In the worst 4% of the state for water-quality hazard — Cowan Tract, Stanislaus County

Cowan Tract has no public water system to fix — residents here rely entirely on private wells, in an area the state's own hazard data ranks among the worst 4% of all California block groups for water-quality risk.

4%

Cowan Tract's rank among California block groups for water-quality hazard — in the worst 4% statewide.

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Public water systems serving Cowan Tract — residents rely entirely on private wells.

What happened

Cowan Tract, an unincorporated Stanislaus County community, has no community water system at all; residents draw their water from private wells. The California Attorney General's SB 1000/SB 244 letter to Stanislaus County documents that the area ranks in the top 4% of all California block groups statewide for water-quality hazards, with groundwater exceeding legal limits for multiple chemicals — the letter doesn't specify which contaminants by name. Nearby groundwater levels are declining, compounding the risk, and the same letter notes that Cowan Tract's septic-system needs are unaddressed in the county's draft Housing Element, alongside its water problems.

Impact — what we know, and what we don't

- **Which specific contaminants exceed legal limits:** Not named in the source reviewed — the Attorney General's letter cites the statewide hazard ranking and "several chemicals" without itemizing them.
- **Population:** Not captured in this pass.

- **Whether any state or county intervention has followed the Attorney General's letter:** Not confirmed — the letter raises the deficiency; we don't have a subsequent fix to report.

Part of a larger pattern

Cowan Tract represents the private-well version of this project's water-insecurity pattern — unlike **Keyes** or **Armona**, there's no public utility here to consolidate or fund a fix for; residents are each individually exposed to whatever their own well draws up, with no system-wide remedy available even in principle until a public water system exists to connect to.

Sources

- California Attorney General's Office, SB 1000/SB 244 letter to Stanislaus County regarding its General Plan Environmental Justice Update. Access: not-captured — a public URL exists for this source and this project has not recorded it.

Full citation detail and source archive: **Data**. Back to **water insecurity in the Central Valley**.