



Frequently Asked Questions Darwin Region Groundwater

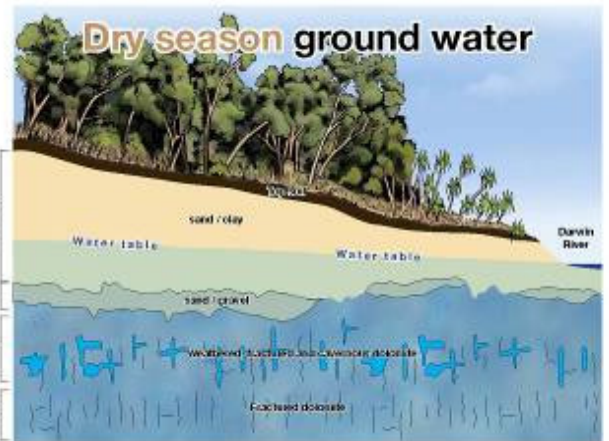
How Important is Groundwater?

Large quantities of groundwater are extracted each day from aquifers in the Territory to supply towns and communities, stock, domestic, rural needs, mining and irrigation. Groundwater supplies 90% of the Territories water supply.

In the Darwin region, the McMinn's bore field supplies up to 10% of Darwin's public water supply. Groundwater is also crucial for those people who supply their own water (domestic use) as over 90 percent of self supplied domestic water extractions come from groundwater.

How Does the Water Level in My Bore Change?

The water level in the aquifer that supplies your bore does not always stay the same. Variations in rainfall and pumping all affect the height of the underground water levels. Typically in Darwin water levels increase during the wet season (rainfall=recharge) and decreases during the dry season as extraction increases.

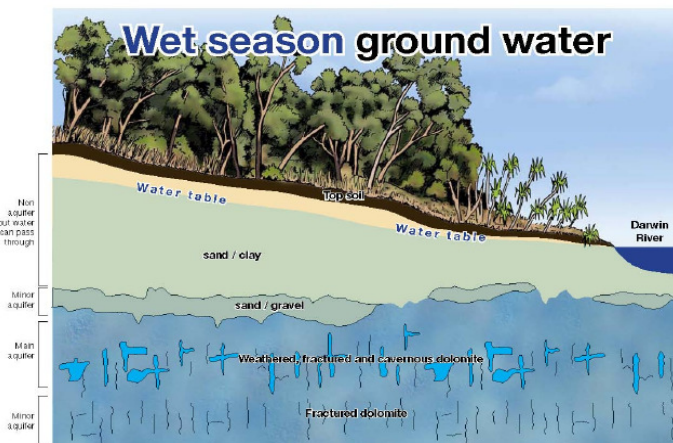


What Determines if My Bore Goes Dry?

A bore is said to have gone dry when water levels drop below a pump intake. This does not mean the bore will never have water in it again, as the water level should come back after the Wet Season. The water level in a bore depends on a number of things, such as the depth of the bore, the type of aquifer the bore taps, the amount of pumping that occurs in this aquifer, and the amount and timing of rainfall (recharge) occurring.

How Do I Find Out if My Bore Will Go Dry?

Water Resources have produced hydrogeological maps for Darwin, Palmerston, Litchfield Shire and Berry Springs where yields are indicated. If your property is located on a low yielding aquifer there is a higher risk of having less water available. The extent of use can also reduce the amount of water available in the aquifer.



My Bore Water is High in Iron, How Can I Improve its Quality and Reduce the Clogging of Fittings?

Iron is a common constituent in the groundwater around Darwin and can be treated. Investing in a tank and using it as a sedimentation tank may be an effective method. As the iron settles at the bottom of the tank the clear, clean water can be taken from the top. Water filters and regular maintenance of your bore pump can also reduce the red water entering your pipes and taps.

I Paid to Have My Own Private Bore Drilled, so Why Can't I Use the Water Any Way I Like?

If you own and pump water from a bore you are contributing to local groundwater level decline. Since aquifers can be quite extensive and the water within them is connected the usage of your bore may influence other people's some distance away. Groundwater also feeds creeks, rivers and springs during the dry season and excessive pumping from your bore during this time can also contribute to less water being available to these surrounding water dependant environments.



Some wetlands are dependent on groundwater for their survival.

What Can I Do to Conserve Water on My Block?

Be Waterwise and invest in a rainwater tank. Rainwater tanks can provide a renewable supply of water and help reduce the demand on our groundwater supplies. Fixing leaking taps and pipes can save you up to 300 litres per day and fitting flow devices in taps can save you up to nine litres per minute.

In the garden mulch generously and reuse grey water from the laundry.

Tips for Watering Your Lawn

- Plants only absorb water in their root zone, so watering for long periods is wasting water.
- Try reducing your watering for 15 minutes, your plants will still thrive and you will save water.
- Put a small sized tuna can on the lawn. Once its full your lawns had enough and you can stop watering.

Further Information:

Water Resources Division

Department of Natural Resources,
Environment, The Arts and Sport

Ph: (08) 8999 3678

Fax: (08) 8999 4445

Email: water.nretas@nt.gov.au

Web: www.nt.gov.au/nretas/water