



Where Does My Water Come From?

Drinking water comes from either underground or surface water sources.

Groundwater is found in the tiny spaces between soil particles and in cracks in underground rock. Aquifers are the underground areas of soil or rock where substantial quantities of water are found, and are the water source for wells and springs. Of all the fresh water in the world, two thirds is underground, making groundwater one of the Earth's most valuable resources.

London District Chiefs Council Drinking Water Source Protection

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First Nations with the London District Chiefs Council



Surface water is the water found in oceans lakes, rivers streams and ponds. Most Canadians get their drinking water from surface water sources. These two water sources – groundwater and surface water – are interconnected and affect each other. If one water source becomes contaminated, there is a good possibility that the contaminant will eventually make its way into, and contaminate, the other water source.

In Ontario about 80 per cent of residents get their drinking water from surface water and 20 per cent from groundwater sources.



Aside from Caldwell First Nation members and Aamjiwnaang First Nation purchasing municipal water, the remaining six First Nations manage their own drinking water supplies. Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation have their drinking water source from Lake Huron. Bkejwanong Territory (Walpole Island First Nation) has their supply drawn from the St. Clair River. Chippewas of the Thames, Oneida Nation of the Thames and Delaware Nation rely on groundwater as their communal drinking water source. Munsee-Delaware First Nation purchases some service from Chippewas of the Thames Water Treatment Plant but most community members rely on private wells.

Munsee-Delaware First Nation



Munsee-Delaware First Nation falls in the Thames-Sydenham and Region Source Protection Region.

Less than 20 % of the Munsee-Delaware First Nation is serviced by the Chippewas of the Thames Water Treatment Plant. The rest of the community relies on groundwater from privately owned wells.

Wells of all types, municipal and private, urban and rural, pump water from under the ground. This groundwater comes from in or snow that seeps below ground and pools in cracks or spaces in the soil, sand and rock. These underground sources of water are sometimes known as aquifers. The level of groundwater, or the water table, rises and falls depending on the season, temperature, amount of rain or snow and the amount of water withdrawn from the aquifer.

PRIVATE WELLS

INSIDE YOUR WELL

1. Make sure that commercially manufactured well cap or sanitary seal is securely in place.
 - a. The new covers prevent bugs and animals from entering
 - b. Inspect the cover or sanitary seal for cracks and holes.
2. Inspect inside of well with a flashlight once every year.
 - a. early spring after snow melt is a good time
3. Look and listen for signs of surface water seeping or running freely into the well.
4. Look for seepage through cracks or stains bellows joints on the inside of the well casing
5. Remove any debris floating in the well and prevent any more debris from entering
6. Disinfect the well and plumbing with a chlorine solution after doing any work inside the well, or on pumping equipment
7. Check the condition of well vents.
 - a. Look for flaws such as cracks or weakness in the vent tubing.
 - b. Make sure that the fine-mesh screen is in place.



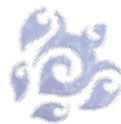
WHEN SHOULD I TEST THE WATER IN MY WELL?

Private wells should be monitored regularly. Watch for changes in water taste, odour and colour. Have a sample of your well water tested through your local health unit for indicator bacteria:

- At least three times per year, with one of those samples done in the spring
- More frequently than three times per year if you know of problems
- More frequently than three times per year if you have a highly vulnerable water supply, or if you are in a critical recharge area, which tends to be very sandy or gravelly.
- After major plumbing or septic work

In addition, you should test for nitrates once every year, or more often if you have livestock or lands with high fertilizer application. Nitrate is a form of nitrogen that is stable in groundwater but levels greater than 10mg per liter can lead to health problems, particularly in young children.

For More Information Contact:
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