

PHYSICO- CHEMICAL ANALYSIS OF GROUND WATER OF AJMER CITY IN RAJASTHAN

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ABSTRACT

The physico-chemical analysis of ground water quality of Ajmer city in Rajasthan is presented in this paper. It is important from this point of view to observe the suitability of water for safe drinking and irrigation. The different parameters measured are calcium hardness, magnesium hardness, total hardness, As^{3+} , Cd^{2+} , Pb^{2+} , Hg^{2+} , TDS, F^- , Cl^- , NO_3^- , SO_4^{-2} alkalinity, carbonate hardness, pH and conductivity. From the observed data it is found that parameters like conductivity, TDS, F^- , NO_3^- and hardness are higher in concentration from prescribed values. From the analysis of ground water quality, it is observed that some of the sites are not suitable for drinking purpose as well as domestic purpose.

Key words: Ground water quality, Different parameters.

INTRODUCTION

Water is one of the foremost essential components and it is essentially required by all living organisms¹. Availability of good quality water for drinking purpose is very essential for healthy human society.² About 80% of the earth's surface is covered by water. Out of the estimated 1,011 million Km³ of the total water present on earth, only 33, 400 Km³ of the total water is available for drinking, domestic and industrial consumption. The rest of the water is locked up in oceans as salt water, polar ice caps, glaciers and underground. Ground water is also one of the earth's renewable resources, which occur as a part of hydrological cycle. The quality of ground water is the resultant of all the processes and reactions that act on the water from the moment; it condenses in the atmosphere to the time it is discharged by well. Therefore, determining ground water quality is important to observe the suitability of water for particular purpose^{3,4} through anthropogenic and other sources like different land conditions, rain conditions, and use of different chemical pesticides and different depths of bore wells. Continued economic growth, green revolution, urbanisation⁵

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and increase in health consciousness are posing enormous stress and threat to the limited fresh water resources. The 26th December, 2004 Tsunami has major impact on the quality of ground water⁶ along the south east coast of India. The Tsunami flooded large coastal areas, destroyed vegetation and greatly affected ground water supply. Water quality monitoring involves the sampling and testing of water sources of the public at specific intervals and at different locations. Constant, regular and effective monitoring of water sources can ensure and help in effective water quality management⁷.

Natural ground water bodies are subjected to pollution comprising of organic and inorganic constituents. Among the inorganic constituents, metals have been recognized as the most harmful pollutants because they are not biodegradable and often have long term toxic effects. A number of metals are present at trace levels in residential and industrial waste water. These trace metals, significantly As, Cd, Pb, and Hg are considered to be highly toxic while Cu, Zn and Fe etc. can also be considered so, at appropriate levels^{8, 9}.

The present report discusses the results of physico-chemical analysis of ground water from different points of Ajmer city and surrounding area with reference to its suitability for various uses.

EXPERIMENTAL

Matrials and methods

The water samples have been collected from 22 hand pumps of Ajmer city. Geographically, Ajmer is situated in 26° 27' N latitude and 74° 44' E longitudes on the lower slopes of Taragarh hill, in the Aravalli range. The annual rainfall is below 500 mm. showing a semi-arid climate. The North-Western part is covered with sand dunes and rest of the area is generally flat. Hydrogeologically the major part of the region is occupied by crystalline rocks comprising of calc-schist, amphibolites/Calc-gneiss and biotite schist and alluvium of younger age are other important formations. A small occurrence of fluorspar in Ajmer, has also been reported.

The study has been initiated from July 2006 to Dec. 2009 in different seasons viz; premonsoon, monsoon and postmonsoon period to check the various physico-chemical parameters. Samples have been collected in clean and sterilised polyethylene bottles of 2 L capacity. Standard methods with precise instruments are used to test the samples as per the literature method¹⁰ (APHA and AWWA). All the chemicals and solvents are of AR grade (Sigma-Aldrich). The location of sampling stations (Table 1) and their surrounding are shown in Fig. 1.

land Pump No.*	Location
359	Opp Post Office, Ramnagar, Pushkar Road
355	Near Gents Toilet, No. 2, Pushkar Rd, Vishram Sthal
909	Bathroom No.1, Pushkar Road, Vishram Sthal
898	Near Wall Pushkar Road, Vishram Sthal
472	Lakdi ki Tall, Pushkar Road
471	Near. Graveyard, Pushkar Road
288	Near RSEB Chowki, Vaishali Byepass
1160	House No. 20/17, Near Dumb & Deaf School
558	Near Ashiyana Sadan, Link Road
164	Ana-Sagar Link Road
613	infront of Mahadev Mandir, ASC Road,
167	Near Kamla Devi Nursing Home ASC Road
155	Infront of Jawahar Rang Munch, Lohagal Road
199	Shantipura, ASC Road,
264	Opp. BOB, ASC Road, Vaishali
250	Near RIICO Unit, Vaishali
256	Infront of Shri Krishna Store, Vaishali Nagar
375	Pancholi Choraha, Ramnagar
372	Govt. Sec. School, Ramnagar
402	Near Chouhan Auto Repairs, Rishi Ghati
398	Near Bhagchand ki Kothi, Rishi Ghati
198	Sunder Villas Gali, Subhash Bagh Road

Table 1: Sampling stations



Fig. 1: Description of study area (Ajmer city)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of water analysis of the samples collected are summarized in Table 1 and the observed results for different parameters for three seaons for twenty two hand pumps are shown in Fig. 1 in order to visualize the quality and their trends in deterioration over different seasons.

The physico-chemical investigation of the water samples for the following features of the ground water viz; calcium hardness, magnesium hardness, total hardness, As, Cd, Pb, Hg, TDS, fluoride, chloride, nitrate, sulphate, alkalinity, carbonate hardness, pH and conductivity etc. have been analyzed by standard methods and compared with standards of the World Health Organization (WHO) and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). The findings of these major chemical parameters have been summarized in Table 2.

		Cond.	782.72	3600	1821	189.44	1756.8	1778.4	547.36	2448	1252.8	707.84	1296	928.8	005.92	2088	1728	452.96	1339.2	2030.4	4968	4320	3628.8	Cont
		μd	7.8 1	7.2	7.8	7.9	7.6	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.6	7.8 1	7.6	7.7	7.8 2	7.7	7.8	7.9 1	7.6	7.6	7.9	7.7	7.7	
		CO ₃ ⁻² Hardness	60	360	240	70	60	70	250	230	170	120	180	150	240	250	400	260	120	540	220	280	400	
		Alkali- nity	410	360	590	480	470	470	540	230	230	400	220	220	370	250	250	260	120	120	500	360	360	
mples		SO_4^{-2}	235	205	216	150	145	140	165	160	188	120	104	130	100	92	150	78	68	170	230	220	220	
ater sa		NO3 ⁻	60	170	130	5	5	45	100	65	45	35	20	45	30	90	35	100	145	45	15	15	20	
m pun		CI	240	245	240	140	135	139	430	470	170	290	180	110	800	410	300	220	200	270	1360	1100	760	
of grou		L.	3.5	3.2	5.9	6.8	6.6	6.2	3.2	3.5	3.9	3.3	4.9	5.4	1.6	1.9	2.4	0.5	0.6	0.9	2.2	3.2	3.8	
eters o	meters	SQT	1238	2500	1265	826	1220	1235	1769	1700	870	1136	006	645	1393	1450	1200	1009	930	1410	3450	3000	2520	
param	Para	${\rm Hg}^{2+}$	0.002	0.003	0.023	0.001	Nil	0.012	0.013	0.011	0.012	0.045	0.023	0.023	0.011	0.012	Nil	0.01	Nil	0.021	Nil	Nil	0.023	
sico-chemical		\mathbf{Pb}^{2+}	0.001	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.035	0.02	0.03	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.04	0.01	0.01	
		\mathbf{Cd}^{2+}	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.01	0.01	Nil	0.01	0.07	0.001	0.002	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.004	0.01	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.05	0.006	0.003	
2: Phy		As^{3+}	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.86	1.06	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.01	0.23	0.56	0.88	0.13	0.21	1.5	1.2	0.11	0.16	0.15	
Table		Total Hardness	90	420	240	70	60	70	250	300	170	120	180	150	240	350	400	270	380	650	220	280	400	
		Mg ²⁺ Hardness	40	400	140	20	30	30	80	240	80	40	120	09	80	300	180	110	310	09	140	110	240	
		Ca ²⁺ Hardness	50	20	100	50	30	40	170	09	06	80	60	90	160	50	220	160	70	590	80	170	160	
		S. P.	Α	В	C	A	В	C	Α	В	C	Α	В	С	Α	В	С	Α	В	C	Α	В	С	

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							Par	ameters								
S. P.	Ca ²⁺ Hardness	Mg ²⁺ Hardness	Total Hardness	AS^{3+}	Cd ²⁺	Pb^{2+}	Hg^{2+}	SQT	Ľ.	CI-	NO3 ⁻	$\mathrm{SO_4}^{-2}$	Alkali- nity	CO ₃ ⁻² Hardness	μd	Cond.
Α	60	100	160	0.14	0.002	0.01	0.024	980	1.7	170	35	130	440	160	7.8	1411.2
В	40	180	220	0.06	0.001	0.01	0.021	950	1.7	180	25	124	250	220	7.8	1336
C	140	70	210	0.08	0.001	Nil	Nil	860	2.2	160	20	180	250	210	7.8	1238.4
A	90	60	150	0.09	0.04	0.001	Nil	860	0.9	170	50	80	240	150	7.9	1238.4
В	50	260	310	0.06	0.06	0.001	0.017	930	1.5	130	95	92	220	220	7.8	1339.2
C	160	140	300	0.07	0.07	0.01	Nil	700	1.6	110	25	210	220	300	7.8	1008
Α	160	140	300	0.05	0.08	0.02	0.025	1220	0.7	190	45	96	500	300	7.8	1756.8
В	09	330	390	1.1	0.08	0.03	Nil	940	1.3	130	90	92	230	230	7.8	1353.6
С	150	120	270	1.2	0.08	0.02	Nil	5660	1.2	90	45	110	230	270	7.6	950.4
A	90	270	360	1.4	0.09	0.05	Nil	1225	1.3	230	60	130	440	360	7.9	1720.8
В	70	310	380	0.01	0.04	0.04	0.023	1195	1.2	210	165	124	280	280	7.6	1720.8
C	160	200	360	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.024	1040	1.3	180	40	130	280	360	Τ.Τ	1497.6
Α	100	270	370	0.04	0.05	0.01	0.011	1180	1.7	210	90	130	290	220	7.9	1699.2
В	130	230	360	0.06	0.06	0.02	Nil	1150	0.8	200	160	124	240	240	7.8	1656
С	180	40	420	0.07	0.08	0.02	0.027	925	1	140	160	140	240	420	7.6	1332
Α	100	10	110	0.05	0.05	0.02	Nil	880	1.4	140	20	60	580	110	7.9	1267.2
В	50	60	110	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.013	360	1.8	40	20	48	120	110	7.8	518.4
C	110	60	170	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.025	280	0.5	50	210	50	120	170	7.8	403.2
Α	90	190	280	0.06	0.04	0.03	0.021	2030	0.6	540	160	196	280	0	7.8	2923.2
В	09	460	520	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.021	1800	0.8	410	155	184	160	160	7.6	2592
С	240	230	470	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.011	1500	0.9	290	45	150	160	470	7.7	2160
															-	Cont

	ss pH Cond.	7.9 2563.2	7.7 2448	7.6 1656	7.7 1065.6	7.8 1166.4	7.7 892.8	7.8 1281.6	7.6 1116	7.8 921.6	7.9 1843.2	7.7 1908	7.8 2001.6	7.8 2822.4	7.8 2116.8	7.6 2088	7.9 2563.2	7.6 2224.3	7.7 1857.6	7.9 4176	7.6 4075.2	7.8 3844.8	7.8 2044.8	7.6 1800	
	CO ₃ ⁻² Hardnes	230	370	380	160	230	270	200	200	310	310	220	100	400	410	320	530	200	260	290	220	530	200	190	
	Alkali- nity	530	410	410	390	230	230	400	200	200	280	100	100	670	320	320	580	250	250	290	220	220	420	190	
	${\rm SO_4}^{-2}$	170	160	160	100	96	108	110	104	120	155	148	160	135	128	220	170	164	120	172	164	228	160	152	
	NO_{3}^{-}	125	155	200	35	40	70	30	80	80	100	120	40	125	125	150	125	15	160	80	25	140	09	100	
	Cl	360	460	190	110	120	60	120	150	100	240	280	310	370	250	300	270	270	140	820	006	660	240	250	
s	Ţ	1	2.8	0.3	3.7	0.9	0.5	0.8	1.2	1.2	1.5	0.7	0.9	1	2.1	2.6	2.9	1.1	1.3	1.7	0.8	1.2	1.2	1.5	
ameter	SQT	1780	1700	1150	740	810	620	890	775	640	1325	Nil	1390	1960	1470	1450	1780	1545	1290	2900	2830	2670	1420	1250	
Par	${\rm Hg}^{2_+}$	0.014	0.015	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.014	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.021	0.021	0.023	0.025	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.022	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	Nil	Nil	
	${ m Pb}^{2+}$	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.05	0.06	Nil	0.01	Nil	0.01	0.01	Nil	0.001	0.001	0.02	
	\mathbf{Cd}^{2+}	Nil	0.03	Nil	0.001	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.056	Nil	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.04	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.01	
	${\rm As}^{3_+}$	0.07	0.04	0.01	Nil	0.05	0.06	1.01	1.04	1.1	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.02	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.01	
	Total Hardness	300	370	380	270	270	270	200	250	310	220	390	400	410	410	530	200	350	260	590	066	740	200	300	
	Mg ²⁺ Hardness	190	290	250	120	190	210	110	160	90	140	330	90	270	300	290	120	300	09	280	930	140	50	80	
	Ca ²⁺ Hardness	110	80	130	150	80	60	90	90	220	80	60	310	140	110	240	80	50	200	310	60	600	150	220	
I	S. P.	A	В	C	A	В	C	A	В	C	A	В	C	A	В	C	Α	В	C	Α	В	C	A	В	

Hardness is defined as the some of polyvalent cation present in the water, notably calcium and magnesium. Calcium and magnesium are the two major scale forming constituents in most raw water supplies. The presence of calcium and magnesium in ground water is mainly due to its passage through or over deposits of limestone, dolomite, gypsum and other gypsiferous materials. Calcium content in all experimental water samples is varying from 20 to 600 ppm. Calcium salts are non-toxic except at very high doses (100 mL for 20 days) in human body, hyper calcemia causes comma and death, if in serum; calcium level rises to 160 ppm. The suggested limit of calcium is 75 ppm. Magnesium in too high concentration causes nausea, muscular weakness and paralysis in human body, when it reaches up to the level of about 400 ppm. The suggested limit of magnesium is 80 ppm (WHO), in this area magnesium concentration has been observed from 10 to 930 ppm.

The permissible limit of hardness in drinking water according to WHO is 600 ppm. Total hardness at some stations has been found much higher than the said limit. The total hardness (Ca^{2+} , Mg^{2+} , Cl^- , SO_4^{2-}) of all water samples has been found to be above the permissible limits, varying from 60 to 990 ppm. This is mainly attributed to natural action i.e. rock, weathering rather than man made pollution, which has been affecting the soil nature like aeration and permissibility of earth surface.

The environmental presence of arsenic derives from both; natural and anthropogenic sources. It occurs naturally when aquifers pass through bedrock containing arsenic. Significant amounts of arsenic are also introduced into the environment from anthropogenic sources, metal mining and smelting being the most important. Arsenic is a carcinogen and a potential health hazard¹¹ known to produce skin, bladder & lung cancers and diarrheal diseases. According to some current estimates, approximately 1.8 million people still die every year from diarrheal diseases¹² mostly in developing countries (WHO, 2008). The WHO and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommended limit for arsenic in drinking water is currently 10 μ g/L (WHO, 2006).

Cadmium is extensively used in the manufacture of batteries, paints, plastics etc. It is also used in plating iron products such as nuts and bolts for corrosion protection. At extreme levels¹³, it causes an illness called itai-itai disease characterised by brittle bones and intense pain. Exposure for prolonged periods at low levels causes high blood pressure, sterility among males, kidney damage and flue like disorders. The maximum and minimum concentration of cadmium has been registered to be 0.09 and nil ppm.

Lead (II) is the abundant of the natural heavy metal. The primary form of lead in nature is galena (PbS), a relatively insoluble ore. Lead also occurs as plattnerine (PbO₂), cerussite (PbCO₃) and anglesite (PbSO₄). From the observation, lead content in water

samples has been found from nil to 0.07 ppm. The sources of lead to water is, manufacture of pesticides, insecticides and storage batteries or from contact with gasoline containing lead activities. Lead poisoning¹⁴ has been recognized for many years. Higher level exposure of lead in the water system, results in metallic taste. Simultaneously, the lead may be redistributed i.e. deposited in bones, teeth or brain. In bones, lead is immobilized and does not contribute to the general toxic symptom of the patient. Organic lead compounds have an affinity for the central nervous system and produce lesions there. A dry burning sensation in the throat, cramps, etching and encrusted with the coagulated proteins of the necrotic mucosa, will occur; thereby, hindering further absorption of the lead muscular spasms, numbness and local palsy may appear.

Mercury is widely used in amalgams, scientific instruments, batteries, arc lamps, extraction of gold & silver and the electrolytic production of chlorine. Its salts are used as fumigants for control of plant disease and insects. The most spectacular incident of mercury poisoning^{15,16} in humans resulted from ingestion of sea food taken from Minamata Bay, Japan during the late 1950's, the high concentration of mercury in the fishes was found to be due to methy-1-magnesium cation and dimethy-1-magnesium, which were shown to be produced by bacterial action in botton muds under anaerobic condition. The maximum permissible limit of Hg in drinking water is 0.002 ppm. (WHO 1984).

Total dissolved solids have ranged from 280 to 5660 ppm. All values are high as compared to permissible limit. This may be due to contamination of inorganic salts like carbonate, chloride, sulphate, nitrate etc. and also organic substance (ketones, esters and carboxylic acids i.e. aromatic or aliphatic) which are generally found in polluted water Dissolved solids are important parameters in water quality management.

Since some fluoride compounds in the earth's upper crust are soluble in water, fluoride is found in both; surface water and ground water of Ajmer district, Rajasthan. In the ground water, the natural concentration¹⁷ of fluoride depends upon the geological, chemical and physical characteristics of the aquifer, the porosity and the acidity of soils and rocks, the temperature, the action of other chemical elements and the depth of wells. Because of the large number of variables the fluoride concentration in ground water varies from 0.1 ppm to more than 11 ppm in Ajmer district¹⁸.

Fluoride is no doubt essential up to 1 ppm according to WHO and BIS. The excess amount of fluoride of water is poisonous¹⁹. High levels of fluoride lead to dental and/or skeletal fluorosis²⁰. Millions of people are suffering from these diseases due to fluoride contamination. The fluoride content of all water samples in the study area ranged from 0.3 to 6.8 ppm.



Variation in Hg

Variation in TDS



Fig. 1: Physico-chemical parameters in ground water at twenty two sites

The chloride contents of water samples has been observed between 40 to 1360 ppm. The chloride contents in the ground water may be contributed from minerals like apatite, mica, hornbleds and also from the liquid inclusions in the igneous rocks. Excess chloride content in water imparts a salty taste. Peoples, those who are not accustomed to high chloride can be subjected to laxative effects²¹. Its permissible limit is 250 ppm and harmless upto 1500 ppm.

Importance of analysing the concentration of nitrate is felt due to its deterious effects on infants. Nitrate poisoning brings about a condition called methemoglobinamea. Nitrate forms nitrosoamines in stomach, which causes gastric cancer.

Nitrogen occurs in water as nitrite or nitrate anion and ammonium cation. Nitrate is present as species of nitrogen in water over a considerable range of condition. The source of nitrate in water may be natural or man made. Naturally present atmospheric nitrogen is fixed as nitrate by soil bacteria "*Nitro bacillus*" which get dissolved into water. Nitrogen of atmosphere is also fixed by lightening, which dissolves in rain water. The excess fertilizer used in agriculture is the major source of nitrate in ground water. Beside these, animal and human being produces considerable amount of nitrogenous organic waste that tend to concentrate in the ground water of surrounding. In all the samples tested, nitrate has been varied from 5 to 210 ppm.

The desirable limit of sulphate in drinking water prescribed by WHO is 200-400 ppm. High values of sulphate are generally not harmful to human beings but high concentration of these may affect the persons, who are suffering from kidney and heart disease. The presence of sulphate in water may result from the dissolution of minerals such as gypsum and anhydrite and from the oxidation of various sulphide minerals such as pyrite and galena. Presence of sulphate has less effect on the taste of water compared to the presence of chloride. High value of sulphate above 500 ppm produces bitter taste to water and exerts adverse effect on human. All the water samples collected have satisfied the drinking water quality so far the presence of sulphate is concerned i.e. 48 to 230 ppm.

Alkalinity of natural water is due to dissociation of salts. The constituents of alkalinity in natural water system mainly include carbonates, bicarbonates and hydroxides. These constituents result from dissolution of mineral substances in the soils and atmosphere. Carbonate and bicarbonate may originate from microbial decomposition of organic matter. The WHO acceptable limit is 200 ppm, beyond this limit, the taste may become unpleasant, where as in the absence of alternate source of water, an alkalinity up to 600 ppm is

acceptible (Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India). The total alkalinity values are ranging from 100 to 670 ppm.

pH value of all these samples has been found with in the limits. pH is the measure of hydrogen ion activity, thus it is a good measure of acidity and alkalinity in water. Presence of phosphates, silicates, borates, fluorides and some other salts in dissociated form may also affect the pH. In very pure waters with dissolved carbon dioxide and in mineral waters in zone of oxidation, the pH may be lowered appreciably. Normally the pH of ground waters ranges between 6.0 to 8.5, but lower or higher values have also been reported in some thermal springs and polluted water²². The pH is the significant factor in dissolution of various minerals in ground water. It controls the solubility of various salts like calcite, dolomite, fluoride etc. The pH is a major parameter in determining the corrosivity of water. In general, with increasing pH value, the rate of corrosion²³increases. The observed pH value varied from 7.2 to 7.8 ppm.

Conductivity is a measure of the current carrying capacity; thus, gives a clear idea of soluble salts present in the soil. Conductivity values are ranging from 403.2 to 4968 μ mohs/cm. All the samples are above the permissible limits. If the conductivity and TDS values exceed, it may lead to scaling in boilers, corrosion and quality degradation of the product.

The study clearly reveals that all the hand pumps chosen for study are not managed properly and show signs of organics and inorganic pollution load. Findings of these investigations cited in Table 2, reveal that these stations being in the near vicinity of Ana Sagar are badly polluted. The stations situated in the slum areas surrounded by motor garages are under the threat of toxic metal load, which is going to affect the people residing in the area using such ground water. In the present state, these sites are not safe for public use and may lead to poor ground water quality. For that, there is an immediate and urgent need for their treatment incorporating the following recommendation.

- Diverting the domestic sewage to flow away from the lake totally.
- Giving proper treatment to domestic sewage and permitting its entry into the lake.
- Quantifying the domestic sewage, which enters into lake and planning for effective sewage treatment plant and minimizing the pollution load.
- Continuous monitoring of water quality in lake will help to take necessary actions in minimising the chances of further deterioration.

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