

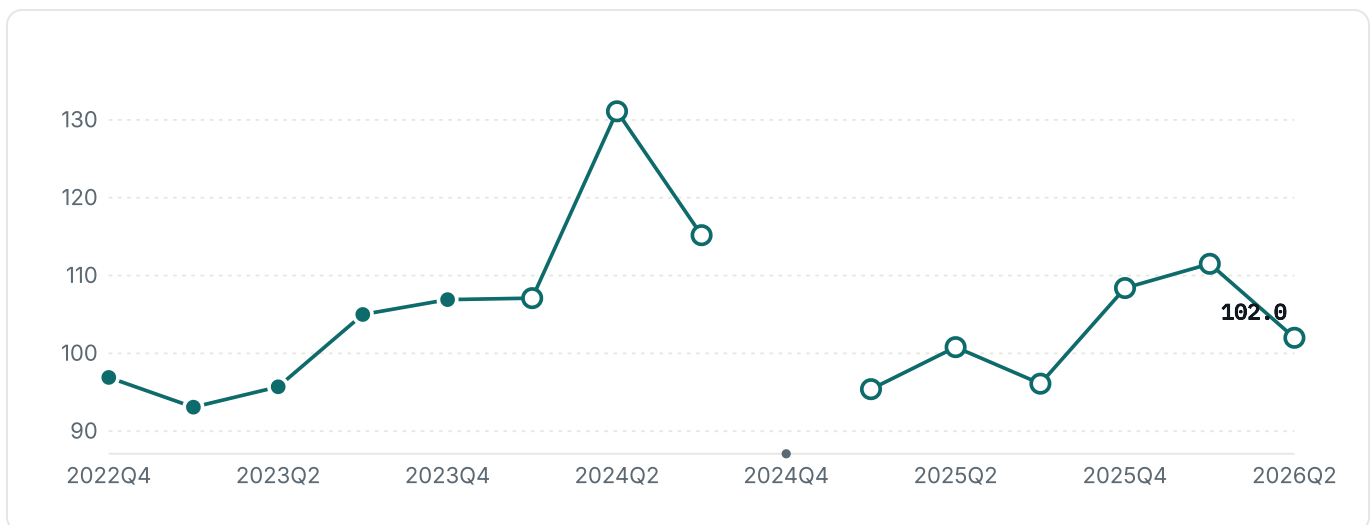
Plugging Cost Report, Q4 2026

What publicly funded well plugging has cost in the United States since late 2022, from 11,741 reported costs in 25 states.

Key findings

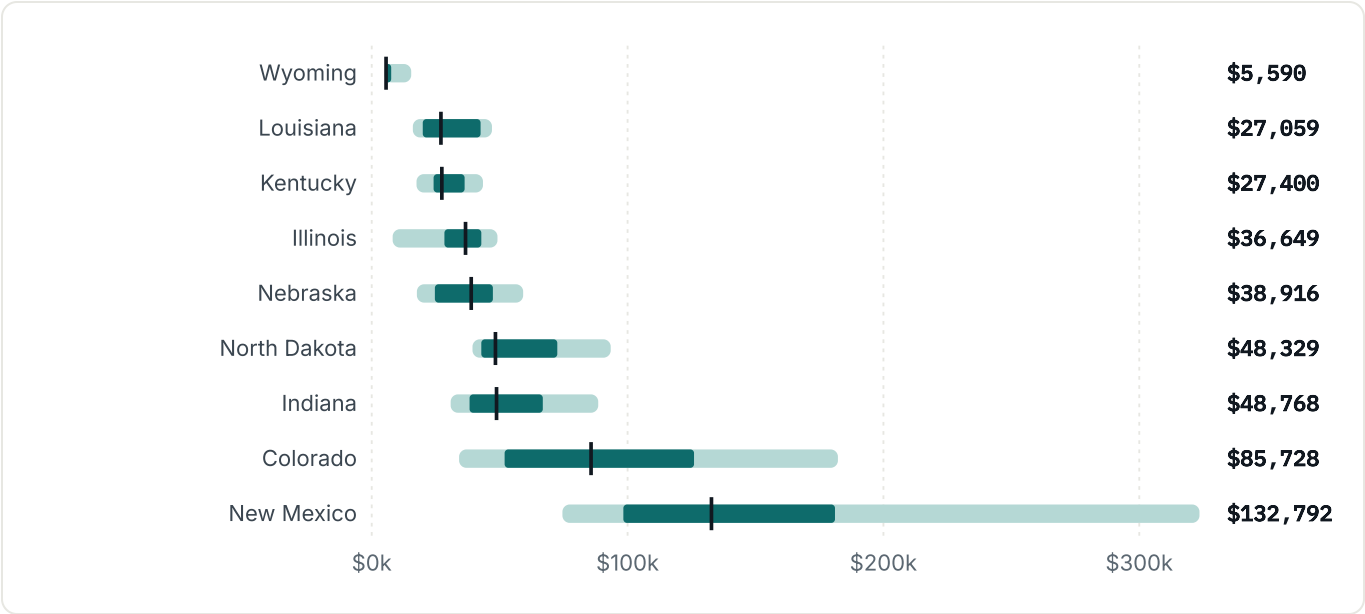
- The national Plugging Cost Index stood at **102.0** in 2026Q2 (2023 = 100, grade B). Annual values: 2022: 98.8, 2023: 100.0, 2024: 111.1, 2025: 103.5, 2026: 106.9. The annual index rose 11% from 2023 to 2024 and moved -7% from 2024 to 2025.
- **9 states** have a statewide estimate that passes grading. Median reported cost per well ranges from \$5,590 in Wyoming to \$132,792 in New Mexico.
- No single national cost per well is published. A national median missed held-out wells by 82%, because cost differs several-fold between states. Location explains more than well type.
- 16 states with cost records do not pass grading statewide, including some of the largest programs (Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, California). The usual reason is wide dispersion within the state or costs reported as contract averages.
- Records of new pluggings are thinning: 2022: 492, 2023: 6,428, 2024: 2,408, 2025: 1,313, 2026: 1,040 wells by year plugged.

National index



National Plugging Cost Index, 2023 = 100. Filled markers grade A, hollow grade B; blank quarters did not pass grading.

Statewide estimates



Light bar: 10th to 90th percentile. Dark bar: middle half. Tick: median.

STATE	MEDIAN PER WELL	TYPICAL RANGE (10TH-90TH PCT.)	GRADE	WELLS	HELD-OUT
Wyoming	\$5,590	\$5,051 – \$15,448	A	1,124	
Louisiana	\$27,059	\$16,062 – \$46,958	B	661	
Kentucky	\$27,400	\$17,535 – \$43,490	B	921	
Illinois	\$36,649	\$8,148 – \$49,088	A	783	
Nebraska	\$38,916	\$17,628 – \$59,145	A	403	
North Dakota	\$48,329	\$39,412 – \$93,450	B	81	
Indiana	\$48,768	\$30,874 – \$88,560	B	414	
Colorado	\$85,728	\$34,175 – \$182,260	B	322	
New Mexico	\$132,792	\$74,508 – \$323,520	B	217	

States on file without a graded statewide estimate: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Kansas, Mississippi, Montana, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia.

Graded estimates by well type

STATE	WELL TYPE	MEDIAN PER WELL	TYPICAL RANGE (10TH-90TH PCT.)	GRADE	WELL
Colorado	Oil well	\$90,824	\$34,166 – \$205,898	B	10
Illinois	Injection or disposal well	\$36,501	\$21,651 – \$47,794	B	15
Illinois	Oil well	\$37,544	\$7,184 – \$49,590	A	55
Indiana	Gas well	\$43,359	\$30,209 – \$76,803	B	17
Indiana	Oil well	\$54,863	\$33,394 – \$93,568	B	17
Kentucky	Oil well	\$27,216	\$16,500 – \$43,792	B	62
Louisiana	Gas well	\$41,139	\$16,057 – \$45,954	B	28
Louisiana	Oil well	\$25,383	\$16,674 – \$47,233	B	30
Montana	Gas well	\$10,382	\$7,862 – \$27,546	B	13
Nebraska	Gas well	\$32,581	\$16,182 – \$47,870	B	22
Nebraska	Oil well	\$46,003	\$32,039 – \$87,178	B	8
Nebraska	Other or unknown	\$43,308	\$33,384 – \$60,655	B	6
New Mexico	Oil well	\$140,684	\$75,103 – \$323,520	B	16
Wyoming	Gas well	\$5,520	\$5,051 – \$8,189	B	96

Data and limits

- **Source.** All cost records come from the US Department of the Interior Orphaned Wells Program Office well-level data, as reported by states, tribes and federal agencies for wells plugged with federal infrastructure-law funds. Only sources whose terms allow commercial use are included.
- **What the cost covers** is defined by each reporting agency. Some include surface restoration, some do not.

- **Averages.** 51% of records are a contract or lease average repeated across wells. They count once each in grading and in the index.
- **Depth.** Total depth from commercially usable sources is known for 38% of wells. Depth-band estimates are published only where they pass grading: Colorado, Kentucky, Louisiana.
- **Scope.** These are mostly old, shallow orphan wells. The figures should not be applied to deep or horizontal wells.
- **Grades** come from held-out tests (five random 80/20 splits). Figures below grade B are withheld.

Method, sources and version history: pluggingindex.com/methodology/.

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