

PROTECT YOUR WATER SOURCE

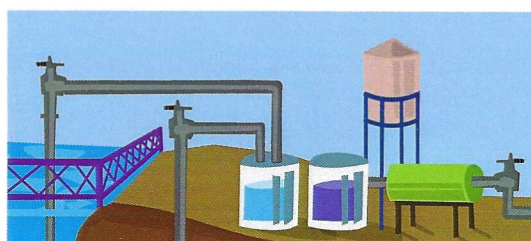
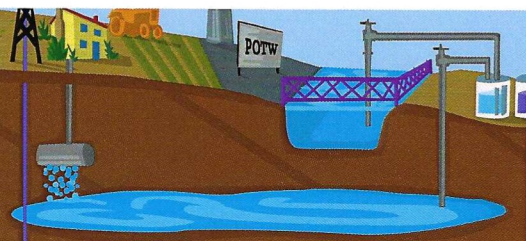


What is Source Water?



Source water is the water we use for drinking. It can be surface water, such as lakes, rivers, bayous and streams, or groundwater, which is the water that gets trapped in the cracks and space between the soil. When it rains, water slowly seeps into the ground, constantly refilling the large underground pools of water referred to as aquifers.

Your water provider collects surface water, groundwater, or a combination of both, then treats it for safety, taste, odor, and appearance. Clean water is then delivered to your sink, shower, and home. The more effectively we protect source water, the better the quality of our drinking water.



Why Protect Source Water?

Protecting source water can reduce potential contamination of drinking water and can reduce treatment costs for drinking water utilities. Protected source water may serve as higher-quality wildlife habitats and provide recreational opportunities for humans.

Learn More About the Program Including Steps You Can Take to Protect Your Source Water

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Source Water Protection:

Visit www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/SWAP

Texas Source Water Protection Program:

Visit www.TexasSWP.org

Get Involved

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) "Don't Mess with Texas" water program helps prevent illegal dumping that impacts Texas source water. Community groups can get involved by calling 512-239-0010 or by emailing pep@tceq.texas.gov.



Report an Environmental Emergency, Discharge, Spill, or Air Release

State of Texas Spill Reporting Hotline and the State Emergency Response Commission:

Call 1-800-832-8224

Visit www.tceq.texas.gov/response/spills

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Response Center:

Call 1-800-424-8802

Never dump anything that you wouldn't want to drink or swim in on the ground, onto the street, down a storm drain, or into a drainage ditch.



Polluted stormwater runoff has been identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as the nation's main cause of water quality problems. As stormwater runs over roofs, driveways, and streets, it can pick up chemicals, oils, dirt, or other pollutants before flowing untreated into source water. The things we do and the items we use every day are potential sources of contamination to source water.

Take these simple steps to help protect our source water during your everyday activities.

Vehicle Maintenance



Maintain vehicles properly and handle fluid changes carefully—just one quart of oil can contaminate 250,000 gallons of drinking water.

- Check your vehicles for leaks and repair them.
- Use a pan to catch the old oil and clean up any spills or drips immediately.
- Recycle motor oil and other vehicle fluids at an approved facility.

Washing cars on pavement sends detergent and chemicals into storm drains and water sources.

- Use biodegradable or environmentally friendly soap.
- Take your vehicle to a car wash with a water recycling and filtration system.

Pet Ownership



Pet waste carries bacteria and up to 75 diseases that can pollute streams and make water unsafe for recreation.

- Clean up after your pet – even in your own yard.

Yard Maintenance



Leaves and grass that enter storm drains lower oxygen in waterways, harming aquatic life.

- Compost yard clippings and leaves. Don't blow them into the street.

Fertilizer runoff, especially phosphorus, fuels algae growth that lowers oxygen which can endanger fish and harms aquatic life.

- Reduce the amount of hazardous waste used at home, such as excess paint, bleach, and fertilizer.
- Dispose toxic and hazardous materials properly, or properly recycle materials.

Waste Disposal



Burning waste releases toxins that can pollute groundwater and nearby waterways.

- Recycle materials such as paper, plastic, glass, and cardboard.
- Compost fruit and vegetable waste.

Home Maintenance



Private water wells tap into groundwater, but without proper maintenance, they can let in contaminants like chemicals, waste, microbes, and heavy metals.

- Inspect your well: the casing should extend above the ground surface.
- Prevent water from flowing towards the well or ponding at its base.
- Keep pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals at least 100 feet away.
- Keep livestock and animal waste at least 50 feet away.



Signs of a failing septic system include soggy leach fields and wastewater backup after heavy rain.

- Pump out your septic tank every two or three years.
- Do not dump things like paint, solvents, chemicals, cleaners, feminine products, grease, or oil down toilets or sinks.



Gas or diesel generators require fuel tanks that can leak and threaten source water.

- Monitor tanks for signs of wear or leaks.
- Keep a spill kit or absorbent materials in the fueling area.
- If you have a spill, contact local emergency services or the TCEQ Spill Reporting Hotline.



Paints, solvents, and other chemicals have the potential to impact water quality.

- Store chemicals indoors and away from floor drains.