

INSTITUTE CLAIMS NEGEV WATER RECOVERABLE

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[Text] Prof Arye Issar of the Desert Research Institute at Ben Gurion University says that potable water has been discovered in the Negev in quantities sufficient to supply the needs of the State of Israel for 100 years and more.

Prof Issar notes that the calculations of the Institute investigators indicate that at various depths in the Negev terrain there are reserves containing about 300 cubic meters of water.

According to him various studies conducted in the region indicate that beneath these strata lie additional strata containing less potable water but which, by means of modern technology such as "sweetness osmosis," it would be possible to pump from the earth's depths. In order to exploit the water reserves, Prof Issar proposes that tunnels be dug below the surface of the earth, similar to the manner in which coal or ore is mined. According to the plan laid out by researchers of the Desert Research Institute, shafts (whose depths have not yet been determined) should be sunk at the edges of the Arava and should progress from the base of the shaft in the direction of the tunnels within the stratum where the water is found. In the tunnel an orifice will be located through which the water will be directed toward the shaft, and by the use of pumps the water will be raised to the surface. On the radio program "New World," which was broadcast yesterday, the scientist stated that the water reserves mentioned are to be found beneath most of the ground of the Negev and the Sinai and that from a hydrobiological standpoint they are a continuation of water reserves in the Sahara Desert. "The implication is that Israel is blessed with a sea of water beneath the terrain of the Negev. We propose a modern approach and if it is our intention to solve the water crisis in the Arava, we must begin immediately with a program of digging," Prof Arye Issar emphasizes.

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