



*The exposed wooden pilings beneath a St. Charles Street home*

# Groundwater Trust To Build 100 Wells

**by Samuel J. Scott**  
**Courant News Writer**

The Groundwater Trust will announce this Wednesday that it plans to build 100 new groundwater observation wells this fall, according to a trust official.

The trust's announcement will occur as part of a 6 pm public meeting at the Boston Public

Library to update residents on efforts to study and combat declining groundwater levels.

The trust will also give water readings from various new wells that have been installed in neighborhoods including the Back Bay, Beacon Hill, South End and Fenway, according to trust co-chairman Tim Mitchell.

"I think we'll have to report

that it's mixed news," he said. Initial readings from the new wells have suggested that water levels close to them might be low, but the trust will take additional measurements to confirm the readings, Mitchell added.

At the meeting, various city and state officials will also inform residents of their efforts

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to fight declining water levels throughout the city, according to Antonia Pollak, the city official selected by the mayor to handle groundwater concerns.

Pollak said water levels near St. Charles Street in the South End have been recharged, and officials are investigating how water is leaking from the ground. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is also researching whether water levels might rise on their own, she added.

Carter Jefferson of the Groundwater Emergency Taskforce, a recently formed group of residents who are encouraging the city and state to address the problem, said he was pleased with the efforts.

"It looks like the city and state are making a serious effort," he said. "We hope this continues, and we appreciate their keeping us informed. There's a tremendous amount of work still to be done, and we're pleased to see it's gotten started."

State Representative Paul Demakis, however, offered cautionary advice to the city and

state officials who will discuss the falling water levels, an issue that has concerned many residents who fear that their properties are at risk.

"It is very important that city and state officials convey a sense of real progress on this issue at this meeting," said Demakis.

Many buildings in local neighborhoods rest on wooden pilings immersed in groundwater. If water levels decline enough to expose the wood to air, property foundations could begin to rot.