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CITY OF CAPE TOWN

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MEDIA RELEASE

What residents need to know about registration and inspections of alternative water systems

The City of Cape Town's Water and Sanitation Department is currently running a programme inspecting boreholes and well-points that will continue until the end of June 2021. Compliance requirements are in place to safeguard drinking water quality in the general network, and ensure sustainable use of groundwater. Read more below:



High resolution photos available here: <https://bit.ly/3vkspEM>

Private boreholes and well-points have become much more common in recent years due to our experience with drought. While groundwater is a useful resource that can be used for a range of purposes, offsetting demand on the drinking water supply, it is important that alternative water supply systems are safely installed. If these water sources are incorrectly connected

to the shared water supply system, it could lead to a negative impact on human health.

'The City thanks residents who tapped into groundwater resources as part of the broader effort to offset reliance on the potable supply during the extreme scarcity during the drought. It is, however, critical that alternative water installations do not contaminate the drinking water supply, and that this finite resource does not become depleted.

'The City is supporting these objectives by conducting city-wide inspections at properties with registered well-points and boreholes, to ensure that alternative water supply systems have been safely installed in accordance with the City's Water By-Laws, SANS codes of practice and the City's guidelines for the installation of alternative water systems. If these installations are not compliant, and/or the correct backflow prevention device has not been installed, it can result in untreated water contaminating the municipal drinking water supply, resulting in water quality incidents and related health risks,' said the City's Mayoral Committee Member for Water and Waste, Alderman Xanthea Limberg.

The National Department of Water and Sanitation (NDWS) is the custodian of groundwater resources, and residents who wish to take water from an underground water resource are advised that National Legislation (the National Water Act) applies. If they are unclear on these regulations, we recommend that they please contact the regional office of the National Department of Water and Sanitation (NDWS) for guidance on applicable authorisations.

The NDWS has gazetted a notice requiring that all borehole and well-point water use is to be metered, and for this information to be submitted to the National Department of Water and Sanitation via metering@dws.gov.za on a regular basis. This will assist DWS in ensuring this water source is used sustainably. The City is not the custodian of the resource and does not have authority to enforce the requirements, but supports regulations that protect this finite resource and the health and safety of residents. Inspections in terms of City by-laws started in October 2018 and should be completed by the end of June 2021.

'Once the installation has been verified to be compliant by the Water Inspector, he or she will issue the owner with a Certificate of Approval (COA) which is signed by both parties. The original copy will be handed to the homeowner,' said Alderman Limberg.

Homeowners can verify the water inspector's identification and request that the inspector produce his or her City ID card, which includes their contact details as well as the contact details of the Supervisor and/or Manager.

Residents who would like more information on alternative water sources and the rules and regulations which apply are advised to consult the following documents:

- Water By-law at www.capetown.gov.za/waterregulations
- [Guidelines for the Installations of Alternative Water Systems](#)
- [Summary Guide to Alternative Water Installations](#)
- [Risks of Groundwater Quality Pamphlet](#)

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