

# Certification of Irrigated Acres



## CERTIFICATION PROCESS

We mail certification forms to each land owner, or their representative, for annual review each spring. This helps us keep the most up-to-date information on file. The forms do not need to be returned unless there are changes or corrections. Because changes happen through-out the year, there is no deadline for submitting corrected forms.

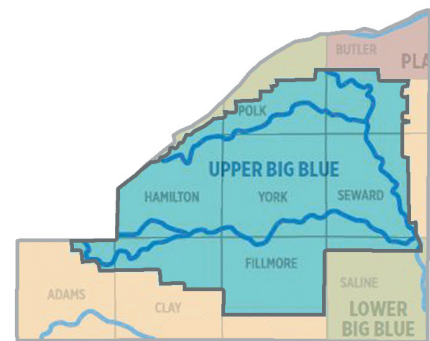
The following information is included with each report:

1. The property location, the number of acres being irrigated, and the method of irrigation.
2. The owner's name and address as shown by the county assessor.
3. The mailing address for the owner, or their representative (if it is something other than the name and address shown by the assessor). This is the address we will use to mail the certification forms and whom we will contact with questions.
4. The operator(s) for each parcel of land. The primary operator, with few exceptions, will be asked to report the use from any wells on this property.
5. A listing of wells located on the property and/or used to irrigate all or a portion of the property. It also includes the well status and owner information on file with the state.

The owner name and address, and the number of irrigated acres, is based on information we receive from assessors. If you have a change to your number of irrigated acres, you must provide the NRD or the county assessor with a map from the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Your changes will remain "pending" until the county assessor confirms the change. **Please note, the FSA does NOT provide the map to the NRD or the assessor's office. You are responsible for providing that information.**



*The Upper Big Blue NRD is the most heavily irrigated district in the state, with more than 1.2 million irrigated acres. Managing our water resources well is essential to the continued success of producers in our district.*



**Upper Big Blue  
Natural Resources District**  
319 E 25th ST  
York, NE 68467  
(402)362-6601  
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Well ownership and status is maintained at the state level. The certification forms that we mail you annually give you directions for updating your records. If you need assistance preparing the forms, please contact NRD Water Data Specialist Miranda Coffey at [mcoffey@upperbigblue.org](mailto:mcoffey@upperbigblue.org) or call (402) 362-6601.

## WHY DO WE CERTIFY ACRES?

In 1990, the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District Board of Directors set a goal of holding our district's water levels to the average level measured in 1978. The board set two "trigger" points to ensure they could meet that goal, which applies to all wells located within the district's Groundwater Management Area #1 – the management area includes almost the entire district, except a very small portion of Fillmore County and a portion of eastern Seward County.

The first trigger point was set at three feet above the 1978 average water levels of our district. This trigger point was reached in 2007, and initiated a reporting phase that requires land owners to certify the number of acres being irrigated and to make annual reports on the amount of water pumped from the wells. This phase will remain in effect even if water levels rise.

If the average water level in our district drops below the 1978 level, which is the second trigger point set by the board, we would move into an allocation phase. The water allocation each land owner receives will be based on how many certified acres are being irrigated by wells located within our district. Unless the property is in a fully appropriated area, you can continue to develop additional acres during the allocation phase.



*Miranda Coffey, NRD water data specialist, would be happy to help you with your acre certification questions. Contact her at [mcoffey@upperbigblue.org](mailto:mcoffey@upperbigblue.org) or call the office at (402) 362-6601.*



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