



Study: Local water quality ranks among cleanest in state

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APPLE VALLEY • The Mojave River Basin has some of the cleanest water in the state, even without processing, according to early results from a recent study.

Representatives from the State Water Board and U.S. Geological Survey recently presented local data from an ongoing, 10-year study to the Mojave Water Agency.

“What did we find? Not much, actually,” joked one USGS representative. “Your water is really clean.”

The team tested 59 wells across the Mojave basin from February to April. They took samples from 45 public supply wells and 14 domestic, irrigation or monitoring wells.

The goal was to get water straight from the aquifers, before it's been processed as drinking water, and check for a variety of substances including pharmaceuticals, pesticides, nitrates and radon.

In looking at arsenic, which is a major concern across the state after the acceptable level was lowered several years ago, the team said the levels were lower than anything they've seen in the 27 other areas studied so far.

Even when traces of some chemicals were found slightly above suggested levels in a well or two, such as slightly elevated levels of fluoride, officials said the amounts were lower than what is found elsewhere in the state and easily processed out before the water is sent to consumers.

Full data reports from the Groundwater Ambient Monitoring & Assessment Program, or GAMA, are expected to be released to the public in the spring.

The team also has a follow-up study planned in the area for three years from now, so that they can report on any trends and compare the data over time, with the entire GAMA study scheduled to wrap up in 2012.

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