

GBU Mountain News

No-Cost Water Tank Installation and Water Deliveries

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By Mountain News Staff

Kern County families living in homes whose wells have run dry due to the drought may qualify for no-cost water tank installation and water deliveries thanks to a temporary assistance program that is a collaboration among Community Action Partnership of Kern; Self-Help Enterprises; Kern County Public Health Services, Environmental Health Division; and local water companies.

CAPK is Kern County's federally appointed poverty-fighting agency. Its Energy Program's weatherization installers can deliver and install a 2,600-gallon storage tank and a small pump that allows water from the tank to flow through the taps in the home. The tank, which is about 8 feet in diameter and 9 feet tall, can be filled and replenished with hauled water for washing and bathing.

"As soon as the tanks are installed, the water company comes right after and fills them up," said Romala Ramkissoon, CAPK's Director of Community Services. "The client is placed on a schedule and the water company comes and refills the tank at regular intervals every so many weeks."

For drinking, Sparkletts bottled water is also provided and can be delivered to homes in Sparkletts service areas, or, for homes not in Sparkletts service areas, picked up at the closest Sparkletts location.

The tanks and pumps come from Self-Help Enterprises, a community development organization headquartered in Visalia, whose mission is to work with low-income families to build and sustain healthy homes and communities.

Self-Help Project Manager David Mendez explained in an e-mail how the program works for owners versus renters of homes whose wells have run dry: "Owner-occupied homes whose wells have been impacted by the drought qualify for a temporary tank installation at no cost," he wrote. "Renters may qualify for temporary water hauling or possibly a temporary tank install depending on their unique circumstance."

Families who believe they may qualify for the Temporary Water Assistance Program can obtain more information by calling the Environmental Health Division of Kern County Public Health Services at (661) 862-8776.