

## Testimony in Support of HB 2424

**Presented by Tony Wedel**  
**Before the House Water Committee – January 13, 2026**

### **Chairman Minnix and Members of the Committee:**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2424 on behalf of the Kansas Groundwater Association (KGWA). My name is Tony Wedel, former KGWA President and General Manager of Hydro Resources, the largest water well drilling company in Kansas and among the largest in the nation.

### **Why HB 2424 Is Needed**

Kansas currently requires water well drillers to be licensed, but there is no licensing requirement for individuals or businesses that install water well pumps. This gap poses a serious risk to our groundwater resources. In 2023, KGWA surveyed its membership through the Docking Institute at Fort Hays State University. Results showed that **87% of members support a Pump Installer License**, while only 6% opposed. It is unusual for an industry to request additional regulation, but KGWA believes this measure is critical for public health and environmental protection.

### **Risks of Unregulated Pump Installation**

Unlicensed and untrained contractors often leave wells open, exposing them to animals, debris, and pollutants. Public water supply wells may be serviced with unsterilized tools, undermining initial disinfection standards.

#### **Example from Southwest Kansas:**

- **Image 1:** A right-angle gear drive (in blue) that turns the water pump below ground. The lubrication line connecting the tank to the shaft is marked with red arrows.
- **Image 2:** Contents of the lubrication tank—**15W-40 motor oil**. Trained professionals use mineral or biodegradable oils to prevent aquifer contamination.

These photos illustrate blatant pollution caused by unregulated practices. In another case, a neighbor poured used motor oil down an old well, unaware it was his drinking water source. These examples are not isolated; they occur statewide.

### **Impact on Kansans**

Groundwater provides drinking water for **85% of Kansas residents**. Approximately **1.2 million people rely on public water systems**. Without HB 2424, these individuals remain at risk of consuming contaminated water.

## **Broad Support for HB 2424**

Western Kansas Groundwater Management Districts #1 and #3, the Kansas Water Office, The Kansas Water Authority, the Johnson County Department of Health, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) strongly support this bill. With the full backing of KGWA and its membership, I respectfully urge you to pass HB 2424 to protect Kansas' most vital resource—our groundwater.

## **Closing Statement**

Passing HB 2424 is not just about regulation—it is about safeguarding public health and ensuring economic stability. Clean water is the foundation of life and commerce in Kansas. Contaminated groundwater can lead to costly remediation, health crises, and loss of trust in public water systems. By requiring pump installer licensing, we can help prevent pollution at its source, protect families from illness, and preserve the agricultural and industrial sectors that depend on reliable water. This bill is a proactive investment in Kansas' future—one that saves money, protects lives, and secures our most precious resource for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.

Tony Wedel

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Image #1

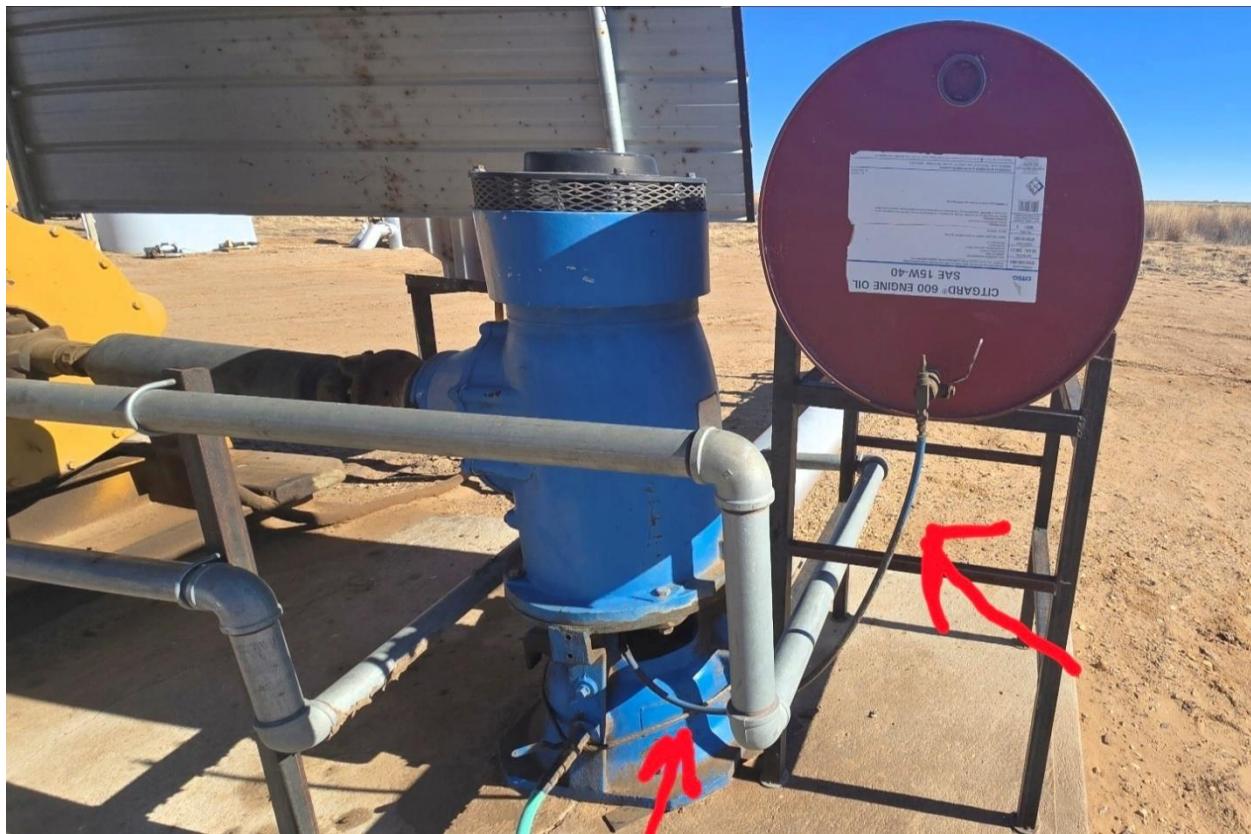


Image #2

