

The Water Table



GMD 4 LEMA: MYTH vs. FACT



Many questions have been asked about the GMD 4 LEMA that is in effect. There are also several “myths” circulating. We encourage you to contact our office or visit our website at www.gmd4.org to find answers to any questions or “myths” you have heard.

Myth #1: If I don’t use all of my LEMA allocation I will lose it.

FACT: Your LEMA allocation only regulates the maximum amount you can pump over five-years. Your certified water right is the maximum allowed in any one year. If you think you may need to pump more than your certified quantity in a given year you can enroll into a Multi-year Flex Account (MYFA) that would allow you to pump more than your authorized annual quantity over five-years. You must apply for a MYFA before December 31st, 2018. The maximum amount of your MYFA quantity cannot exceed your LEMA or five times your authorized quantity (whichever is less) and may be less depending on the historical pumping of that water right.

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Myth #2: The GMD 4 LEMA allows me to bank water.

FACT: You can bank water over the five-year period, but you cannot exceed the annual authorized certified quantity of your water right. For example: If your five-year LEMA quantity of 600 acre-feet and your water right is authorized 200 acre-feet per year then you can pump up to 200 acre-feet per year, but cannot exceed 600 acre-feet over the five-year period. So, if in the first three years you only pumped 50 acre-feet per year (total of 150 acre-feet) you now have 450 left of your LEMA quantity but cannot exceed 200 acre-feet in any one year.

“Thousands have lived without love, not one without water”

~W. H. Auden

Dan’s Field Notes

We have been fielding a few phone calls from producers who have pumped and just noticed their meter has not been working all year. The DWR can assume you have pumped your entire water right quantity if you cannot demonstrate how much has been pumped! For those in the LEMA this could equate to a couple of years allocation. Check your meters every two weeks and have a secondary way of recording how much water you have pumped so this does not happen to you.

Myth #3: The next GMD 4 LEMA will not have a carry-over quantity if I don’t use all of my LEMA quantity

FACT: The current board of directors cannot tell a future board of directors to implement another LEMA. However, the board of directors did include in their motion for the GMD 4 LEMA that any possible future LEMA could consider a maximum of a 10% carry-over. If the future board of directors chooses to develop another GMD 4 LEMA based on the advice from the GMD 4 LEMA Advisory Committee, then they could decide to include a specified carry-over quantity. This would be a decision made by the board of directors in place at that time.

Myth #4: My water right allows me to pump 24” per acre but my LEMA quantity only allows me to pump 18” per acre in any one year.

FACT: The LEMA quantity is over five-years, not annually. You are limited annually by your certified water right quantity. You can still pump 24” per acre in any one year if needed, but other years will have to be less to not exceed 18” per acre over five years.

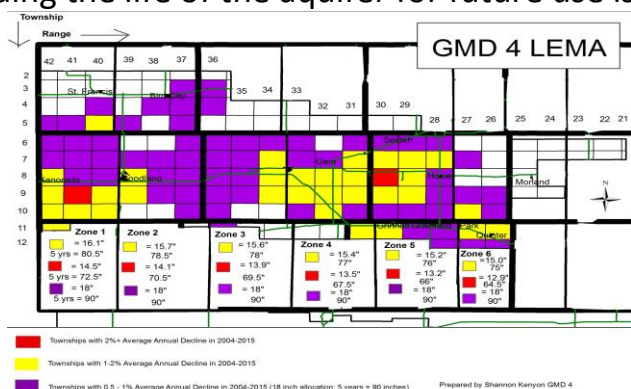
Myth #5: The GMD 4 LEMA and SD 6 LEMA will sustain the aquifer.

FACT: Although sustainability of the aquifer is ideal, no evidence suggests that the aquifer is sustained under the LEMAs. SD-6 still has a rate of decline, but the rate of decline has slowed and extended the life of the aquifer in that area, not sustained it. It is still too early to tell how the aquifer will respond to reduced pumping in the GMD 4 LEMA. At present, sustainability is not yet the goal of the LEMAs. Extending the life of the aquifer for future use is.



MULTI-YEAR FLEX ACCOUNTS (MYFA)

A few rules have changed regarding MYFAs. The Division of Water Resources (DWR) wants to sync the time period of the MYFA's with the GMD 4 LEMA time period. If you would like a little extra flexibility, the last day for you to enroll 2018 into a five-year MYFA is December 31st. After this date you will not be allowed to enroll into a MYFA until the GMD 4 LEMA has expired.



ANNUAL WATER LEVEL MEASUREMENTS

The Kansas Geological Survey (KGS) has released the results from their annual water level measurements. Every year in January the KGS measures approximately 1,400 wells throughout Kansas. On average, GMD 4 currently has a steady decline rate of 0.60 feet per year which equates to about a 1% decline when compared to the saturated thickness of the Ogallala Aquifer within GMD 4. Please keep in mind that these numbers are a district-wide average. There are places in GMD 4 with a decline rate well above 1% and some places within the district that have no declines at all. Please refer to the GMD 4 LEMA map found at www.gmd4.org to note the average annual decline by township. More information on the state-wide water level measurements can be found at www.kgs.edu.



NW KS GMD 4

1290 W 4th
PO Box 905
Colby, KS 67701
785-462-3915
Fax: 785-462-2693

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www.gmd4.org



Important Dates

**Monthly Board Meetings – First Thursday of every month @ 9 am.
(Except February & December)**

December 31st, 2018 – Last day to enroll in a MYFA.

February 13, 2019 – Annual Meeting in Hoxie

March 1, 2019 – Water Use Report Cards due and last day to file for a GMD 4 LEMA appeal.

Staff and Board of Directors

- Ray Luhman – Manager rluhman@gmd4.org
- Shannon Kenyon – Assistant Manager skenyon@gmd4.org
- Dan Simmering – Field Technician dee@gmd4.org
- Jody McCain – Administrative Assistant jmccain@gmd4.org

Brent Rogers – President	Karen Flanagin	Lynn Goossen
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NW KS GMD 4
1290 W 4th
PO Box 905
Colby, KS 67701

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