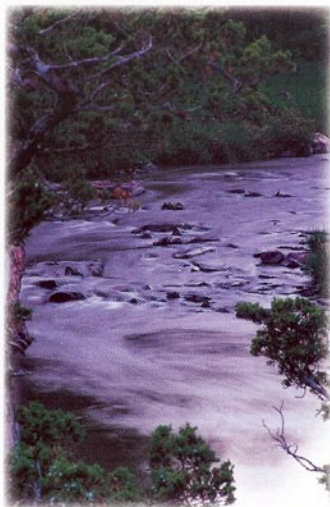


Maryland Rural Source Water Protection



**Quality
On Tap!**

Since 1979

What Is Source Water Protection?



USDA/FSA, MDE, and MRWA

The value of a clean, high quality drinking water supply cannot be overestimated. Public Water Supplies (PWS) invest a considerable amount of time and money in their water systems, so it only makes sense to protect that investment. The high costs associated with developing alternative water supplies or aquifer remediations alone are substantial reasons for making protection of PWS water a number 1 priority.

The SWP Program is meant to be a tool for PWS's to ensure their drinking water remains clean and of high quality now and for future generations. The Program begins with creating a planning team, whose goal is to initiate, lead and oversee the development and implementation of a plan.

The program is designed to be a multi-barrier, multi-jurisdictional approach to protect public drinking water. PWS participation in the protection program is an indication to the public that the community leaders and water system managers are committed to providing the public with quality drinking water. The goal of the program is best described by our motto...



Benefits

Completion of this program leaves a PWS with valuable data about their source water that can be used to help plan for the future. Having the data on hand can also be used to avoid possible conflicts or problems that might otherwise have occurred because the PWS did not have a full understanding of their water source.

There is probably no other environmental area where the adage "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" has as much meaning as it does in water protection.

Why it Is Important?

- Protection from contamination is the key to maintaining good quality water. One way to protect water supplies is to protect the area surrounding the well or surface water intake.
- There is a profound financial impact on communities when their water supply becomes contaminated.
- The only sure way of ensuring a safe quality supply, now and for the future, is to protect the source
- Water can be contaminated from many sources on the land surface, water surface, and underground. Potential sources of contamination include croplands, and lawns with fertilizers and pesticides, septic tanks, mining, industrial impoundments, and accidental spills.
- Growing interest in recreational activities finds larger numbers of people in recharge areas creating the potential for contamination.