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# 'Well from hell' spewing hot water from taps

**Edythe Jensen**

The Arizona Republic

Jul. 18, 2007 11:48 AM

Hot water is flowing from cold water faucets in Sun Groves, and it's not a plumbing problem.

The Chandler neighborhood southeast of Lindsay and Riggs roads is close to one of the city's newest wells - a natural underground hot spring where water temperatures can exceed 100 degrees, said Bob Mulvey, assistant municipal utilities director.

The heat became more noticeable in recent weeks because record water consumption is forcing the city to pump more from the thermal source, he said.

"It's bizarre that you can't have cold water," said Sun Groves resident Charles Bassett. "Our 3-year-old son said it's too hot to wash his hands. My wife is seven months pregnant and can't take a shower to cool down."

Bassett's family moved in last year, and he missed previous city-hosted meetings that explained the thermal well. He said he thought he had a plumbing problem until he talked to neighbors.

Mary Sluzas used to live near the well but moved recently. At the city meetings last year she said she had to put ice cubes in her washing machine to protect delicate fabrics. "We were told that the problem was going to end soon when the city mixed water from other sources," she said.

Mulvey said that's true, but the cool down won't come until April 2009 when the joint Chandler-Gilbert water treatment plant is finished and treated canal water will be mixed with the hot stuff.

The "well from hell" isn't all bad. Mulvey said it is producing 3 million gallons a day, three times the quantity of an average city well. That has saved the city more than \$4 million in additional well-drilling costs.

Unlike other sources of groundwater, this one has such a low arsenic level that the city doesn't have to treat it to meet strict federal standards. The thermal spring's water also has a low mineral content; minerals cause water's "hardness," and can corrode plumbing.

"We second-guessed our decision when we brought that well on line, but now I'm glad we did," Mulvey said.

Natural "hot springs" or geothermal wells are not uncommon in Arizona but often aren't found in cities before streets and homes are built on top of them, said Tempe energy consultant Amanda Ormond. She has helped map the state's geothermal sites and has promoted them as a source of low-cost energy.

What do you think?

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- ron7188
- Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 1:13 PM
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"Marge, can we set the oven to cold?"

- [jack4717](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 1:17 PM
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Well, it probably saves us some money on the water heater. We can take a shower almost completely on "cold".

- [Steve9419](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 1:23 PM
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I discovered last year when I lost my hot water heater that it saved me 40 to 50 month if you turn it off during these months and turn it back on when it gets a little colder.

- [JSimpson](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 1:28 PM
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The money saved on the hot-water does not compare to the extra costs of having hot water surge through all appliances and piping in the house. The extra electricity needed to cool water for the fridge, air conditioning for the house does not mean the 5\$ I save on gas matters. I don't recall any notifications in the mail or pubic notice regarding this issue. I have been in this development for 5+ years and I'm just

not finding an answer to this conundrum? What a joke Chandler utility services is.

- [SDL](#) | [Profile](#)
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Glendale is looking better all the time, I have cold water:-)

- [Keith6812](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 1:55 PM
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Ahh, for a nice cool down just jump in your 93 degree swimming pool :0)

[robert8107](#) | [Profile](#)

Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 2:11 PM

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Seems to me the developers should perform their due diligence before buying cheap land and slapping up homes. It's always something with the subdivisions here - not using post tension slabs when building on soft ranch land and now this. I wish City of Chandler had more quality checks and accountability built into their processes.

- jackcracker
- Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 2:36 PM
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Are ther any building codes in az at all, seems like everbody is a builder, whats it, a 25 question test, how hard can it be? put up foam chicken wire and stucco and paint it,easy money.

- [Robert3054](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 2:49 PM
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ha ha ha ha i have no comment but that is funny

- [grantmendez](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Jul 18, 2007 at 3:01 PM
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Hey Jsimpson, more like Homer Simpson. Refrigerators and air conditioners don't use water. The bit of warm water in your copper lines isn't heating up your home either. I would like free hot water.

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