-2000	Perm Reg			Info Mgmt Plan Reg	Own PlnA		Mgmt Own PlnA Plan	Info Plan			Mgmt Own Plan	Plan Reg	Mgmt Mon Plan	Mgmt			
	US Bureau of Reclamation 308-389-4622		Mon Res		Own Mon Rept	Own		Mgmt Plan	Fund Mgmt Mon Own Plan			Mgmt Own Plan	Fund Mgmt Plan	Mgmt Plan			Fund Info Mgmt Own Plan Res	
	USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service 785-823-4500		Fund Info Plan		Plan	Plan	Fund Info Plan PlnA Mon	Fund Info Plan PlnA Mon	Fund Info Plan	Info Plan	Info Plan	Fund Info Plan PlnA	Fund Info Mon Plan PlnA Reg	Plan		Fund Info Mon Plan PlnA	Info Fund Mon Plan PlnA	
	US Environmental Protection Agency 913-551-7003	Perm Plan	Info Fund Mgmt Perm PlnA Reg Std	Fund			Reg	Info Fund Plan Reg Std	Std		Info PlnA Reg Std	Info Mon Mgmt Rept Reg Std	Reg Std	Fund Info Mon Plan Reg Res Std	Info Reg Std		Perm Reg Std	Info Plan
	US Fish and Wildlife 785-539-3474		Mon Plan Res				Plan	Plan	Plan			Plan	Info Mon Own Plan Std	Info Mon Own Plan Std	Info Mon Plan Res	Plan	Plan	
	US Geological Survey 785-842-9909		Mon Res	Mon Res	Mon Res	Mon			Mon Res		Mon Res				Mon	Mon		Mon Res
State Agencies	KS Biological Survey 785-864-1500		Mon Res							Info			Mon Res	Info Mon Res				
	Department of Agriculture, Division of Water Resources -- State Water Engineer 785-296-3717	Perm			Perm Mgmt Mon PlnA Plan Reg Std	Mgmt PlnA Plan	Mgmt Mon PlnA Plan		Perm Mgmt PlnA Reg Std	Perm PlnA Reg		PlnA		Perm	Perm PlnA Rept	Perm Rept	Perm PlnA Rept	
	KS Department of Health and Environment, Division of Water 785-296-1535	Info Mgmt Mon Perm Reg Rept	Fund Info Mon Plan PlnA Reg Rept Res Std	Info Mon Reg Res Std			Fund Info Mon Perm Plan PlnA Reg Res		Mon	Mon	Fund Info Mon Perm Reg Rept Std	Mon Reg Res Std		Mon Reg Rept Res Std	Mon Perm Reg Res	Mon Perm Reg Res Std		

State Agencies	KS Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism 785-296-2281		Res		Own Plan	Fund Plan	Own Plan		Mgmt Plan		Plan		Own Fund Info Mgmt Plan Rept	Fund Info Mgmt Mon Plan	Reg PlnA Fund Info Mgmt Mon Std Plan Res Rept			
	KS Forest Service 785-532-3300		Info Fund Mgmt Plan			Info Fund Mgmt Plan								Info Fund Mgmt Plan				
	KS Geological Survey 785-864-3965	Info Res	Info Mon Res	Info Mon Rept Res	Info Res				Info Res					Res			Res	
	K-State Research and Extension 785-532-5820	Info Res	Info Res	Info Res	Info Res			Info		Info		Info Res		Info Res			Info Res	Info Res
	KS Water Office/KS Water Authority 785-296-3185	Info	Info Fund	Info	Info Mgmt Plan Rept	Info	Info Fund	Info	Info Fund Mgmt Plan	Info	Info	Info	Info Fund Mgmt Plan	Info	Info Mgmt Plan	Info Mgmt Plan	Info	Info
	KS Department of Agriculture, Division of Conservation 785-296-3600	Fund	Fund				Fund		Fund				Fund	Fund			Fund	Fund
Local Agencies	Drainage, Irrigation or Levee District*				Mgmt Own Plan Reg Rept	Mgmt Own Plan			Mgmt Own Plan					Mgmt			Mgmt Mon Own Plan Rept	
	Groundwater Management District*	Mgmt Plan Res		Info Mgmt Res	Info Mgmt Res Std											Mgmt Mon Plan	Mgmt Mon Plan Res	
	Health Dept., Local Sanitary Code*	Info Reg										Perm Info Mgmt PlnA Reg Rept	Mgmt				Info Reg	
	Local Water District or Wastewater Utility*	Mon Plan Rept	Mgmt Mon		Mgmt Own Plan			Mgmt Mon Own Plan Rept	Mgmt Own Plan		Mgmt Mon Own Plan Rept	Mgmt Mon Own Plan Rept						
	Conservation or Watershed District*	Info Fund	Info Fund			Info Plan	Info Mgmt Own Plan	Fund	Mgmt Plan		Info		Mgmt Own	Fund Mgmt Own Plan			Info Fund	Info Fund

*See local telephone directory †Riparian and floodplain only

Key to Designated Responsibilities:

Info = Information/Education – Develops or distributes information or educational materials.
Fund = Provides funding or financial assistance.
Mon = Monitoring – Monitors progress, status or quality.

Mgmt = Management – In charge of on-going status of resource.
Own = Ownership – Owns resource–infrastructure.
Perm = Permitting/Certification – Issues official authority for activity.
PlnA = Plan Approval – Official acceptance of plans or action.

Plan = Planning – Provides services for planning and implementation.
Reg = Regulation/Enforcement – Upholds established standards or laws.
Rept = Reporting – Data gathering and Reporting for government requirements.
Res = Research/Data Collection – Collects or interprets information through research.
Std = Standards – Establishes enforceable parameters or guidelines.

General Agency Authority Involving Water

Federal Agencies

- U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers — public works projects for navigation and flood control.
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation — public works projects for irrigation, drainage and flood control.
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)* — resource assessment and technical assistance for private lands and watersheds
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency — water quality protection and enforcement
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service — monitor and protect aquatic species and habitats
- U.S. Geological Survey — research, monitor and report quantity and quality of water

State Agencies

- Kansas Biological Survey — research and monitor of aquatic habitat and species
- Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Water Resource — water quantity and water use laws
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment — water quality protection, monitor and enforcement
- Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism — aquatic habitat and species, state lakes, and wetlands
- Kansas Forest Service — riparian and wetland zone habitat

Kansas Geological Survey — research, monitor and report quantity and quality of water

K-State Research and Extension — research and education programs

Kansas Water Office/Water Authority — state water plan, program coordination and marketing water

State Conservation Commission — fund for conservation, wetland, and watershed practices

Local Agencies

Conservation District* — encourages and administers soil and water conservation on private land

Drainage, Irrigation or Levee District — own, operate, and maintain infrastructures

Drinking Water, Stormwater, Wastewater District or Utility — own, operate, and maintain infrastructure

Groundwater Management Districts — plan and manage groundwater within district

Health or Environmental Office; (Sanitary Code) — administer local laws and regulations for health and environment protection. (Onsite wastewater systems)

Watershed District* — own, operate, and maintain watershed infrastructure

*NRCS partners with local conservation districts and watershed districts

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