

Common Sense Tips for your Household

Store & dispose of hazardous waste properly

Store hazardous materials safely indoors and away from water sources such as wells. Take unused or expired paints, cleaners, pesticides and prescription pills to the local hazardous waste facility.



Maintain your septic

In vulnerable areas, water drains rapidly through the soil. If your septic isn't working right, raw sewage can percolate very quickly into the groundwater below. Regular inspections and pump-outs when due go a long way to protecting water quality & saving money.



Use non-toxic cleaning products * & organic lawn care

Cleaners: check the label or make your own with a vinegar base.
Lawn Care: Cultivate healthy soil with compost; organic methods are cheaper and safer.



Take care when refueling gas tanks or changing oil

Use a drop-cloth to catch spills and dispose of waste oil at proper facility. A single drop of oil can contaminate a million drops of water.



Clean up pet waste / Manage livestock manure

These wastes contain bacteria that can pollute waterways.



Protect Your Water Well

Make sure your well is properly capped and has a surface seal so that no polluted surface run-off can enter the well and get into the groundwater. Do not use a pumphouse to store hazardous materials.



Conserve water

Lower water levels in a source can mean contaminants are more concentrated.



We have the best water! Let's keep it that way and protect it — by taking simple precautions at home.

Resources

Hazardous Waste Disposal

Nanaimo Recycling Exchange

www.recycling.bc.ca | (250) 758-7777

RDN Recycling Directory

www.rdn.bc.ca | (250) 390-6560

Septic Smart

www.rdn.bc.ca

Free information kit & online presentation.

Well Smart

www.rdnwellsmart.ca

Check for upcoming workshops!

***Toxic Smart**

www.georgiastraight.org > pollution & toxics

Find recipes for non-toxic cleaners and a list of harmful ingredients to avoid.

Environmental Farm Plan

www.ardcorp.ca

(250)746-7666

Financial assistance for farmers to protect the groundwater.

MVIHES Automotive Business Outreach

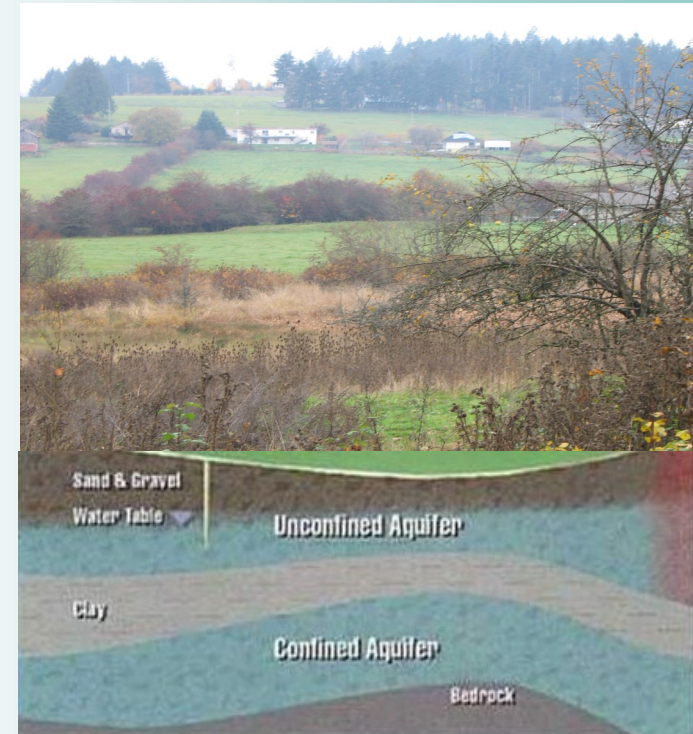
Improve your business and the environment—download a free Guidebook.

www.mvihes.bc.ca

VIU Vulnerability Mapping Project

<http://web.viu.ca/groundwater/>

Do You Live in an Area with a HIGHLY VULNERABLE AQUIFER?



Know what's going on underground & on the surface...
For the sake of clean water!

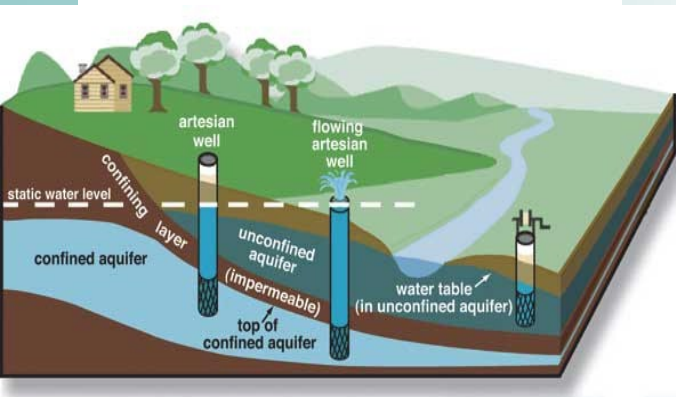


Vulnerable Aquifers are easily contaminated...

An **aquifer** is where water is held underneath the ground surface in the cracks and spaces between rock or sand and gravel .

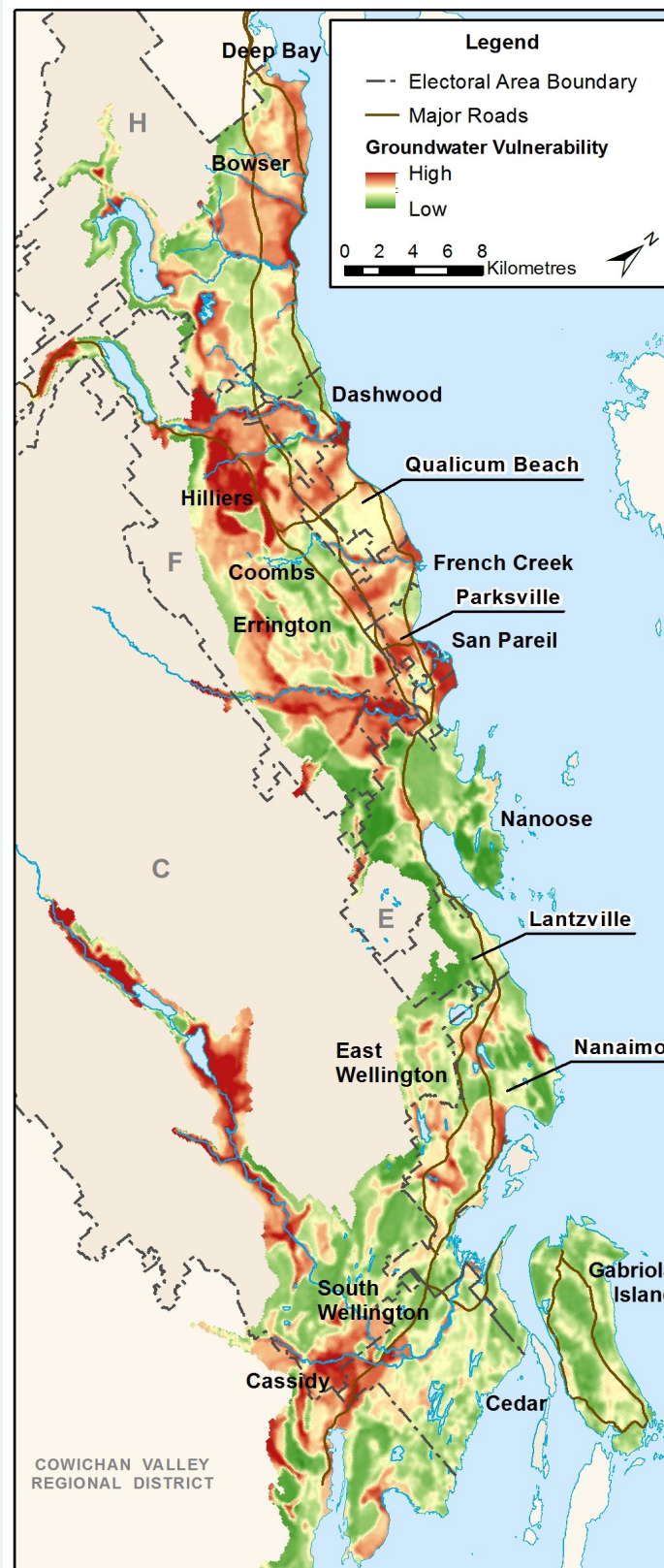
Rain and snowmelt **re-charge** or re-fill the aquifer by seeping down through the soil and becoming **groundwater**.

Water is filtered and cleaned naturally as it flows through the soil and sediments. Of course, deeper soil/sediment provides better filtration. Among other factors, how quickly water gets into the ground influences how vulnerable the groundwater is to contamination....



Contaminants on the ground surface like oil, pesticides, fertilizer, pet/animal waste, paint, anti-freeze etc. can be picked up by the rain water as it runs-off paved surfaces, lawns and fields. This is how water can become polluted on its journey into the aquifer.

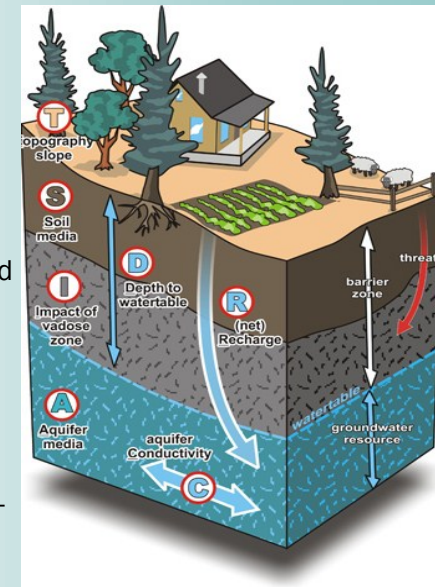
...DRINKING WATER QUALITY IS INFLUENCED BY WHAT YOU DO ON THE LAND.



What Makes an Aquifer Vulnerable?

Depth to Water

— Aquifers that are near the ground surface have less of a barrier between the activities above ground and the water below ground. Shallow soils/rock above the aquifer are limited in their capacity to naturally filter out surface contaminants.



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Amount of Water

that Enters The Ground

— Greater recharge, or flow of water into the aquifer, makes it more likely that contaminants will hitch a ride. Topography (slope of the land) influences this. Flatter ground means higher infiltration rate.

Type of Soil / Substrate Overlaying the Aquifer

— Thin, sandy soils are an ineffective barrier to contaminants. Aquifers that have a layer of clay above them are '**confined**': the impermeable clay layer blocks surface contaminants from reaching the water table. Unconfined sand and gravel aquifers are more vulnerable to contamination.

All groundwater is vulnerable to some degree. "High & Low" are relative characterizations when compared to each other.

High Vulnerability: Groundwater is more susceptible to contamination from the surface.

Low Vulnerability: Groundwater is more protected against surface contamination.