

Tulare County Ground Zero: Thousands Running Out of Water

Many communities across California face serious water quality issues that make water unsafe to drink. This document captures media highlights of the water crisis and how it has exacerbated water quality issues for families across the state face. Water is a human right that no one should go without.

Tulare County: Ground Zero of the Drought



5,433	Residents without running water
1,006	Households receiving bottled-water deliveries
36	Percent of kids living below the poverty line
3	Public water tanks
16	Portable shower stalls
4	Employees in Tulare's emergency services office

Learn more: [2015 Mother Jones](#) | [KTLA 5](#)

- “California's historic drought has hit one area particularly hard. In East Porterville, about 160 miles north of Los Angeles, more than 500 families are out of the water. Some homes rely on private ground wells, while others use bottled water to survive.”
- “The drought in these communities resembles a never-ending natural disaster, says Andrew Lockman, manager of the county's Office of Emergency Services.”

The Impact of the Water Crisis on California Families



Learn more: [2015 Peninsula Press](#) | [Project of Stanford Journalism](#)

- “Agricultural laborers face not only work shortages but also the increased potential of contaminated water supplies. This threatens both their health and their economic stability, as a disproportionate amount of their budgets is spent on private water supplies and other basic.”
- “For most of us, water is an entity that can flow freely, but when you describe it as a thick, clump coming out of your faucet, you have another dimension to water that most people don't understand or recognize,” *Rosanna Esparza (Clean Water Fund)*

Invest in Safe Water for Struggling Californians



Why Invest in Safe Water: Dry Wells Plague California



- “Nearly one-fifth of the raw groundwater used for public drinking water systems in California contains excessive levels of potentially toxic contaminants, according to a decade-long U.S. Geological Survey study that provides one of the first comprehensive looks at the health of California's public water supply and groundwater.”
- “Outside Porterville, in a dusty, unincorporated hamlet populated by many Latino citrus-farm workers, some residents use donated bottled water to drink and cook. About 40 people a day wash in the 26 showers set up in trailers next to the parking lot of Iglesia Emmanuel Church. They lug non-potable water home from county tanks for their toilets.”

USDA Helps Families in Flint | Lets do the same for Californians



Learn More: [2016 USDA Press Release](#)

- In February 2016, USDA provided temporary approval of a request by Michigan to use WIC funds for lead testing costs on a time-limited basis. This flexibility will enable approximately 3,800 low-income infants, children, and pregnant or post-partum women to have access to lead screening tests at WIC clinics.
- "The programs of the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service are there to help because they're a vital source of nutrition for children, infants, and adults," said Under Secretary Wilson. "Our goal is simple: to encourage folks to maximize the healthy foods they have available to mitigate the effects of lead."