

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 12th MAY 2009**

Question

Would the Minister advise whether there have been any problems with the Water Resources Law (Jersey) 2007, requiring householders to register their wells and boreholes, and, if so, would he consider inviting the States to rescind this part of the Law?

Will the Minister agree to review this part of the water law for those householders who do not have the opportunity to be connected to a mains supply, and, if not, what action, if any, will the Minister take to put in place a portable water supply to all the Island by 2015?

Answer

The Department launched its campaign relating to the registration of boreholes in early January 2009 and, to date, it has proved a successful exercise with more than 2500 registration forms being received. Each form provides information that is vital to understanding and effectively managing the Island's water.

The registration form is a two page format supported by full guidance notes. Applicants who required assistance can contact the States Customer Services Centre or the Department. Where required, Officers visit homes in order to locate boreholes/wells or to assist people to complete the form. Where information is unknown - such as the borehole depth - people are simply asked to write 'not known' on the form.

The vast majority of forms have been completed accurately and without difficulty. Very few verbal complaints (less than 10 people) have been received regarding the need to register a supply and about the same number of comments were received about the process or form itself.

The major objective of the Water Resources (Jersey) Law 2007 is to enable effective and equitable management of this vital resource. This requires accurate information, including a valid estimate of how much water is abstracted from the Island's aquifer.

Domestic boreholes individually do not abstract large quantities of water. However, given their number, in totality, they represent the major group using this resource. The Department therefore needs to understand where they are located and how much water they abstract. This information is captured within the registration form.

Added benefits of registering a water supply are that the borehole or well can be protected against future large licensed abstractions being located nearby which could have an adverse affect. Knowledge of the location of boreholes and wells is also important in pollution incidences where preventative measures might be required to guard against contamination of a householder's water supply.

It is of vital importance that we protect our Island's water resources and encourage registration of boreholes and wells. Given the level of success to date, and the value of the information collected, the Minister will not be requesting that the States rescind the law.

Regrettably the Minister cannot address issues relating to the provision mains water supply. These are the responsibility of Jersey Water.