

ABC 30 ACTION NEWS

Porterville area residents urged to test well water

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PORTERVILLE, Calif. (KFSN) --

A South Valley non-profit is making a final push to sign-up people for free well water testing.

Self-Help Enterprises started the program in the Porterville area last year, where high levels of nitrate have previously been found.

So far, this testing program has identified 25 homes that exceed the maximum contaminant level.

Now the program has been extended, thanks to additional funding.

Self-Help Enterprises is trying to bridge the gap, between those who rely on a private well, but may not have the means to test it for water quality

Previously, people could get information about the program at the Porterville WIC office, but now, information will also be available at the Family HealthCare Network clinic. It's part of an effort to connect with pregnant women or families with infants-the most vulnerable populations to nitrate contamination.

Those with a private well can also call Self-Help Enterprises directly to set up a nitrate testing appointment.

All that's needed is a small water sample, and it will be sent to a lab, with results available within about a week.

"When that happens, through this program, we're able to provide them with ... the knowledge of knowing that the water is unsafe to cook and drink," says Abigail Solis of Self-Help Enterprises. "We're also able to provide them with an alternative source of water, through bottled water or a point of use filtration device."

It's short-term relief for people plagued by nitrate contamination and peace of mind, for those who choose to take advantage of it.

The program will run through the end of April, but Self-Help Enterprises hopes to also expand nitrate testing operations to other parts of the Central Valley.