

What is the Difference Between a Cistern and a Large Diameter Water Well?

Cistern

A cistern can be used as a type of underground water storage system. Cisterns do not allow drainage and do not collect groundwater. In general, a cistern is no more than 40 feet deep. Often cisterns are bell shaped to hold more water. Cisterns collect rainwater and store it for future use. The water levels are inconsistent and vary depending on rainfall events.

Cisterns are not regulated by Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) because they do not produce or monitor groundwater.

Large Diameter (Hand Dug) Water Well

Large diameter wells are either hand dug or dug with a bucket rig. A water well allows water to seep into the well through seams in the well wall. These wells are often lined with bricks or cement tiles. Water levels in these remain consistent. A large diameter well can range from ten to one-hundred feet deep, depending on the depth to groundwater in the area. TDLR regulates these wells because they either produce groundwater or monitor shallow groundwater.

Resources and Useful Links

- *TDLR Water Well Drillers and Pump Installers* webpage, <https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/wwd/>

Other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

To find additional FAQs visit the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee's FAQ webpage at <https://tgpc.texas.gov/frequently-asked-questions-faqs>.