

# What can you do to help protect your drinking water source?

- Clean up your property. Properly dispose of outdated or unused household chemicals stored in your basement, garage, or barn.
- If you have a septic system, have it serviced regularly.
- Reduce the amount of fertilizers, pesticides, or other hazardous chemicals that you use. Buy only what you need so that you don't have to dispose of leftovers. Read all the labels and follow directions.
- Recycle used oil, automotive fluids, batteries, and other products. Don't dispose of hazardous products in toilet, storm drains, wastewater systems, creeks, alleys, or the ground. This pollutes the water supply.
- Properly abandon and plug water wells that are no longer in use.

## For more information about Wellhead Protection



"Safe Water for the Future" is a Purdue Extension program that provides resources on drinking water protection for individuals and communities. For more information, call 765-494-1194 or visit their website at: [www.ecn.purdue.edu/safewater](http://www.ecn.purdue.edu/safewater)



The Indiana Department of Environmental Management's Ground Water Section can provide information on Indiana's Wellhead Protection Program. For more information, call 317-234-7477 or visit their website at: [www.in.gov/idem/cleanwater/2456.htm](http://www.in.gov/idem/cleanwater/2456.htm)



Your local water utility can provide information on what contaminants, if any, have been found in your water, what the community is doing to protect the water, and how you can join the Wellhead Protection Team. For more information, visit the Water Department website at: <http://www.decaturing.org/Services/Water-Department/16>

# Protecting Your Drinking Water:

## Wellhead Protection



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# Ground Water

Ground water moves slowly through soil and rock crevasses to reach underground aquifers. Slow transport through the soil filters and cleans the water. Ground water supplies drinking water to the majority of Indiana residents.

Foreign substances, such as bacteria and chemicals, can be dissolved in water at the surface and transported with ground water into the aquifer, polluting the ground water. Human activity on land can affect ground water quality. For example, agricultural practices can add fertilizers and herbicides to ground water. Industrial activities may add chemicals and metals. Septic systems may add bacteria and household chemicals.

Damaged and abandoned wells can also become a direct conduit for surface or near surface contamination to reach the underlying aquifer.

Once ground water is contaminated, it is very expensive to purify or replace. Protecting our ground water from all sources of contamination can be accomplished through the cooperation of citizens, government, and businesses.

## What can you do to help conserve water?

- Install low-flow showerheads, low-flush toilets, and other water efficient fixtures and appliances
- Turn off the water while shaving, brushing your teeth, or washing your hands.
- Check hoses, water faucets, and water devices periodically for leaks and malfunctions.
- Run only full washing machine and dishwasher loads.
- Mulch around shrubs and small trees to retain soil moisture.
- Keep swimming pools and spas covered to reduce evaporation.

## Wellhead Protection

Wellhead Protection is a program designed to protect your source of drinking water through a program of **pollution prevention**. Ground water constantly moves through the earth toward wells. Wellhead Protection is intended to prevent contamination which occurs on the land surface from reaching the well water below by protecting the land surface above.

As part of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) requirements, a Wellhead Protection Plan has been developed for your community and approved by IDEM. Your community has begun implementation of management strategies and public outreach programs to protect drinking water.

Drinking water protection is the responsibility of all citizens. The Wellhead Protection Plan will ensure that a clean water source is available for your community's current needs and a supply is preserved for future generations.