

Wellhead protection is designed to protect public water supply wells. States are required to have wellhead protection programs under the provisions of the 1986 amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. A capture zone for the well (called the wellhead protection area) is designed and a plan is developed and implemented for managing potential contamination sources within the wellhead protection area. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) assigns staff in the Source Water Protection Unit to assist public water suppliers with preparing and implementing wellhead protection plans. MDH administers the state wellhead protection rule Minnesota Rules, Chapter 4720.5100-4720.5590 that sets standards for wellhead protection planning.

Wellhead Protection is a way to prevent drinking water from becoming polluted by managing possible sources of contamination in the areas which supply water to public wells. Wells become polluted when substances that are harmful to human health get in the groundwater. Water from these wells can be dangerous to drink when the level of pollution rises above health standards. Many of our everyday activities can cause pollution. Much can be done to prevent pollution, such as wise use of land and chemicals. The expense of treating polluted water or drilling new wells can also be avoided. Help avoid drinking water contamination by being an environmentally aware citizen. Wellhead protection will be an ongoing need for communities. Everyone has an important part to play in protecting drinking water wells today and for the future.

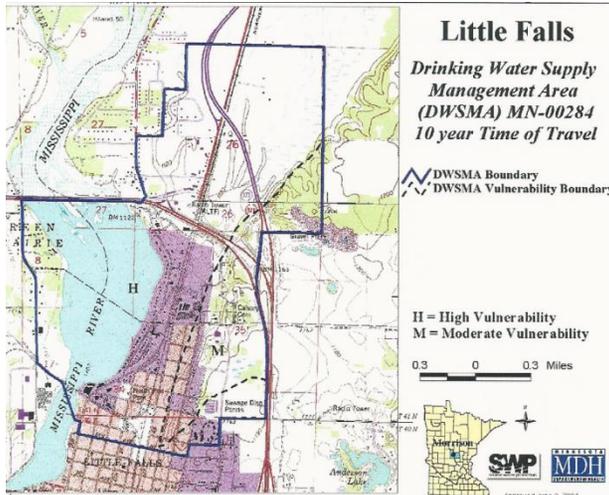
Where Does Your Drinking Water Come From?



The City of Little Falls, MN

Wellhead Protection Plan

A free nitrate clinic will be held from May 6th to May 10th at Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District, co-sponsored with the City of Little Falls. Well samples can be brought in clear Ziploc bags (2-3 oz) to 16776 Heron Rd, Little Falls. For more information call (320) 616-2479 from 8–4:30 Monday - Friday



For More Information Contact:

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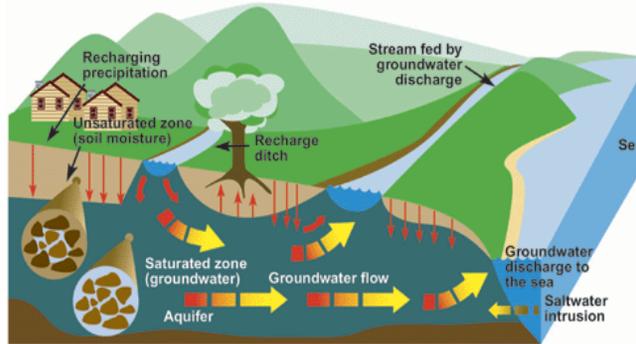


Protecting our Public Water Supply

The residents of Little Falls rely on groundwater for their drinking water supply. The City owns and operates 8 wells located near City Hall. The City wells draw water from a groundwater aquifer located below the land surface. Groundwater aquifers are vulnerable to contamination from human land use activities.

With help from Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Minnesota Rural Water Association (MRWA) and a team made up of local business owners and citizens, the City has implemented a wellhead protection plan that was approved by MDH in accordance with State Rule Requirements. The MDH and MRWA will continue to offer technical assistance in implementing the City's objectives and plans of action.

Groundwater flow



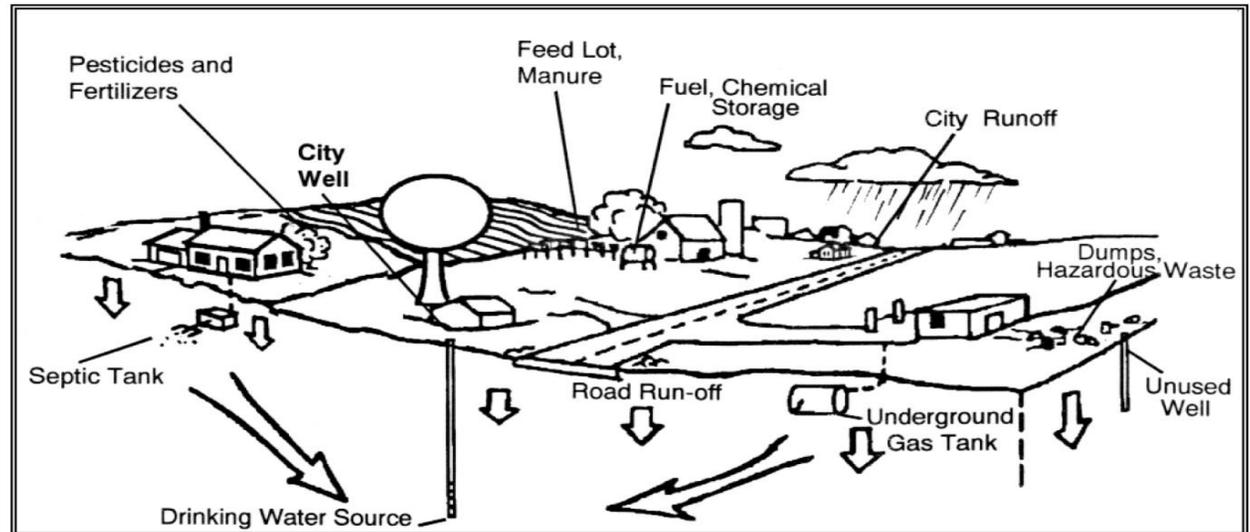
What is Groundwater?

Groundwater is the water that fills the small spaces between rock particles (sand, gravel, etc.) or cracks in solid rock. Rain, melting snow or surface water becomes groundwater by seeping into the ground and filling these spaces. The top of the water-saturated zone is called the “water table”

When water seeps in from the surface and reaches the water table, it begins moving towards points where it can escape, such as wells, rivers, or lakes.

An **aquifer** is any type of geological material, such as sand or sandstone, which can supply water to wells or springs.

The groundwater, which supplies wells, often comes from within a short distance (a few miles) of the well. How fast groundwater moves depends on how much the well is pumped and what type of rock particles or bedrock it's moving through.



Examples of Source Water Contamination