

330 Wells to Hike Troop Ration

TAN SON NHUT, Vietnam (IO) —Nothing can improve water like scotch—or U.S. Army Vietnam's (USARV) Engineers.

A program has been launched in September to dig more than 330 wells so troops can have 100 gallons of potable water per man every day.

According to Lt. Col. Martin A. Kendall of New York, chief, Repair and Utility Div., USARV Engineer Office, an average of 25 gallons of water is now provided per man. In some isolated Army areas, however, men are receiving less than the average.

Most of the water used by troops in Vietnam is being

trucked from streams and lakes.

Kendall predicted that by the end of February, more than 110 wells will be dug.

Five military and 10 civilian drilling teams are operating throughout the country.

Eugene Ayer, a civilian adviser to the USARV Engineers, says wells 200-250 feet deep take civilian teams approximately 10 days to dig.

"The military is turning to wells to provide water because salt water intrudes very far inland, many surface sources are polluted and have a high mineral content, plus the added security

of having an internal water supply," Kendall said.

Water now used by the Army is surface-supplied and is cleaned by portable purification units.

Kendall reported that for the well-digging project, USARV Engineers are using French maps to locate well sites.

Long Binh Post, a 25 square-mile military complex 18 miles north of Saigon, is expected to have between 65 and 175 wells by the time the post is ready for troop occupancy.

While civilian well-digging teams are working around the clock, the U.S. Army is providing security for the water seekers.