STATE OF MAINE
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STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, VETERANS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
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BRUCE FITZGERALD
DIRECTOR

October 24, 2016

Re: Farm Operators with Dry Wells, Small Businesses and Small Non-Profit Organizations

Farm operators, small businesses and small non-profit organizations in your municipality may call your office for direction on where to turn in the event of a dry well as a result of the drought conditions Maine is experiencing.

The U.S. Geological Survey reported that nearly the entire state is in some sort of hydrologic drought, with the southern two-thirds of the state showing surface water levels at the lowest ten percent of all data gathered over a period of 60-100 years. Groundwater levels for most of Maine are at the lowest 15 percent of all data gathered over the last 11-35 years.

The Secretary of Agriculture designated as primary natural disaster areas the counties of Androscoggin, Cumberland, Lincoln, Kennebec, Oxford, Sagadahoc and York. Franklin, Knox, Somerset and Waldo are named as contiguous disaster counties. This declaration makes farm operators eligible to be considered for assistance from the federal Farm Service Agency Disaster Assistance Program. A listing of Maine Farm Service Agency County Directors and their contact information is enclosed here or may be located at this web address: http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=me&agency=fsa.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced that federal Economic Injury Disaster Loans are available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and private nonprofit organizations in Androscoggin, Cumberland, Oxford, Sagadahoc and York counties as a result of the drought.

The Maine Emergency Management Agency website advises the following: (http://www.maine.gov/mema/prepare/prep_display.shtml?701117)

- Contact 2-1-1 to report your dry well. This will allow the state to see how widespread this problem is.
- Contact a well driller to discuss options. Options include well replacement, lowering an existing well pump deeper into the water table, or deepening the well itself. For informational guidance on licensed well drillers in Maine, see the Maine Well Driller's Commission.
- The following resources may be available during severe water shortages: Farm Service Agency's Disaster Assistance Program (USDA)
- The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans for drought effects.
- The Water Systems Council is a non-profit organization focused on private wells, and operates the wellcare Hotline, a free service that can answer questions on wells and well water.

USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY – MAINE	Don Todd, State Executive Director, (207) 990-9100 ext 2, fax: (855) 589-1056, don.todd@me.usda.gov		
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