Looking after your bore

Regular maintenance of a bore will increase the chance that it will continue working efficiently. Many bores and pumps fail because they are not properly maintained or gradual deterioration goes unnoticed. Rehabilitation of a neglected bore can end up being as expensive as drilling a new one.

How can I look after my bore?

1. Monitor the water level:

- Measure the water level in the bore several times a year. Take the measurement after pumping has stopped and the water level has had a chance to recover.
- By comparing measurements you can calculate if the groundwater in storage is being depleted over a long period. If you suspect this, you should contact the department for advice.
- The water level can be measured with a weighted cord, preferably a fishing line with a stick of solder or lead weight on the end. Measure the depth of the water by listening to the 'plop' as the weight hits the water. Do not drop anything loose down the bore. Extreme care should be taken to ensure the depth measuring device does not dislodge and foul the pump.
- If the volume of water pumped has reduced over a period of time, check the total depth of the bore to ascertain whether the bore has silted up. This can be done using the same procedures as above. If the depth of the bore is less than the depth recorded on your bore report, it would be due to silting. A drilling contractor or bore rehabilitation company should be employed to clean out the bore.

2. Maintain detailed records of your bore, its construction and performance, so that you can monitor its efficiency and determine reasons for problems should they occur.
3. Do not over-pump the bore by changing the pump setting or pressure head, even for short periods. A pressure gauge should be fitted on the pump side of the gate valve so that normal operating pressure can be maintained during testing.
4. Ensure the headwork and surrounds are sealed and well drained to prevent contaminants from entering the gap between the pump column and casing.
5. Maintain the pump according to the manufacturer's specifications. Avoid having electrical components in connection with the casing as this can cause corrosion. If the pump is malfunctioning, the electrical wiring to the pump or inside the pump could be faulty. Corrosion of the pump column can also reduce bore discharge. It may be necessary to have the pump examined by a pump contractor.

Assessing an existing bore

To obtain information on an existing bore go to nt.gov.au/helpstopthedrop. If the bore has not been in operation for some time, a drilling contractor will need to examine the bore to assess its condition and casing. A driller or pump contractor can conduct a test to ascertain whether the bore and its casing are in good condition.

Water samples collected from un-equipped bores can be unreliable, and a sample should only be taken after pumping for at least 30 minutes.

For more information contact Water Resources:
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www.nt.gov.au/water