

Madera family spent two years without running water after water-well dried out

USDA representative helps Madera family who spent two years without water

By Gregory Woods

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It's no secret the drought has affected thousands of people across the Central Valley, especially families in rural areas.

That's why a representative with the United States Department of Agriculture visited an elder family in Madera.

Estanislao Cabrera, 84, and his wife Faustina Cabrera, 62, used water well for their house since they moved to the home on Colorado Avenue back in 1993.

Due to the drought, in 2013 the water well dried out.

"For the past two years we've had to go to my children's house to take a bath, we had to buy water to cook, drink or even flush the toilet," said Mrs. Cabrera.

Lisa Mensah with USDA went to visit the family to hear their story and see first-hand how they are getting by.

"I can't imagine the shock when a well runs dry and when there is no water," said Lisa Mensah, USDA. "These are hardworking people, and I'm glad that they are welcoming us into their home and that we can be of assistance."

The USDA with the help of the local organization Self Help Enterprises are helping the Cabrera's buy and install a new water-well.

The USDA gave the family \$26,000 for a well that will run 500ft underground.

The nonprofit Self Help gave \$2,100 to cause and is contracting out all of the labor.

The family was also temporarily given a 2,500 gallon water tank for the house.

The Cabrera are one of 55 families the nonprofit Self Help Enterprises is helping, but there are thousands in the area that have the same problem.

"This is fairly typical for about 2,000 families that are in a similar situation as the Cabrera," said Tom Collishaw, with the organization.

Thanks to the USDA and the local nonprofit The Cabrera their two daughters and granddaughter will have water.

"We are very happy we don't have to live without water anymore," said Mrs. Cabrera.

"Few of us have had to live with that burden and I'm just very glad that there is hope for the future with you for a much deeper well," said Mensah.

Organizers expect the new well to be installed sometime in February.