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Source Protection



Why protect your drinking water source?

Whether a public water system relies on groundwater or surface water, protection of a water system's source is crucial. Source water is untreated water from streams, rivers, lakes, or underground aquifers that is used to supply both public drinking water systems and private wells. Source water protection:

- ◆ Helps to minimize threats to public health
- ◆ May prevent expensive treatment or the need for source replacement
- ◆ Increases public confidence in drinking water quality

In 1996 the Safe Drinking Water Act was amended, placing a new focus on source water protection. The law requires every state to examine existing and potential threats to the quality of all its public water supplies and to develop a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP). These forward-thinking amendments provide a more holistic approach to drinking water management for two reasons. First, instead of focusing on water treatment, emphasis is placed on contamination prevention. By protecting water sources through activities such as public education, land acquisition, and development of zoning ordinances, water sources can be protected. Secondly, Source Water Protection helps communities understand the inter-relationship between a single drinking water source, other sources, and potential sources of contamination within a landscape. This perspective enables better water resource management.

How can GSRWA help you protect your drinking water supply?

The Granite State Rural Water Association can:

- ◆ Develop a source water plan with your community
- ◆ Facilitate community meetings
- ◆ Provide educational and outreach materials
- ◆ Serve as liaison with state officials
- ◆ Act as a source of technical information
- ◆ Help communities implement protection measures

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