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Bubbles in the Bath

I just returned from the ranch in South Dakota and marvel at the differences in daily life between the pre-well days and the post-well days. Water is life, and this holiday season is even more special, as the quality of daily ranch life has improved immensely. I understand that if you have not lived on the parched prairies, this makes very little sense. However, this ranch has always been dependent on the rains, and now the well give us hope.

Previously, we have described the drought ([news0904-prairie.php](#); [news0804-prairie.php](#); [news0704-prairie.php](#); [news1003-prairie.php](#)), which affects all aspects of ranch life, including personalities, budgets, and perspectives. Our previous well ran 5 gallons of very hard water per minute, however even that dried up in the last couple of years, and we had to haul more hard water from several miles away. This makes cooking, drinking, cleaning, washing, showering a challenge. The new well is pumping 250 gallons a minute, and the water is soft.

I have written of transformative teaching and learning, but I never thought I would ever be writing of the transformative power of soft well water. However, last week on the ranch, I washed clothes whenever I wanted; I took long showers; I let the water run in the kitchen sink as I rinsed the dishes. In what follows, are a few additional aspects of daily life, which I relished:

- Instead of the hard water making my hair feel like thistles and my face feel like paper, the soft water makes my hair and skin silky;
- Instead of the limited hard water spotting the dishes, the soft water leaves them clean and shiny;
- Instead of a dry white powdery ring on the bottom of the bathtub, we now have bubbles in the bath. I assure you we have never had bubbles on this ranch.

Dare I hope that we might be able to actually ~use~ the dishwasher? Stay tuned. I'm even beginning to dream about watering plants and trees, whenever they need it!