

wellcare[®] information for you about **Where Your Water Comes From**

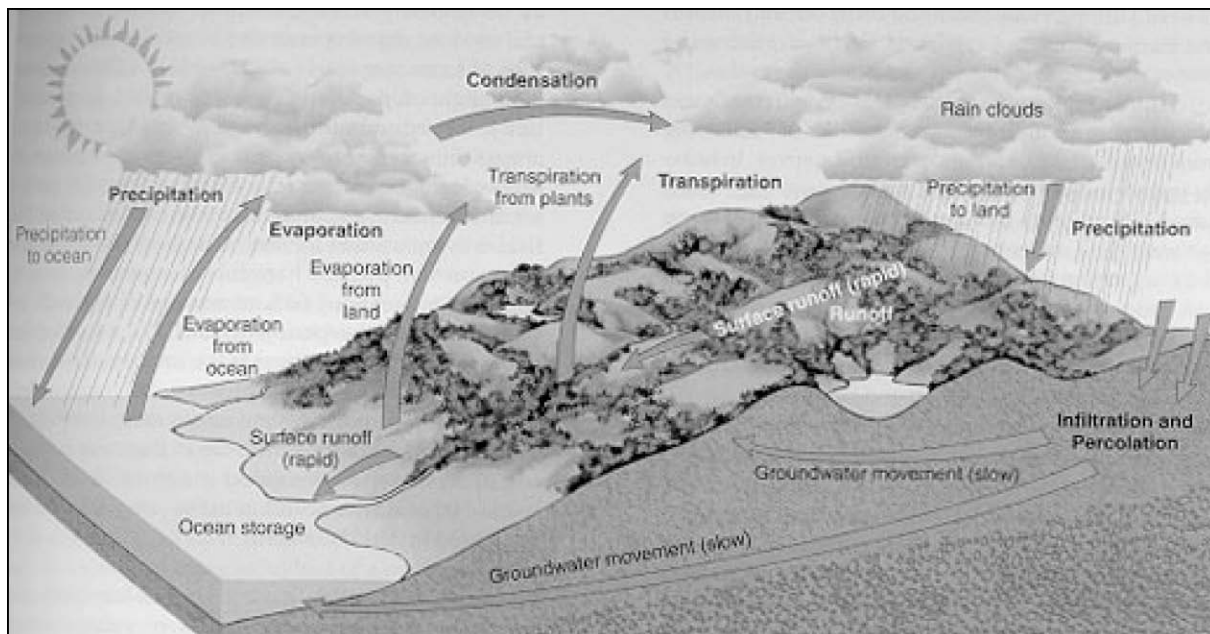
Groundwater is used for drinking water by more than 50% of the people in the United States, including those with private wells and some public water customers. Groundwater is a renewable, reliable resource for cool, pure water.

Groundwater from deep, drilled wells is naturally filtered and less likely to be contaminated than surface water in lakes and rivers. It is also less likely to have shallow well contamination problems, often due to poorly installed septic systems. Deep, drilled wells recharge themselves and can provide a constant, steady supply of water even during bouts of dry weather.

What is Groundwater?

Groundwater, which accounts for 98 percent of the world's fresh water, occurs below the ground, where it is filtered and purified naturally as it passes through layers of the earth. Groundwater is stored in aquifers – layers of soil, sand and rocks – but can come to the surface naturally through a spring or brought to the surface through a well. More than 42 million people in the U.S. depend on individual wells for their drinking water.

Water on the earth is constantly moving. The water cycle, pictured below, describes the continuous movement of water on, above and below the surface of the Earth. Water can change states (liquid, vapor and ice) at various stages of the water cycle.



When water falls as rain, hail or snow, some of it collects as surface water. The rest seeps into the earth to become groundwater. Groundwater flows slowly underground and emerges again as surface water. Evaporation of surface water takes place and the cycle starts again.

Steps You Should Take to Protect Your Groundwater and Well Water

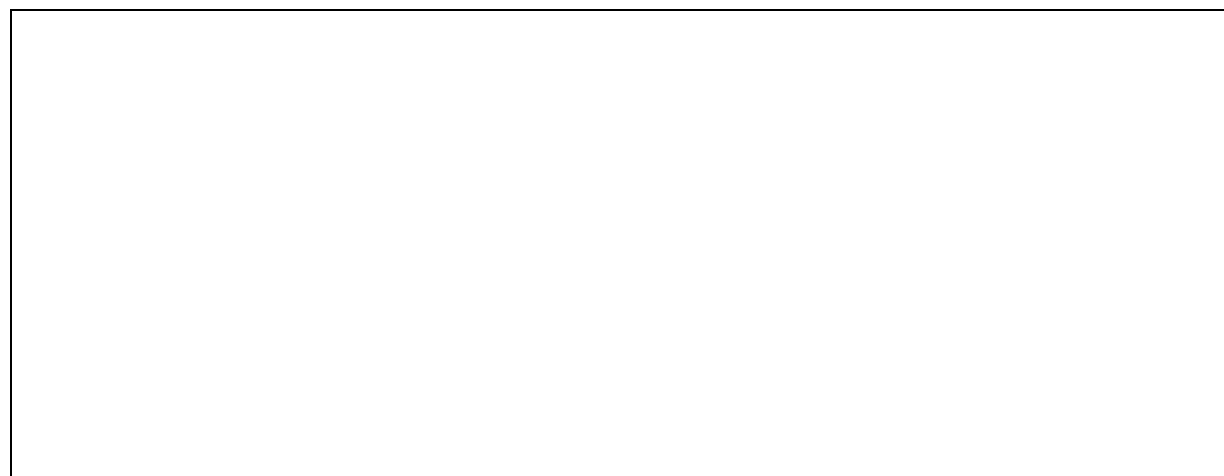
- Maintain your well.
- Keep household chemicals and paint away from your well and dispose of them properly. Take used motor oil to a recycling center.
- Limit your use of pesticides and fertilizers.
- Install a well cap and keep it clear of leaves, mulch, dirt, snow or other materials.
- Be careful when you mow around your well so you don't damage the well casing.
- And remember... even though your well can meet all the water needs of a modern household, it is important to conserve water to protect the nation's ground water resources.

For more information on your Groundwater

Your local well contractor, health department, cooperative extension service and state environmental or natural resources agency can provide you with more information about ground water in your area. You can find them in your telephone directory. Look under "water wells" or "government agencies."

For more information about wells and other wellcare® publications

wellcare® is a program of the **Water Systems Council (WSC)**. WSC is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the wider use of wells as modern and affordable safe drinking water systems and to protecting ground water resources nationwide. This publication is one in a series of wellcare® information sheets. They can be downloaded FREE from the WSC website at www.watersystemscouncil.org. Well owners and others with questions about wells or ground water can also contact the wellcare® hotline at **1-888-395-1033** or visit www.wellcarehotline.org



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