“Recycled Water” at Rock Quarries
What It Really Means for Our Wells

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Initial Monitoring Results: A Clear Warning

- The **initial well data** from the monitoring network off of FM 3509 "Hoover Valley Road" show a **strong correlation** between the water pumped from the **Asphalt Inc. Test wells** and the declining water levels in nearby residential wells. This confirms what many of us feared — that large-scale groundwater withdrawals for **industrial** use will **adversely impact surrounding homeowners** and will continue to have a **long-term effect on the Burnet County aquifer** if left unchecked.

What the APOs Are Saying

Aggregate Production Operations (APOs) and rock-crushing facilities often claim that they will use **“mostly recycled” or “reclaimed” water** for dust abatement. While that sounds responsible, the truth is far more complicated — and far less sustainable — especially in our **hot, dry, windy Texas Hill Country environment**.

Recent Picture above shows the APO’s in Marble Falls – You can decide how well the TCEQ approved Air Quality Permit for dust control is working!

What Really Happens to That Water

APOs spray large amounts of water on roads, crushers, conveyors and stockpiles to keep dust down. Some of this water is collected in ponds and reused, but a large share is permanently lost through **evaporation, drift, leakage, and infiltration**.

Here's a breakdown based on environmental and engineering data:

Source of Water Loss	Typical Loss %	Explanation
Evaporation	20–40%	Fine mist evaporates instantly in 90–100°F air and low humidity.
Overspray & Drift	10–20%	Wind carries water away from target areas.
Infiltration / Leakage	10–30%	Water seeps into unlined roads, pits, or leaks from ponds and pipes.
Carried Offsite	2–5%	Water leaves with crushed rock, truck tires, and equipment.

Even under **best-case engineered conditions** (world class systems with lined ponds and closed-loop systems), at least **20–30%** of the water is lost for good.

But most APOs in Burnet County operate **open-air, unlined systems**, where **40–70% of their water use is effectively consumed** — gone from the aquifer forever.

The Real Numbers Behind “Recycling”

Let’s put this in perspective:
The Air Quality permit granted to Asphalt Inc. by TCEQ lists water usage for dust abatement at 21,600 - 324,000 gallons per day.

An APO pumping **300,000 gallons of water per day** for dust control may claim it’s “recycling” the water — but in reality:

At **50% loss**, that’s **150,000 gallons/day** gone.
Over a month, that’s **4.5 million gallons** permanently removed from the aquifer.

That’s equivalent to the **monthly water use of about 600 Burnet County households**.

Why It Matters

These “recycling” claims can sound environmentally friendly, but they **mask the true groundwater impact**. Every gallon lost to evaporation or infiltration comes directly from the same **aquifers that supply our homes and wells**.

The **Central Texas Groundwater Conservation District (CTGCD)** manages local well permits, but current permits often **don’t account for total water loss** — only for the amount pumped. That gap makes it critical for residents to stay informed and involved.

- **Ask CTGCD and TCEQ** to require complete **water-balance reporting** in APO permit applications. *More information will be provided in future SaveBurnet.com updates.*
- **Support and expand well monitoring** programs to document water level changes.
- **Share this update** with neighbors and encourage them to subscribe at SaveBurnet.com.
- **Stay engaged** — data and persistence are our strongest tools to protect our wells and the Texas Hill Country we love.