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## Residents fret as tests find foul well water

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Susan Chung

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Times - Colonist



### Abstract (Summary)

By Susan Chung Times Colonist staff Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink. That's the situation for some Central Saanich residents bordering the Saanich Inlet as their wells begin to run dry and the water left is not fit to drink. About 30 homeowners around **Senanus** Drive e are upset that after two years of steadily dwindling supply, bacteria, including fecal coliforms, have been found in their water. One home tested had 800 total coliformsper 100 millilitres of water. The standard is zero.

The residents on **Senanus** Drive and Mount Newton Cross Road west of West Saanich Road want to be hooked up to the municipal water supply and say Central Saanich is thwarting them.

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### Full Text (420 words)

*(Copyright Times Colonist (Victoria) 1997)*

By Susan Chung Times Colonist staff Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink. That's the situation for some Central Saanich residents bordering the Saanich Inlet as their wells begin to run dry and the water left is not fit to drink. About 30 homeowners around **Senanus** Drive e are upset that after two years of steadily dwindling supply, bacteria, including fecal coliforms, have been found in their water. One home tested had 800 total coliformsper 100 millilitres of water. The standard is zero.

The homeowners, some living in multi-million-dollar houses, are also afraid the inadequate water supply will mean firefighters will not be able to douse flames if a fire should break out.

"It's completely unacceptable," said resident Frank Towler. "We pay some of the highest taxes in the municipality. And what for?"

The residents on **Senanus** Drive and Mount Newton Cross Road west of West Saanich Road want to be hooked up to the municipal water supply and say Central Saanich is thwarting them.

But Central Saanich says it's a matter of priorities, and the water project is not at the top of the list. The municipality is also under no legal obligation to provide the residents with water. It is the residents who are responsible for their own water, said Coun. Allison Habkirk at a meeting of committee of the whole Monday.

"Maybe we should secede from Central Saanich," shouted Sandy Ormiston

from the audience.

Hooking up the homeowners to the municipal water main by extending the pipe along Mount Newton Cross Road would cost about \$800,000, according to a municipal engineer's report.

But the hookup could cost the municipality nothing if it applied for the Canada/BC Infrastructure Funding Program, said residents.

Under the program, Ottawa, the province and the municipality would split the project cost three ways if it was approved. The residents are willing to pay for the municipality's share.

The group has worked out the project would cost \$24 per home monthly over 15 years. "It's less than what we're paying a month for bottled water," said resident Karen Knott.

But the municipality doesn't want to forward the application for the water system. Since April, it has had an application to the program for a \$3.3-million widening of East Saanich Road, to four lanes from two, from Cultra Avenue to Island View Road. It doesn't want to imperil that with a new application.

Council will vote next month on a proposal that any **Senanus** Drive application await a decision on East Saanich Road.

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