

CLEAN DRINKING WATER IS UP TO YOU!

Where does my drinking water come from?

Your drinking water comes from groundwater. Groundwater is the water that flows through the spaces between soil particles and through fractures in rock. It comes from rain and snowmelt percolating through the ground.

Why should I be concerned?

While some pollutants (such as bacteria, viruses, and phosphorus) can be reduced by passing through soil under certain conditions, groundwater can be easily contaminated by chemicals and oils.

How can I protect my drinking water?

C
H
E
M
I
C
A
L
S

U
S
T

S
E
P
T
I
C

S
Y
S
T
E
M

DO	DON'T
Use non-toxic and less-toxic alternatives to household chemicals such as cleaners, oil-based paints, insecticides.	<i>Don't</i> buy more hazardous chemicals than you need.
Follow package directions on pesticides, fertilizers, and other household chemicals.	<i>Don't</i> over-use household chemicals. More is <i>not</i> better. <i>Don't</i> use pesticides or herbicides near the well. Minimize the use of fertilizers near the well.
Take leftover household chemicals to your community's household hazardous waste collection day.	<i>Don't</i> dispose of hazardous chemicals by pouring them down household drains, into the storm drain, or onto the ground.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your heating oil tank frequently for leaks. • Remove a deteriorating underground storage tank (UST). • Replace it with above-ground storage that has a secondary containment structure and a cover over it. 	<i>Don't</i> have your tank removed by a contractor who is not familiar with State guidelines for UST removal. <i>Don't</i> locate new fuel storage tanks in the recharge area of a well.
Take care of your septic system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep records of septic system maintenance. • Inspect septic tank every year. • Have tank pumped out every two to three years. • Avoid damage to your leach field and distribution lines by keeping vehicles, livestock, and other heavy objects off the leach field. 	<i>Don't</i> overload your septic system with solids by using a garbage grinder (unless the septic system was specifically designed for a grinder). <i>Don't</i> pour grease or cooking oil down the drain; it will clog the soil and leaching system. <i>Don't</i> pour chemicals--including bleach--down the sink or toilet. <i>Don't</i> use septic system cleaners or additives containing acids or chemical solvents such as trichloroethylene (TCE).

For more information, contact _____ at () - _____
or the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection/Drinking Water Program at 617-292-5770