

Well Flow Inspection

Homes in rural areas often rely upon a well or spring for drinking water. When buying a home without access to a municipal water supply, you should consider having the water flow tested to determine if the water supply will meet the needs of the household. Nothing is more disheartening than running out of water, or buying a home and then discovering that you will need to have a new well drilled. Water Flow and Yield Testing takes some of the guesswork out of that equation. While the test only establishes the reliability of the water supply at the time of testing, it can give a home buyer some indication of the volume of water at hand.

What Does the Water Flow Test Establish?

First, let's look at what the test is actually TESTING.

Most drilled wells use a metal casing that is driven into the ground as the well is drilled. As the well is being pumped out during and after the drilling process, water is drawn from the bottom of the casing along with dirt, sand and debris. As this material is drawn out, a reservoir is formed beneath the casing which holds a certain volume of water.

During the course of the water flow test, this reservoir is pumped out and the water is replenished by water moving into the reservoir from the area around the foot of the casing.

So to clarify...pumping 300 gallons of water from a drilled well does NOT mean that there is 300 gallons of water sitting at the bottom of the well at all times. The reservoir may only hold 15 gallons at any given time, but it is refilled again and again as water is drawn out. The same thing applies to a dug well. The concrete tiles of a dug well may hold 150 gallons or more, and as water is pumped out, more water enters the tiles from the surrounding water table.

Therefore, it can be said that the water flow test actually measures the rate of recovery of a water supply. The faster the recovery, the faster that water can be drawn from the source. If a well runs dry during the course of the test, then it may have a poor recovery rate and may not be a reliable water source for the household.

It should be noted that when a water flow test is conducted, it only indicates the water recovery rate at the time of testing. The test can not determine the recovery rate or reliability of a water source at any time in the future, since so many factors can influence the volume of water at hand. Drought, periods of heavy rainfall, excavation in the area, and diversion of ground water sources can all affect the water supply