

County Wells Go Dry

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By CHARLES POSTELL

Lowndes County residents are finding their shallow wells going dry and the water level of their deep wells dropping lately because of a severe drought which has covered the area for several weeks.

Local well - drilling contractors say the shortage of water on some farms is serious, not only in Lowndes County but throughout the south Georgia - north Florida area.

City residents have no reason to worry, at least for right now. M. B. Price, superintendent of the Valdosta water and sewer department, said yields of the wells at present do not indicate too much of a water - level drop.

But Price said he did not have an accurate report on the status of the water tables for the Valdosta city wells. "It will take a couple of days to complete such a report. We could possibly have one ready by Monday," explained Price.

"The present depth of our wells range from 149 feet to 400 feet," said Price, "and the pumping capacity from 402 gallons per minute up to 1,500 gallons per minute. All the wells vary, depending on the well and the area in which it is in."

But outside the city, shallow wells are giving out of water. Submergible and turbine pumps in deep wells are burning out because the water table has dropped, thus leaving the deep well pumps hanging in the air.

Dick Davis, a Valdosta well-drilling contractor for 16 years, said Thursday he had never seen such a shortage of water in the area.

Cecil Bishop of Bishop Drilling Company in Tifton reported the Tift County area in the same predicament. Bishop said he had received some 50 calls in the last few days from people whose shallow wells are dry or going dry.

Deep well water tables in the area from Albany to the Suwannee River valley in Florida

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all are in serious condition concerning their water level, it was reported.

In some areas the water is dropping 6 to 22 feet where deep wells are concerned. When the water table drops this means the submergible and turbine pumps are left hanging in the air. The pumps need water for lubrication, and where there is no water the pump burns out, said drillers.

Water in some wells, reportedly drilled about 30 years ago and as deep as 300 feet, have also dropped and the pumps have no water around them.

Geologists report that in the Suwannee River area water tables have dropped below the limerock cavern walls, said Davis. The walls are drying and

flaking off into the wells, causing muddy water conditions in that area.

Average deep wells in the south Georgia area average 250 feet deep. The average depth for a shallow well is about 35 feet. Some deep wells go as deep as 425 feet.