

SPLASH INTO EXTENSION

Did You Know

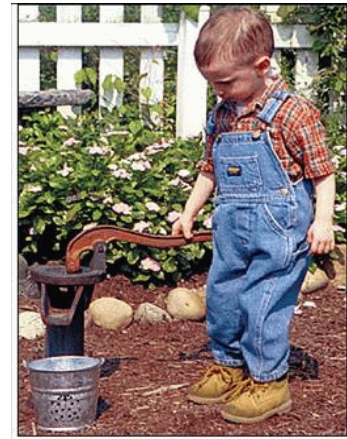
Snow is Good!

Winter can be more fun when we have snow for sledding or skiing. In addition, it's good to have snow cover on your septic system. Snow provides insulation to the tank and soil treatment areas, buffering them from severe temperatures so biological activity can continue to occur.

Managing Your Private Drinking Water Well During Drought

What can you do if your private drinking water well fails to provide an adequate water supply due to drought conditions? Private wells tend to be rather shallow in depth below ground, and shallow wells are more susceptible to adverse impacts due to drought. Most community wells are generally deeper, so a private well may have problems when a neighboring community supply, not far away, may be fine.

Groundwater levels in Nebraska can vary over time. Lower levels can occur during periods of little rainfall and warm temperatures. Periods of little rainfall reduce recharge to the aquifer. Warmer temperatures can cause an increase in vegetative evaporation and transpiration resulting in an increase in outdoor water use. This puts additional stress on the water system.



If you experience water outages, sudden drops in water pressure, air bubbles coming out of a non-aerated faucet, or the water suddenly becomes cloudy or heavily silted, your private drinking water well may be having trouble keeping up with the water demand. Other problems associated with valves, waterlines, pumps, well casing, or pressure tanks can also cause some of these problems, so it is important to work with a State of Nebraska licensed professional to identify and mitigate the problem.

In some cases the problems mentioned above may only occur when water is being pumped from the well continuously for a period of time. This may be during periods of water use for irrigation, showers, or clothes washing. Under these conditions, you may be able to continue using the well by initiating water conservation measures and spreading out the timing of water use so that high water use activities do not occur at the same time.

In addition, you might replace your pressure tank with a larger one or install a second tank to provide additional water storage. For a well with a slow recovery rate, the additional storage can reduce demand on the well during high water use periods by storing water extracted during lower use periods.

When drought persists, the water level in a well can drop below the submersible pump or pump intake, causing a loss of water. Shallow wells are more susceptible than deeper wells. It may be possible to lower the pump or pump intake within the existing well, although this might provide only a temporary solution. A more permanent solution might be achieved by deepening the existing well or drilling a new well. Work with a State of Nebraska licensed professional to determine the best solution for your situation.

Some information was adapted from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Fact Sheet WD-DWGB-1-16 and the Pennsylvania State University Extension publication "Managing Your Well During a Drought."

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