

Water district has more well troubles

The Soquel Creek County Water District continues to have troubles with its water wells.

Just as one ailing well is cured and put back into service, two other wells have been shut down for repairs.

Water directors Tuesday night accepted the rehabilitation work done on the Madeline Lane well (located on Soquel Drive near Mar Vista Elementary School) after district General Manager Robert Johnson said the well was again producing 500 gallons of water per minute.

The well was shut down last fall following a pump failure; a television camera showed that the well casing and the perforations were clogged with calcium carbonate (limestone).

The pump was rebuilt and the well casing cleaned out with an acid bath and a buffer-like swab at a cost of \$17,000.

Now, Johnson said, two other wells have been shut down because of poor production.

Inspection shows the 2-year-old Opal Cliffs No. 4 well in west Capitola has been clogged by mud seeping into the well from underground strata. Cost to clean out the well is estimated at \$10,000 and board members authorized Johnson to go ahead with the work.

The Hillcrest well at Hillcrest Avenue and Mar Vista Drive in Seacliff is also having problems, Johnson said, and district employees believe it's afflicted with the same limestone buildup as the Madeline Lane well. It has been shut down and a well driller is now pulling the pump assembly so that a TV camera can be used to inspect the well's interior, Johnson said.

Once the TV inspection is complete, the district's consultants, Luhrdorf and Scalmanini of Davis, will recommend whether the well should be repaired or abandoned.

The water board also accepted plans and specifications by Luhrdorf and Scalmanini for three new water wells to be drilled in the district. They will be on Rosedale Avenue in Soquel next to the district office, on Bonita Drive in Aptos, and on Sells Drive in La Selva Beach. All will be drilled approximately 400 feet deep, Johnson said, at a package price of \$80,000 each for the well, pump and electrical controls.

All should produce in the 500 gpm range, Johnson said.

The wells are the first to be designed by the engineering firm with data from the district's groundwater monitoring program, and Johnson said the data allows the district to skip the costly test-hole drilling process.

The board formally accepted the six coastal groundwater monitoring wells drilled by Eaton Drilling along the coast, and authorized the installation of quick-disconnect valves and gauges on the two waterfront wells at Seacliff State Beach.