



Tainted by uranium, on groundwater contamination

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Highlights

- Study, published in Environmental Science and Technology Letters, has found over 30 micrograms per litre (mcg/l) of the heavy metal in parts of north-western, southern and south-eastern India.
- Drinking such water can damage one's kidneys, and the World Health Organization prescribes 30 mcg/l as an upper limit. Unfortunately, the residents of the regions surveyed were using the contaminated wells as their main source of drinking water.
- These findings highlight a major gap in India's water-quality monitoring. As the Bureau of Indian Standards does not specify a norm for uranium level, water is not tested regularly for it.
- This contamination is known to result in chronic kidney disease (CKD). The Environmental Science paper identified two types of terrains with heavy contamination.
- In Rajasthan and other north-western regions, uranium occurs mostly in alluvial aquifers; while in southern regions such as Telangana, crystalline rocks such as granite seem to be the source.
- When groundwater is over-extracted from such soils, the researchers suggest, the uranium is exposed to air, triggering its release.

Source: [The Hindu](#)

