

ABC BAKERSFIELD

Temporary drought relief program offers assistance to Shafter family without running water

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SHAFTER, Calif. - After a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan, Juanita Garcia returned to her home in Shafter to the reality of the California drought.

Her family's well dried out, leaving the Garcia family with no running water. Everyday tasks like showers, washing dishes and flushing toilets became increasingly difficult.

The family acquired a plastic water tank trailer which they fill with water from friends. To transport it into their home, they fill 5-gallon jugs and carry them inside. They then heat the water in a small electric kettle to bathe or wash dishes.

The cost of drilling a well deeper ranges anywhere from \$15,000 to \$25,000 depending on the depth.

Without the funds to drill a deeper well or connect to the city's municipal water service, Garcia turned to the internet for help. She reached out to the Kern County Public Health Department, who then provided her information about a partnership between CAPK, Self-Help Enterprises, Kern County Public Health and local water companies.

The partnership provided two water tanks to the family, available for the next year. During that time, Garcia and her family will have enough time to save money for a more permanent solution.

If you believe your family may qualify for the Temporary Water Assistance program, contact the Environmental Health Division of the Kern County Public Health Department at (661) 862-8776.