# Twenty gallons a month, while new wells get built — Richgrove, Tulare County

Richgrove's wells carry three separate contaminants at once — arsenic, nitrates, and the agricultural fumigant byproduct DBCP — and while new wells are built, residents of a Self-Help Enterprises-built farmworker housing complex are rationed to 20 gallons of water per household each month.

**3**

Separate contaminants found in Richgrove's wells at once: arsenic, nitrates, and DBCP.

**20**

Gallons of water per household, per month, that residents of Richgrove's Self-Help Enterprises farmworker housing complex are rationed while new wells are built.

## What happened

Richgrove's wells are contaminated with arsenic, nitrates, and DBCP (1,2-dibromo-3-chloropropane) — a soil fumigant used in Central Valley agriculture until it was banned, now persistent in local groundwater decades later. Residents of a farmworker housing complex built by Self-Help Enterprises are limited to 20 gallons of water per household each month while new wells are constructed to replace the contaminated supply. The sources reviewed for this pass don't give a population figure for Richgrove, a completion date for the new wells, or the funding source behind the well-replacement project.

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

- **Population:** Not captured in this pass.
- **New-well completion date and funding source:** Not established in the sources reviewed.
- **Whether the 20-gallon ration is sufficient for household need:** Not assessed in the sources reviewed; we're reporting the ration amount as documented, not evaluating its adequacy.

## Part of a larger pattern

Richgrove's triple contamination — arsenic, nitrates, and a legacy fumigant chemical all at once — makes it one of the most heavily burdened water systems in this record, comparable in scope to **Tooleville's** combined chromium-and-supply crisis. Both towns show farmworker housing specifically, not just the town generally, bearing the sharpest edge of water rationing.

## Sources


- **The Guardian (via Self-Help Enterprises), "'It smells bad': the US farmworkers grappling with unsafe water at home"** (Jan. 23, 2024).


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