



OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER
WATER RIGHTS DIVISION

Standard Procedure
WRAB



WATER RIGHTS ABSTRACT BUREAU SORT & COMBINE MANUAL



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INTRODUCTION

This manual describes how to prepare water right files for abstracting and imaging into the WATERS database. Preparation of water right files for abstracting is referred to as “sort and combine” (S/C).

To sort means to organize documents and maps associated with each transaction in a standardized order.

To combine a water right file means bringing together water right documents from different Office of the State Engineer (OSE) sources to create one master original copy of every water right transaction and associated correspondence in that file.

Once the S/C process is performed on a water right file, the file can then be entered into the WATERS database, imaged, and prepared for archiving.

SCOPE

Steps in this manual are performed for every Water Right Transaction, domestic (§72-12-1) and non-domestic, to be abstracted into the WATERS database and prepared for imaging.

DEFINITIONS

Correspondence	Supporting documentation to a barcoded event or a Water Right Transaction. Correspondence is placed behind these documents in chronological order. If the correspondence is OSE generated, use the date on the memo, letter or email. Use the OSE stamp date on any correspondence generated outside of the OSE (oldest date on the bottom). See Table 4 .
Event	Part of a transaction packet that satisfies an OSE condition of approval or is deemed important enough to be abstracted into the WATERS database separately from the Water Right Transaction. Events fall into two categories: barcoded and non-barcoded. See Table 3 .
Friable Paper	Thin or ripped paper or onion skin paper, historically used to create carbon copies.
OSE Original Document	A document with an original OSE stamp date, and/or writing or signatures with notary seals. These documents can also be field reports, memos, letters, or emails generated within the organization.
Oversized Map or Document	A map or document that is larger than legal size (8½” x 14”).
To/From Transaction	A Water Right Transaction that involves the transfer of ownership or water right from one file to another file. The file from which ownership or a water rights transfer is made is referred to as the “From-File” or the “Parent-File”. The file to which ownership or a water right transfer is made is referred to as the “To-File” or “Child-File”.

	File”. You may also have a To/From transaction within the same file that changes the Point of Diversion (POD), purpose and/or place of use.
Transaction Packet	A Water Right Transaction bound together by a prong, with its related correspondence, events, and other relevant information in date order, newest to oldest.
Water Right Transaction	An official OSE document, which creates, defines, or changes a water right; or is an action of the State Engineer. These documents can include court documents and subfile orders. Refer to Tables 1 and 2 for a list of all Water Right Transaction types.
Water Right File	One or more Water Right Transactions under the same file number which describes the use of surface or groundwater.

SORT AND COMBINE: GENERAL METHOD

All Water Right Transactions are sorted and combined following the same general principles.

If a document or circumstance is not addressed by these procedures, ask your trainer or senior staff for assistance.

- Research and retrieve all file sets, as defined by basin and file number. Sources of files may include, but are not limited to WRAB, Santa Fe office, District offices, images in WATERS, and archived documents.
- Have the following WRAB documents accessible:
 - [OVERSIZED MAP, TECH REPORT & PERMIT PLACEHOLDER](#)
 - [ELECTRONIC MEDIA PLACEHOLDER SHEET](#)
 - [INFORMATION ONLY](#)
- Identify each Water Right Transaction in the file, and all associated correspondence and barcoded event(s).
- S/C related correspondence behind the applicable Water Right Transaction in order of oldest (on bottom) to newest.
- Per Transaction Packet Preparation, create a transaction packet and place all individual transaction packets within the water right file in order of oldest (on bottom) to newest.

IMPORTANT NOTE: There are some documents such as extra copies, preliminary drafts, (including any loose and/or small pieces of paper or notes), *etc.*, that may be found in a water right file but that may not pertain to the file. Speak with a trainer or senior staff when in doubt as to whether a document should be retained.

TRANSACTION PACKET PREPARATION

General Document Preparation

Torn Documents

- Tape all torn edges, tears and holes to prevent damage during imaging.

Staples

- Remove all staples from documents to prevent damage during imaging. Tape staple holes if necessary.

Paper Smaller than 8½" x 11"

(may include loose or sticky/Post-it notes)

- Tape all edges of small paper pieces to an 8½" x 11" white sheet of paper.
- If a small paper piece has information on both sides, photocopy one side and tape it to the photocopy with the opposite side of the paper face-up to ensure that both sides get imaged.
- For better image appearance, tape small pieces of paper high on sheet.

Certified Mail Receipts and Return Receipts

- Photocopy the return (agency) address side of the certified mail return receipt using the color option.
- Tape all edges of the return receipt to the paper with the opposite (signature) side of the card face-up to ensure that both sides get imaged.
- Tape the certified mail receipt underneath the photocopied image.
- Use the OSE stamp date to file in date order.

Affidavits of Publication (AOP)

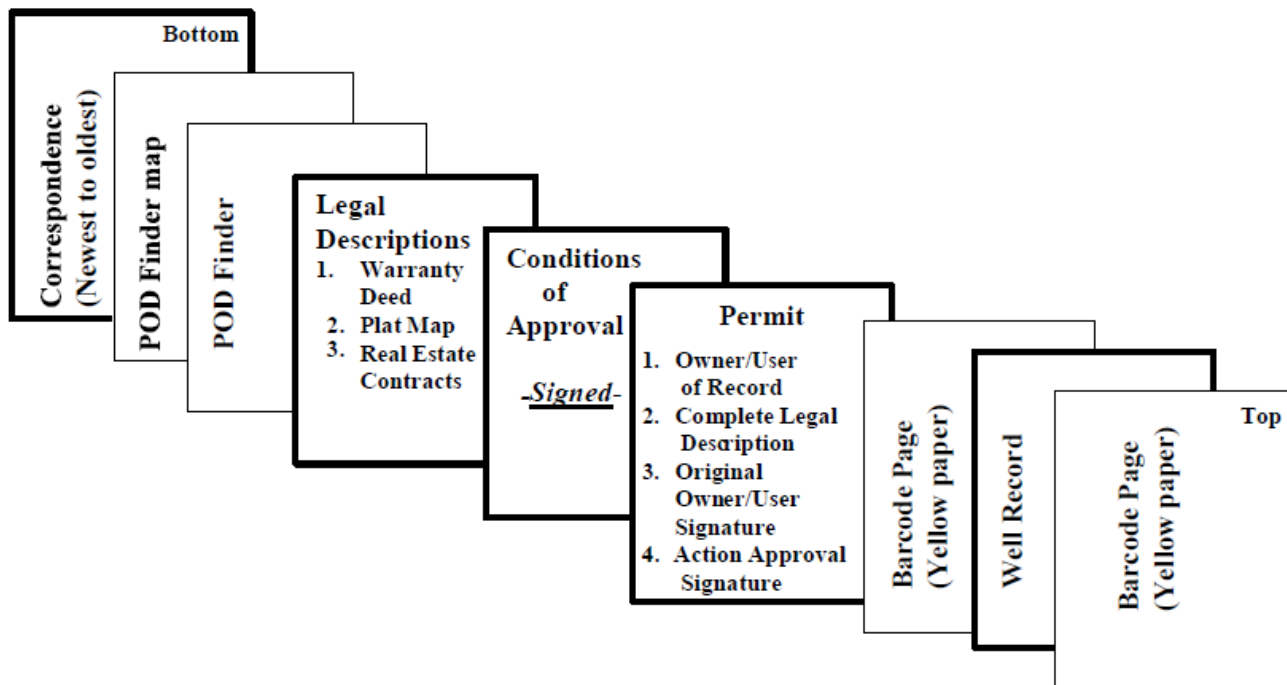
- Tape all edges of newspaper clipping securely to the affidavit page.
- If the newspaper clipping does not fit on the affidavit page, separate it from the page, and affix it to a letter or legal-size white sheet of paper.
- Cutting the newspaper clipping to fit the sheet of paper is permissible.

FINAL TRANSACTION PACKET PREPARATION AND BINDING

- Create final transaction packets using the best original documents.

- Transaction packets are physically created using a two-hole punch, and are bound together with a metal prong in the following order:
 - Barcoded Events (multiple events for one Water Right Transaction are placed in date order from oldest to newest, with the newest being on top). Example: Well Record is placed on top of Application.
 - Water Right Transaction and related correspondence.
- Order all transaction packets (and water right transfer packets, as applicable) for the water right file in date order, from oldest (on bottom) to newest. Non-domestic permits with file and approval dates are placed in chronological order. Domestic well permits are placed in chronological order (see image below).
- Once S/C is complete, the transactions are ready for abstracting into the WATERS database and imaging.

Domestic File Sorting Order



WATER RIGHT TRANSACTION TYPES

This section defines domestic and non-domestic transactions typically found in water right files. If a document does not appear to match any of the descriptions below, ask your trainer or senior staff.

Table 1. Domestic Transaction Types

Document Code	Transaction Description
§72-12-1	Domestic Well Permit Under NMSA 1978 §72-12-1, predecessor statutes: replacement and supplemental wells
COWNF	Change of Ownership Full
UWL	Update Well Location

Table 2. Non-Domestic Transaction Types

Document Code	Transaction Description	To- From Transaction
ADM	Administrative Permit (Not Published)	Y/N
ALTD	Application for Alternate POD	N
APPRO	Application to Appropriate	N
CLOSE	Closed File	N
CLW	Change Location of Well (GW)	Y
CLWPL	Change Location of Well & Place of Use (GW)	Y
CLWPP	Change Location Well & Place & Purpose of Use (GW)	Y
CLWPU	Change Location of Well & Purpose of Use (GW)	Y
COMB	App to Combine &/or Commingle Existing Right	Y
COWNF	Change of Ownership Full	N
COWNP	Change of Ownership Partial (split water right)	Y
CPD	Change Point of Diversion (Surface water [SW])	Y
CPDPL	Change POD & Place of Use (SW)	Y
CPDPP	Change POD & Place &/or Purpose of Use (SW)	Y
CPDPU	Change POD & Purpose of Use (SW)	Y
CPLA	Change Place of Use (GW)	Y
CPLAS	Change Place of Use (SW)	Y
CPPSW	Change Place & Purpose of Use (SW)	Y
CPPU	Change Place & Purpose of Use (GW)	Y
CPUR	Change Purpose of Use (GW)	Y
CPURS	Change Purpose of Use (SW)	Y
DCL	Declaration of a Water Right	N
DCLAD	Declaration (Accumulative)	N
DED	Dedication	Y
ENLRG	Application to Enlarge an Existing Right	N
EXPL	Permit To Explore	N
FCDAM	Flood Control Dam	N
GTSP	Change POD & Place & Purpose of Use (GW to SW)	Y
GWTW	Change POD (from GW to SW)	Y

HS	Hydrographic Survey	N
HSAD	Hydrographic Survey (Accumulative)	N
LIC	License	N
LICAD	License (Accumulative)	N
NOIAP	Notice of Intention to make Application for Permit *Also used for §72-12-25 Declaration of Basin: non-potable deep aquifers	N
OOJ	Offer of Judgment	N
OOJAD	Offer of Judgment (Accumulative)	N
ORDAD	Order of District Court (Accumulative)	N
ORDER	Order of District Court	N
OWMAN	Owner Management	Y
REPAR	Application To Repair Well	N
RFP	Return Flow Plan	N
STGPP	Change POD & Place & Purpose of Use (SW to GW)	Y
SUPPL	Application for Supplemental Well (GW)	N
SWG	Change POD (from SW to GW)	Y
UWL	Update Well Location	N
WTRMA	Water Master	N

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS: DOMESTIC AND NON-DOMESTIC SORTING

§72-12-1 Domestic Well Permits

- Application/Permit is on top.
- Conditions of Approval (COAs) are placed directly behind the permit. There are 2 exceptions: OSE issued orders or amended COA that change the original COA are placed directly behind the permit in front of the original COA.
- Legal Descriptions: Warranty deeds, plats, surveys or real estate contracts.
- POD Finder report (with or without map)

Change of Ownership – Full (COWNF)

- Change of Ownership form is placed on top.
- Warranty deeds (or other documentation that shows the chain-of-title for the property and water rights) are OSE required by NMSA 1978, [§72-1-2.1](#) and are considered an attachment to a change of ownership form.: Therefore, place them directly behind the change of ownership regardless of the warranty deed stamp date.

Change of Ownership – Partial (COWNP)

- Change of Ownership form is placed on top.
- Warranty deeds (or other documentation that shows the chain-of-title for the property and water rights) are OSE required by NMSA 1978, §[72-1-2.1](#) and are considered an attachment to a change of ownership form.: Therefore, place them directly behind the change of ownership regardless of the warranty deed stamp date.
- If the COWNP is split from a parent file with an outstanding permit requirement, such as Proof of Beneficial Use (PBU) or Proof of Completion of Well (PCW), the requirement will apply to the child file. However, each owner is responsible for filing their own Applications for Extensions of Time (ET's). Verify owner names and file number suffixes before adding such events to a transaction. See [P-020 Abstracting Common COWN Scenarios](#).

Declarations

- Declaration is on top.
- Attachments filed with the declaration, such as: warranty deeds, affidavits, and any other documents with the same OSE stamp date shall be filed behind the declaration.

Non-Domestic Applications/Permits

- The application/permit is on top.
- Conditions of Approval (COAs) are placed directly behind the application/permit. OSE-issued orders or amended COA are placed directly behind the permit in front of the original COA.
- Attachments with pertinent information filed with the application that have the same OSE stamp date are filed directly behind the application.

Licenses

- Preliminary draft licenses are licenses that are not signed. All draft licenses should be discarded.
- Licenses are separate transactions. A license may also include a Certificate(s) of Acceptance (CRT) certifying the POD. Separate CRT's may be associated with specific permits. See [page 13](#) for specific event instructions for CRT, if there is a CRT in the water right file.

Plugging Plan

- Plugging plans can be entered as an Administrative transaction or an event. Refer to [SP-022 Entering Well Plugging Plans of Operations & Plugging Records into WATERS](#).

Non-Standard Forms

- Some transaction types and events are not on standard forms and are in the form of letters or other formats. For these, the acceptance letter is the Water Right Transaction, with supporting documentation placed behind the letter. Determine the most appropriate [Water Right Document code](#) or discuss with a trainer or senior staff.

EVENT TYPES

Barcoded Events

The right-hand column of Table 3 indicates whether events are associated with non-domestic (ND) transaction or both domestic and non-domestic (D/ND) transaction types.

The S/C Water Right Transaction Code and Sorting Date are noted for abstracting purposes. Events are pronged on top of the associated Water Right Transaction in date order (oldest on bottom). Each of these will be separated by a yellow barcode sheet. If the document is OSE generated, use the date of that report. If the document was submitted from an external source use the earliest OSE stamp date.

Table 3. Barcoded Events			
S/C Water Right Transaction Code	Event Description	Sorting Date	ND or D/ND
CRT	Certificate of Construction	Earliest Stamp Date	ND
FLD	Folder Cover Image	Use date when abstracted	ND
HUX	Hearing Unit Exhibit	Date of Certificate of Service	ND
LGI	Log Well Image	Earliest Stamp Date	D/ND
LOG	Well Log Received	Earliest Stamp Date	D/ND
MAP	Map or Plat Received	- Earliest Stamp Date, or - Date of related correspondence	D/ND
PBU	Proof of Beneficial Use	Earliest Stamp Date	ND
PBI	Proof of Beneficial Use Image	Earliest Stamp Date	ND
PCW	Proof of Completion of Well/Works	Earliest Stamp Date	D/ND
PCI	Proof of Completion of Well/Works Image	Earliest Stamp Date	D/ND
TEC	Technical Report	- If OSE generated): date of report - If external (not generated by OSE): earliest stamp date.	D/ND

Non-Barcoded Events

Non-barcoded events, such as Applications for Extension of Time, are not separated from transaction packet correspondence. They are treated as correspondence and filed in chronological order (oldest on bottom).

CORRESPONDENCE TYPES

Correspondences are informational documents, not limited to those in Table 4 below, and are filed by date order (oldest on bottom) behind the appropriate transaction or event. Correspondence with no date is filed behind the oldest correspondence.

The last column indicates correspondence that is typically only associated with non-domestic (ND) transaction types and those that can be associated with both domestic and non-domestic (D/ND) transaction types.

Table 4. Correspondence Types		
Correspondence Type	Sorting Date	ND or ND
Affidavit of Publication	Earliest Stamp Date	ND
Amendments to Conditions of Approval	Directly behind permit before original conditions of approval.	D/ND
Emergency Authorization & Correspondence	OSE approval Date (File correspondence as attachment to Emergency Authorization)	ND
Extensions of Time (ET)	OSE Approval Date	D/ND
Field Reports	• If internal (OSE generated): date of report • If external (not generated by OSE): Earliest Stamp Date	D/ND
Incoming Letters	Earliest Stamp Date	D/ND
OSE Memos	Date of Memo	D/ND
OSE Outgoing Letters	Letter Date	D/ND
Notice for Publication	Issue Date	ND

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS: CORRESPONDENCE

Certificate of Construction (CRT)

- Generally, a standalone CRT will be associated with a CLW or SUPPL permit and should be sorted as a barcoded event to the transaction.
- If a CRT is included in a license (often titled “Certificate and License”), do not copy the document as a CRT event.

Electronic Media

(Electronic Tape, Diskette, VHS, DVD, CD, etc)

- If the electronic media can be viewed/verified and included in the paper file, print it out and include it with correspondence and place an “[Electronic Media Disposal Sheet](#)” in the appropriate date order within the correspondence to indicate the existence of the electronic media. Write the requested

information on the “Electronic Media Disposal Sheet” and dispose of the electronic media as directed by the project manager.

NOTE: Electronic media cannot be viewed on your desktop or any other networked device, as this violates agency security protocols. See manager on how to view media safely.

- If the electronic media **cannot be viewed/verified** and included in the paper file, place the electronic media in a large manila or yellow mailing envelope and secure the opening so the media cannot fall out. Using a two-hole punch, punch holes in the envelope taking care not to damage the electronic media. Prong the envelope at the back of the file behind an “[Information Only](#)” sheet. Put a Post-it note to flag for imaging staff to not image any further. For imaging purposes, place an “[Electronic Media Placeholder](#)” sheet in the appropriate date order within the correspondence to indicate the existence of the electronic media. If there is not a date place it at the very back of the correspondence. Write the requested information on the “Electronic Media Placeholder Sheet.

Email Correspondence

- File email correspondence by earliest date in email sequence.

Extensions of Time (ET)

ETs are filed to request more time to complete a POD or apply water to beneficial use. ETs are non-barcoded events and are S/C behind the Water Right Transaction within the correspondence. However, the following should be noted when sorting ETs:

- ETs are placed in chronological order as correspondence by OSE approval date.
- The name on an ET is not necessarily the name listed on a permit, as changes of ownership may occur. It is important to determine the permit with which the ET goes based on permitted information rather than the name on the ET.
- If a COWNP has been accepted for filing, resulting in outstanding requirements applicable to both parent and child files, separate ETs and related correspondence should be filed in the parent and child files. Each owner is responsible for filing their own ET's. Verify owner names and file information before adding them to the transaction. Refer to [P-020 Abstracting Common COWN Scenarios](#).

Extra Copies

- Since water right files are combined from multiple sources, often there are multiple originals and copies of the same document. Transaction packets are comprised of the best original copy of the Water Right Transaction, events, and correspondence. Discard extra originals and copies.
- In the case of having two copies of any document, ensure the second document is not an attachment to something else in the transaction packet. If it is, place it in order behind said document as an attachment.

- Extra mylar maps are returned to the district.

Friable Paper

- Abstractors should use discretion when preparing friable documents for imaging. All tears/holes and folds should be repaired. If the friable document cannot be repaired well, the abstractor will make photocopies of the friable documents. If the onion skin is in good condition the onion skin is sorted within the transaction packet.
- It is not necessary to photocopy onion skins in good condition.

Lone Documents

- If any document is left after finishing the S/C on a file, verify that it does go with your file. If you cannot identify it as an attachment to correspondence, and it does not have a date, file at the back of the transaction packet. If it does not appear to go with your file, discuss it with your trainer or senior staff. It is possible that the document is filed in the wrong file, in which case, it is important to locate the correct file.

Maps

- Maps are sorted like correspondence within a transaction. Use the OSE stamp date and file in chronological order. If it is an OSE generated map, use the date given by staff. These maps can also be attachments to memos or letters and stay with that correspondence regardless of date.
- GIS or POD finder maps submitted as an attachment to a permit/application are filed directly behind the permit/application or associated warranty deeds.
- If the maps are larger than 8½” x 14”: create a map event and add a Post-it note with the note “Large Map” for imaging staff.
- See [SP-019_Map & Multiple Technical Reports](#) for additional information.

Meter Records and Memos (Recommendation, Transmittal, Reports)

- Any attachment to a memo (such as a field check, technical information, well logs, copy of the nearest well permit, letters of delinquency, etc.) is placed directly behind the memo regardless of the date.
- Meter readings filed by the permittee(s) are not combined with water right transactions. Take meter readings to the district lead to return to the district.

Original Photos

- All staples are removed, and photos are taped to an 8½” x 11” (letter) sized piece of paper. If there is information at the backside of the photo, copy it and tape the photo to the page so that all the information is viewable. Photo protectors are also available in lieu of photocopying the back of the photo.
- File photos by date (be sure to determine if they are an attachment to a piece of correspondence, in which case, they are to be placed behind said correspondence). If no date is found, file behind the oldest correspondence in the transaction packet.

Oversized Documents

- Transaction packets must only contain letter and legal sized documents. If a transaction contains a document larger than 8½” x 14” (legal), enter a Map or Tech Report event or the document can be resized to letter or legal size. Oversized Map Place Holder can be used per abstractor discretion.
- If more than one transaction requires the copy of a map or permit use the Oversized Map, Tech report and Permit placeholder sheet. The imager will attach the needed images to each barcoded transaction and eliminates multiple copies being produced.

Protest Letters

- The protest memo is the OSE generated letter, which states that the protest letters are enclosed. The letters of protest should be placed in chronological order behind the OSE generated letter. The OSE letter with the attached protest is placed behind the corresponding application/permit in chronological order as correspondence. When in doubt, ask your trainer or senior staff.

Sensitive or Confidential Information

(e.g., social security numbers, bank account numbers, etc.)

- Be aware of documents such as death certificates, bank checks, or any other documentation with sensitive personal information. For such documents, blackout sensitive information with a black marker or use white-out, so it is not imaged and therefore, not accessible to the public on the web via NMWWRS. Discuss with your trainer or senior staff when in doubt.
- OSE generated documents marked with “Attorney-Client Privilege/Confidential” (or similar), including pre-hearing fact sheets, should not be imaged. Return to the District office.

Warranty Deeds

- Any barcodes found on Warranty deeds need to be marked out by using a pen, marker, or white-out. The barcodes create problems when they are run through imaging software.

Oversize Map, Tech Report & Permit Placeholder Sheets

- The Placeholder Sheet is used when documents need to be attached to multiple transactions. This sheet flags the imaging staff to let them know where the images need to be attached. This reduces the amount of photocopying. When in doubt ask your trainer or senior staff.

OVERSIZED MAP, TECH REPORT & PERMIT PLACEHOLDER

FOR HARDCOPY IN ARCHIVES SEE:

File No: _____

Transaction No: _____

Event No: _____

Number of Maps: _____

Archive Box No. _____

Abstractor notes:

ELECTRONIC MEDIA PLACEHOLDER SHEET

(Such as: Electronic Tape, Diskette, VHS, DVD, CD, etc.)

Title of Media: _____

Type of Media: _____

File Number: _____

Transaction Number _____

Date of Media: _____

Other Information: _____

OSE personnel use this sheet as a placeholder to mark the location of electronic media within a transaction packet. Electronic media for this transaction is accessible by contacting the OSE Water Rights Abstracting Bureau.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA DISPOSAL SHEET

(Such as: Electronic Tape, Diskette, VHS, DVD, CD, etc.)

Title of Media: _____

Type of Media: _____

File Number: _____

Transaction Number _____

Date of Media: _____

Other Information: _____

The electronic media has been verified, included as a paper copy, and is no longer being retained by the OSE.

INFORMATION ONLY

(DO NOT IMAGE)