

# **Analysis of Kansas Water Well Policies and Proposal of New Water Well Policies**

The background of the slide is a faded photograph of a modern, multi-story building, likely a school building at the University of Kansas. The building's facade is light-colored and features large blue letters spelling 'KU' and the text 'THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS' and 'School of Medicine School of Pharmacy Wichita'. Below this, the address '1010 North Kansas' is visible. In the foreground, there are several flagpoles with flags, including the American flag and a blue flag with the KU logo. The sky is overcast with grey clouds, and some green trees are visible on the right side of the image.

**KU** THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**KANSAS**  
School of Medicine  
School of Pharmacy  
Wichita  
1010 North Kansas

# Our Team

University of Kansas  
School of Medicine-  
Wichita



Public Health Law  
Center



University of  
Kansas Medical  
Center- Kansas City



# Lack of an Environmental Public Health System

Multiple data sources suggest our groundwater may include:

- Pesticides and Herbicides
- Industrial chemicals (solvents and metals)
- Harmful bacteria
- Naturally occurring contaminants (arsenic, nitrates)

yet Kansas does not have a system to detect these compounds

# Project Objectives

# Year 1, Objective 1

- **By June 30, 2016, we will have established an advisory group that includes new and existing stakeholders to address nonpublic water well quality.**
- **How we are assessing this:** List of members
- **Status:** Complete! Our next meeting is May 8<sup>th</sup> in Wichita 😊

# Year 1, Objective 2

- **By December 31, 2016, we will develop an inventory of existing non-public well water quality policies across Kansas and best practices across the country.**
- **How we are assessing this:** Analysis of Kansas county and city regulations; best practices around the country.
- **Status:** In progress; Mary Marrow, Public Health Law Center is finalizing this information; NEHA survey

# Year 2, Objective 1

- **By October 31, 2017, 90% of Well Water Project stakeholders will indicate they are more educated about the range of policy options available in dealing with nonpublic well water quality.**
- **How we are assessing this:** Interviews, surveys
- **Status:** Assessed participants at KEHA meeting and online

# Stakeholders



Advisory  
Group

Kansas  
Well  
Water  
Owners

Regional State  
Water Basin  
Planning  
Committees

Key  
Informants

League of Kansas  
Municipalities

Kansas Real  
Estate  
Commission

Kansas  
Association of  
Counties



# Year 2, Objective 2

- **By October 31, 2017, 90% of decision-makers engaged in the Well Water Project will indicate they feel better equipped to make decisions regarding viable and effective policy options for their local Kansas community to improve well water quality.**
- **How we are assessing this:** Survey; partner with Kansas League of Municipalities and Kansas Association of Counties to request and share information
- **Status:** In progress

# Year 2, Objective 3

- **By October 31, 2017, we will produce at least two earned media pieces about the public health implications of private well water quality in Kansas and policy options which could improve water quality**
- **How we are assessing this: Media hits**

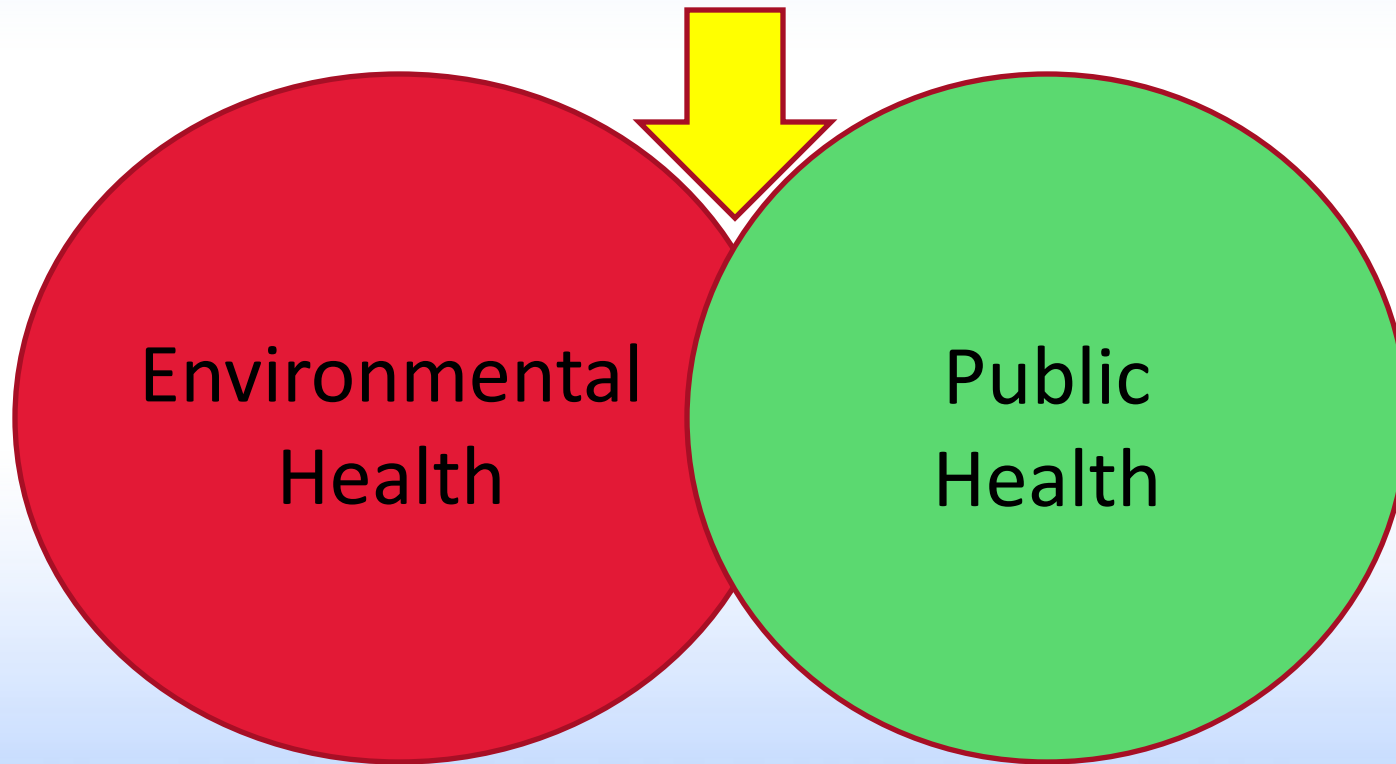
# Year 2, Objective 4

- **By October 31, 2017, a discussion of public health, private well water quality, and policy interventions will be included on the agendas of *at least* 50% of regional state water basin planning committee meetings and will be presented to the groundwater management district offices.**
- **How we are assessing this:** Agendas, this is my first RAC presentation.

# Year 2, Objective 5

- **By October 31, 2017, 90% of Water Well Project Advisory Group members will indicate they are more likely to reach out to their cross-sector partners to support policy change around public environmental health.**
- **How we are assessing this:** Interviews, surveys

# Explore Intersection



# Overview of Research Process and Anticipated Findings

# Year 1, Objective 2

- **By December 31, 2016, we will develop an inventory of existing private well water quality policies across Kansas and best practices across the country.**
- **How we are assessing this:** Kansas county and city sampling; best practices around the country.

# County Environmental/ Sanitary Code Review

- Reviewing all 105 Kansas county Sanitary Codes
- Sources of Information:
  - KDHE and County Websites
  - <http://www.kdheks.gov/nps/lepp/CountyCodes.html>



# City Codes

- Representative sampling of at least 20 Kansas cities:
  - Urban/rural
  - Small, medium, large population
  - Geographic diversity
- Sources of Information:
  - Legal Databases (Municode and Sterling Codifiers)
  - City Websites
  - In-person Research

# Federal/State Laws

- Federal Safe Drinking Water Act
- Kansas Groundwater Exploration and Protection Act and Implementing Regulations
- Other Kansas Statutes and Regulations

# Best Practices

- Review other promising practices from similar states and municipalities
- Contact with National and Regional Legal and Content Experts
- Assessment of Best Practices with Advisory Committee for Kansas applicability and feasibility

# Challenges

- Finding local policies may be difficult particularly in smaller cities and given that Kansas has a decentralized public environmental health system.
- How specific/general policies need to be?
- Policy proposals bring up questions re: cost and political feasibility.
- Project is diving into an area where technology, science, and law may not yet be ready to address our identified needs.

# Ideas?

- Suggestions?
- Feedback?