



## Groundwater Study Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### **Q.3 Loudoun has experienced a noticeable proliferation of wells since 2000. Would this have a noticeable impact on groundwater levels?**

- A.** Yes. Since 2000, more than 9,000 new wells have been drilled in western Loudoun. Not only are there many more wells withdrawing groundwater, but they have been drilled closer and closer together. Approximately 90% of western Loudoun's wells are now within 550 feet of another well. And growth has brought other problems:
- 325 previously productive wells have had to be replaced.
  - Increasingly, drillers' efforts to find water have come up dry with 760 dry holes since 2000.
  - Drillers are having to go deeper and deeper to find water — most new wells in western Loudoun are now tapping water stored in isolated, unpredictable fissures in the surrounding rock.
  - In recent decades, a number of community water systems have been built. Unlike parcels with private residential wells and septic systems, these community systems send used water directly into stream and river systems rather than back into the ground reducing local groundwater recharge.
  - Development has increased areas of impervious surfaces, resulting in greater runoff and reduced groundwater recharge.

Collectively, these facts confirm that our groundwater is threatened. The evidence shows that water tables are falling in many areas of western Loudoun. The available data quality is not, however, able to identify imminent groundwater supply threats to specific neighborhoods and properties. LCPCC emphasizes that while the “red blob” map provided in its report accurately illustrates general conditions throughout the area, it should not be used to draw conclusions about access to water on specific properties. Additional monitoring, modeling and analysis is needed to help identify impacts at the neighborhood or property scale.