

BARKLY REGIONAL COUNCIL



MEDIA RELEASE

26 September 2014

Council provides solutions for collapsed bore

The Chief Executive of the Barkly Regional Council Edwina Marks has issued a statement outlining the latest development regarding a collapsed bore at a clinic in the Utopia homelands.

While the council has been carting potable water to address the immediate issue of ensuring the Urapuntja Health Service Aboriginal Corporation clinic and the community has a regular water supply, the Northern Territory Government has been responsible for providing the capital renewal funding process to provide a sustainable long-term solution.

Both the NT Government's Department of Community Services and the CEO of Urapuntja's health clinic met on September 3 to discuss potential solutions for the bore which collapsed during pump replacement in late June.

There is another bore on site. However, the water is discoloured and the government's Department of Community Services decided not to pipe this into the outstation water tank before having the water tested for the presence of e-coli and metals.

Dr Marks said both bores are very old (1980s) and that repairing the bore or installing a filtration plant on the old replacement bore could not guarantee a sustainable supply as it may run dry at any time. She said drilling a new bore without researching the location may not tap into a suitable source either.

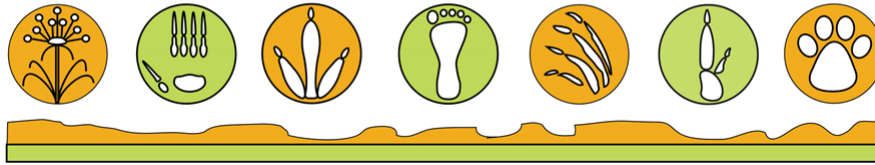
Within a week of the government's visit a consultant hydrologist was appointed to examine available technical data and pinpoint a suitable location. Their report was received on September 22.

The report concluded that the failure of the bore was due to a combination of corrosion and poor construction rather than resource availability. A driller has now been appointed to drill a new bore and will be on site within the fortnight.

"Throughout the whole process the Urapuntja health clinic has been informed of developments," said Dr Marks. "The council also met with the clinic to discuss other contingencies and service provisions."

The council provides 27,000 litres of water to a ground tank and 22,000 litres to a header tank which provides back-up storage for the clinic.

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There was a recent instance when the Urapuntja clinic ran out of water on Sunday, August 24. “The council was notified at 4.05pm on Sunday and the tank was filled, with water supplied to the clinic just after 5pm,” said Dr Marks.

On Sunday, September 5, the clinic ran out of water again and was able to use their supply from the header tank while council scheduled its usual Monday carting.

“Every second day council has been carting water as requested,” said Dr Marks. “However, council is committed to carting water everyday if necessary to ensure water supplies are kept up.”

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