

Water tank and drilling guys loving the drought

By [David Gemon](#)

24 May 2017

Cape Town's water crisis has seen many companies' cash dry up, while the same crisis has seen new businesses profit.



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A close look at different industries - borehole drilling, water tanks and nurseries - reveals that even in drought, some trades can boom while others must find new ways to adapt to the arid landscape.

Borehole drilling has soared in the Western Cape as residents look for alternatives to the municipal water that is so tightly controlled.

"As it usually happens with any drought conditions, the phones start ringing off the hook," said John Tonkin, editor of *Borehole Water Journal Online*. One place where telephones have been ringing more than usual is Umvoto, a ground water consultancy.

Umvoto's senior geologist Dylan Blake said two years ago he would get just one phone call a month from private home owners asking about a borehole in their garden. Now, Blake said he gets about 10 calls per week.

Perhaps not surprisingly, installation of water tanks that store rainwater has also soared. JoJo tanks have seen an astronomical increase in sales in recent months.

The number of vertical water tanks sold in the Western Cape has increased 186% since October 2016 compared with the same period a year earlier. The increase in sales in Cape Town is at 300%.

Blake said he has also seen a large increase in drilling companies in the province, at least five in the past year.

Although more boreholes are being dug, Cape Town residents are doing less planting and some nurseries are feeling the pinch.

Last week, the city said it was considering Level 4 restrictions, meaning no municipal water is used for outside and non-essential use.

Source: The Times

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