

CASGEM to Monitoring Network Module Transition

Frequently Asked Questions



Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) regarding the transition from the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) Program to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Portal's Monitoring Network Module (MNM) and the submission of groundwater level measurements into the MNM. This document includes questions related to the CASGEM Program, the MNM, and the transition processes occurring before, during, and after Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) submission. For the time being, only basins or subbasins (basin) with a submitted GSP may transition from CASGEM into the MNM. However, basins with an approved Alternative and adjudicated areas (either entire basins or basin portions) will transition into the MNM at a later date.

Contact Information

For any additional questions, please reach out to the following contacts:

Monitoring Network Module: GSPSubmittal@water.ca.gov

CASGEM: Thomas.Lutterman@water.ca.gov

Northern Region: Glen.Gordon@water.ca.gov

North Central Region: Bill.Brewster@water.ca.gov

South Central Region: Charles.McKenzie@water.ca.gov

Southern Region: Abiodun.Aderonmu@water.ca.gov

CASGEM to SGMA MNM Transition Process Frequently Asked Questions

Section A. CASGEM Monitoring

1. What is the Groundwater Monitoring Law and how is it associated with CASGEM?
2. What is the CASGEM Online System (CASGEM OS)?
3. What are CASGEM Notifications and who are CASGEM Monitoring Entities?
4. What is the difference between a CASGEM and a Voluntary well?
5. How often are CASGEM Monitoring Entities required to collect and submit groundwater level measurements?

Section B. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Monitoring

6. What are the groundwater elevation monitoring requirements for a GSP?
7. Does GSP required groundwater elevation monitoring comply with the Groundwater Monitoring Law?
8. What is the SGMA Portal's Monitoring Network Module (MNM)?
9. When should GSAs upload their GSP's monitoring network information into the MNM?
10. How will the Department confirm seasonal data submission within the MNM?
11. Where can GSAs and other interested parties download MNM related materials?
12. Where can GSP-related monitoring data, submitted to the MNM, be downloaded?

Section C. CASGEM Well Migration

13. Can groundwater wells be migrated from the CASGEM OS into the MNM?
14. Following well migration, are GSAs required to submit any additional SGMA-specific well information?
15. Can a GSP include groundwater wells actively monitored by the Department and should these wells be migrated into the MNM?
16. Will the Department continue to collect groundwater level measurements from Department operated groundwater wells?
17. Will the Department continue to collect groundwater level measurements from non-Department operated groundwater wells?

Section D. CASGEM Notification Closure

18. Following GSP submission, are the underlying CASGEM Monitoring Entities required to update their Notification's monitoring plan and/or continue submitting groundwater level measurements?
19. What happens to CASGEM and Voluntary wells that are not migrated into the MNM following CASGEM Notification closure?
20. How and when will CASGEM Notifications be closed?

Section A. CASGEM Monitoring

1. What is the Groundwater Monitoring Law and how is it associated with CASGEM?

In 2009 Senate Bill X7 6 (SBX76) created the Groundwater Monitoring Law ([see Water Code § 10920 et seq.](#)) which required the establishment of a permanent, and locally managed, groundwater elevation monitoring network in all Bulletin 118 groundwater basins prior to January 1, 2012. Additionally, the law required that the resulting groundwater elevation data be made readily and widely available. In 2011, the Department developed the CASGEM Program to implement the law and provide local agencies the opportunity to submit groundwater level measurements. CASGEM is a voluntary program that local agencies choose to participate in. However, the law states that the Department may withhold grant eligibility and funding from local agencies located within basins which do not comply with the Groundwater Monitoring Law.

2. What is the CASGEM Online System (CASGEM OS)?

The CASGEM OS is a web-based system developed to receive and manage information for the CASGEM Program. Local agencies and entities apply to become CASGEM Monitoring Entities, prepare their Notification, and manage well and groundwater level data using the CASGEM OS. Additionally, the CASGEM OS provides the public access to groundwater well information and historical groundwater level measurements submitted to the Department.

3. What are CASGEM Notifications and who are CASGEM Monitoring Entities?

The Groundwater Monitoring Law ([see Water Code § 10927](#)) outlines the types of local entities that can assume responsibility for monitoring and reporting groundwater level measurements in all or part of a basin. These entities are required to notify the Department of their intent to participate in the CASGEM Program by submitting a monitoring plan that outlines the well locations and extent of their proposed monitoring network. If approved, the Department officially designates the entity as the CASGEM Monitoring Entity for the requested basin or basin portion. The Department subsequently posts the monitoring plan, Monitoring Entity information, basin or basin portion, and other information to the CASGEM OS. These documents and information are collectively defined as the Monitoring Entity's CASGEM Notification.

4. What is the difference between a CASGEM and a Voluntary well?

CASGEM wells are those listed in a CASGEM Notification. Monitoring Entities are required to collect and submit groundwater level measurements, for their CASGEM wells, to the CASGEM OS at least twice per year. Voluntary wells are all remaining wells in the CASGEM OS; these wells are not formally part of a CASGEM Notification. Local agencies may voluntarily submit groundwater level measurements to any Voluntary wells in the CASGEM OS.

CASGEM to SGMA Transition Process Frequently Asked Questions

5. How often are CASGEM Monitoring Entities required to collect and submit groundwater level measurements?

The Groundwater Monitoring Law requires that CASGEM Monitoring Entities provide sufficient information to demonstrate seasonal and long-term trends in groundwater elevations ([see Water Code §10933\(e\)\(2\)](#)). The Department has historically defined seasonal measurement periods as spring (January 1 to June 30) and fall (July 1 to December 31). Monitoring Entities must collect a minimum of one measurement per season, for all CASGEM wells listed in their CASGEM Notification. These measurements must be submitted to the CASGEM OS by July 1 for spring and January 1 for fall.

Section B. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Monitoring

6. What are the groundwater elevation monitoring requirements for a GSP?

The GSP Regulations state that a GSP's groundwater elevation monitoring network should include a sufficient density of monitoring wells, which collect measurements through depth-discrete perforated intervals, to characterize the groundwater table or potentiometric surface for each principal aquifer (23 CCR § 354.34(c)(1)(A)). Static groundwater elevation measurements must be collected from these wells, at least twice per year, to represent seasonal low and seasonal high groundwater conditions (23 CCR § 354.34(c)(1)(B)). The GSP Regulations define these conditions as:

Seasonal High – Refers to the highest annual static groundwater elevation that is typically measured in the spring and associated with stable aquifer conditions following a period of lowest annual groundwater demand (23 CCR § 351(ad)).

Seasonal Low – Refers to the lowest annual static groundwater elevation that is typically measured in the summer or fall and associated with a period of stable aquifer conditions following a period of highest annual groundwater demand (23 CCR § 351(ae)).

The GSP Regulations further state that GSAs may adjust the frequency of groundwater level measurement collection to provide an adequate level of detail about a basin's groundwater conditions (23 CCR § 354.38((e)). Additionally, many GSAs may use groundwater level measurement methods to collect measurements at hourly or shorter intervals. The Department recommends that GSAs collecting groundwater level measurements at these high-frequency intervals submit a maximum of one measurement per day.

In addition to the groundwater elevation monitoring requirements, the GSP Regulations require the establishment of Sustainable Management Criteria for select wells (23 CCR § 354.22 *et seq.*). The MNM requires the submission of Sustainable Management Criteria for these wells prior to the submission of groundwater level measurements. For more information about SGMA specific well information requirements, please see **Question 14**.

**CASGEM to SGMA Transition Process
Frequently Asked Questions**

7. Does GSP required groundwater elevation monitoring comply with the Groundwater Monitoring Law?

Yes, the Department has determined that the GSP Regulations minimum required groundwater elevation monitoring is equivalent to the monitoring required by the Groundwater Monitoring Law. Due to this equivalency, the Department will close CASGEM Notification(s) in basins with a submitted GSP(s) and the basin’s Groundwater Sustainability Agency(s) (GSA) will become responsible for compliance with the Groundwater Monitoring Law. For more information about the CASGEM Notification closure process, please see **Questions 18-20**.

8. What is the SGMA Portal’s Monitoring Network Module (MNM)?

The SGMA Portal’s [Monitoring Network Module](#) is the Department’s online reporting system for the electronic submission of GSP related monitoring data. Monitoring data for the chronic lowering of groundwater levels (groundwater levels) sustainability indicator includes groundwater well information and groundwater level measurements. The MNM provides GSAs the necessary tools to upload new groundwater wells, migrate existing wells from the CASGEM OS into the MNM, and to import groundwater level measurements.

9. When should GSAs upload their GSP’s monitoring network information into the MNM?

In general, GSAs should electronically submit their GSP’s monitoring network information to the MNM concurrently with submission of their GSP to the SGMA Portal’s GSP Reporting System. GSAs are required to upload any new groundwater wells and to migrate existing groundwater wells from the CASGEM OS into the MNM. If GSAs are migrating wells from the CASGEM OS, which are currently part of a CASGEM Notification, the Department recommends that GSAs coordinate with the CASGEM Notification’s Monitoring Entity to ensure all required CASGEM seasonal measurements are submitted prior to well migration. The Department developed a recommended order of operations to assist GSAs migrating wells from the CASGEM OS which should minimize any potential effect on Monitoring Entities. Figure 1 illustrates this recommended order of operations for basins submitting a GSP in January 2022.

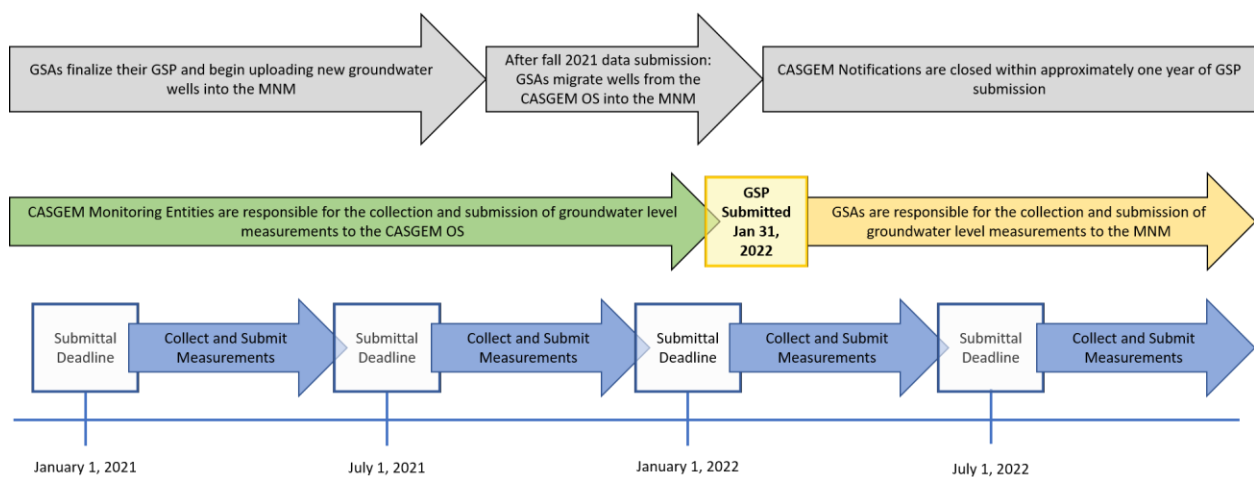


Figure 1. A recommended timeline and order of operations for the CASGEM to MNM Transition

CASGEM to SGMA Transition Process Frequently Asked Questions

The recommended timeline, for the operations required by GSAs and Monitoring Entities, are separated into three generalized periods:

1. Prior to CASGEM Monitoring Entities Submission of Fall 2021 Measurements – During this period CASGEM Monitoring Entities should submit spring 2021 and fall 2021 seasonal measurements to the CASGEM OS. GSAs may begin to upload any new groundwater wells into the MNM.

2. After Fall 2021 CASGEM Measurement Submission and before GSP Submission – GSAs should finish uploading new groundwater wells to the MNM and begin to migrate any existing groundwater wells from the CASGEM OS to the MNM.

3. Following GSP Submission – GSAs are now responsible for the collection and submission of seasonal groundwater level measurements. The Department will work with CASGEM Monitoring Entities to close affected Notifications.

10. How will the Department confirm seasonal data submission within the MNM?

The Department will send two automated emails per season, one prior to and one following a seasonal deadline, to either a basin's GSP Plan Manager (single GSP basins) or a Coordination Agreement's Point of Contact (multi-GSP basins). The primary purpose of the first email is to remind basins of an approaching seasonal deadline, and the second is to inform basins of missing data following a seasonal deadline (July 1 for spring and January 1 for fall). The first email will be sent approximately six weeks before a seasonal deadline (late May for spring and late November for fall). The email will contain an Excel spreadsheet attachment that includes a list of all groundwater wells associated with the basin's GSAs, and the number of groundwater level measurements submitted for the current season.

The second email is sent only to basins missing seasonal groundwater level measurements and will include an Excel spreadsheet listing only the groundwater wells that are missing seasonal data. To ensure that GSAs and other local agencies in the basin retain grant and loan eligibility, the Department recommends that GSAs submit the missing groundwater level measurements as soon as possible after receiving the second email.

11. Where can GSAs and other interested parties download MNM related materials?

Links to download MNM User Guides are provided below:

1. [Groundwater Sustainability Plan Reporting System and Monitoring Network Module](#)
2. [Batch Import Groundwater Elevation Data Process](#)
3. [Sustainable Management Criteria Data Submittal Process](#)

Links to download MNM batch import Excel spreadsheets are provided below:

1. [New Groundwater Wells](#)
2. [Groundwater Elevations](#)
3. [Sustainable Management Criteria](#)

**CASGEM to SGMA Transition Process
Frequently Asked Questions**

12. Where can GSP-related monitoring data, submitted to the MNM, be downloaded?

Groundwater elevation related monitoring data that has been submitted to the MNM can be viewed and downloaded from the following sources:

1. [Summary of Monitoring Sites](#)
2. [SGMA Data Viewer](#)
3. [CNRA Open Data](#)
4. [Annual Reports](#)
5. [CASGEM OS](#)
6. [Water Data Library](#)

Section C. CASGEM Well Migration

13. Can groundwater wells be migrated from the CASGEM OS into the MNM?

The MNM allows GSAs to migrate CASGEM and Voluntary wells, and all associated historical measurements from the CASGEM OS into the MNM. A detailed overview of the migration process is available in **Section 8.1.4** of the [Groundwater Sustainability Plan Reporting System and Monitoring Network Module User Manual](#). The Department recommends that GSAs follow the recommended timeline, see **Question 9**, and coordinate with CASGEM Monitoring Entities prior to migrating any CASGEM wells. The CASGEM Notification associated with migrated CASGEM wells will be closed following GSP submission. For more information about the CASGEM Notification closure process, please see **Questions 18 through 20**.

14. Following well migration, are GSAs required to submit any additional SGMA-specific well information?

Yes, the MNM includes additional well information data fields due to the GSP Regulation’s data and reporting standards. These new data fields, and whether the field is required or optional, is provided below:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| • Monitoring Network Type (SGMA or SGMA Representative) | Required |
| • Sustainability Indicator(s) (select between one and six indicators) | Required |
| • Principal Aquifer | Optional |
| • Sustainable Management Criteria | Conditional |

Sustainable Management Criteria is only required for SGMA Representative (Monitoring Network Type) wells that are monitoring the “groundwater levels” sustainability indicator. Sustainable Management Criteria includes the well’s interim milestones, measurable objective, and minimum threshold.

CASGEM to SGMA Transition Process Frequently Asked Questions

15. Can a GSP include groundwater wells actively monitored by the Department and should these wells be migrated into the MNM?

Yes, any wells identified in a GSP's monitoring network that are actively monitored by the Department should be migrated into the MNM. Any future groundwater level measurements collected at these wells by the Department will be submitted to the MNM.

16. Will the Department continue to collect groundwater level measurements from Department operated groundwater wells?

Yes, the Department will continue to collect groundwater level measurements from Department operated groundwater wells. These are generally continuous measurements collected from dedicated monitoring wells operated by the Department. However, in the future the Department may add or remove wells from its monitoring network, as needed, to ensure the quality of data collected and that each well is accessible and meets minimum standards for groundwater level measurements. As a result, GSA's that rely on Department collected groundwater level measurements, should maintain communication with their Region Office contact (see **Page 1**) throughout GSP implementation.

17. Will the Department continue to collect groundwater level measurements from non-Department operated groundwater wells?

Yes, the Department will continue to collect groundwater level measurements from non-Department operated groundwater wells. These are generally private domestic, irrigation, industrial, and other wells that the Department have historically used to collect semi-annual groundwater level measurements. Similar to the response in **Question 16**, in the future the Department may add or remove wells from its monitoring network, as needed, to ensure the quality of data collected and that each well is accessible and meets minimum standards for groundwater level measurements. However, the Department cannot guarantee the long-term monitoring of these wells. The Department has historically had to drop some of these wells from their monitoring network or have been unable to collect groundwater level measurements for an extended period, due to a variety of situations including, but not limited to, access agreements, wells being destroyed, and staff availability. As a result, GSA's that rely on Department collected groundwater level measurements, should maintain communication with their Region Office contact (see **Page 1**) throughout GSP implementation.

Section D. CASGEM Notification Closure

18. Following GSP submission, are the underlying CASGEM Monitoring Entities required to update their Notification's monitoring plan and/or continue submitting groundwater level measurements?

No, Monitoring Entities are not required to update their CASGEM Notification's monitoring plan or continue submitting groundwater level measurements to any remaining CASGEM wells for any seasons following GSP submission. To eliminate the duplicative submission of data, the Department will

CASGEM to SGMA Transition Process Frequently Asked Questions

coordinate with a basin's existing CASGEM Monitoring Entities to close their Notification(s) following GSP submission.

19. What happens to CASGEM and Voluntary wells that are not migrated into the MNM following CASGEM Notification closure?

CASGEM Notification closure converts all non-migrated CASGEM wells into Voluntary wells. All existing and newly converted Voluntary wells will remain associated with the Monitoring Entity and the Monitoring Entity will retain the ability to submit groundwater level measurements to these wells in the future via the CASGEM OS. For example, if a GSA chooses to migrate some, but not all, of a CASGEM Notification's CASGEM and Voluntary wells, the Monitoring Entity may, if desired, continue to submit groundwater level measurements to these wells voluntarily. The Department encourages Monitoring Entities to continue submitting groundwater level measurements voluntarily.

20. How and when will CASGEM Notifications be closed?

The Department will close CASGEM Notifications within approximately one year of GSP submission. The Department will contact Monitoring Entities prior to CASGEM Notification closure. Subsequently, the Department will send a letter to Monitoring Entities confirming closure. Monitoring Entities are not required to submit groundwater level measurements during the period between GSP submission and Notification closure but may continue to do so if they desire using the CASGEM OS.