

“Rainfall to Tap”

Lesson #1 - Glossary



Aquifers: An area of permeable materials that can contain and transmit groundwater.

Artesian Well: A well drilled into a confined aquifer. The water is under the pressure of the confining layer above.

Capillary Action: Water moving up hill through spaces in soil and gravel by the water molecules attraction to these particles.

Cone of Depression: The underground area around a well that becomes unsaturated as the well is pumped.

Confined Aquifer: An area of permeable materials that contains water between layers of impermeable materials.

Confining Layer: Impermeable materials deposited by glaciers that allow little or no water to pass through to the underlying aquifer.

Discharge: The outflow of water from a stream or groundwater aquifer. The opposite of recharge.

Drawdown: The lowering of groundwater levels caused by pumping a well.

Filter: A porous device for removing impurities or solid particles from a liquid or gas passing through it.

Glacial Till: Concrete like materials deposited as glaciers advanced that often appears near the surface of the land.

Glaciers: A series of ice sheets that moved and retreated over the Puget Sound Basin depositing clay, sand and gravel that form our aquifers. The last glacial event was over 10,000 years ago.

Groundwater: The water that is found in the spaces between the rocks, sand and gravel underground. Eighty percent of the population of Kitsap County uses groundwater for all their water uses.

Impermeable Surface: Materials that won't allow water to pass through. Examples: asphalt parking lots, rooftops and streets.

Infiltration: The process of water soaking into the soil and underlying aquifers.

Permeability: The rate that water can pass through rock and soil.

Pesticides: A substance used for destroying insects or other organisms harmful to cultivated plants or to animals.

Porosity: The capacity of rock or soil to hold water.

Potable water: Water pure enough to drink.

Recharge: Groundwater being replenished through rain or snow melts.

Root Zone: The part of the soil that can be penetrated by plant roots.

Saturated: When all the spaces between rock and gravel are filled with water.

Saturation Zone: The portion of the earth's crust that is filled with water.

Septic System: A system that manages the waste water on the site of a home or business. It usually consists of a tank, pipes and drain field.

Surface Tension: The sticking together of water molecules that sometimes forms a "skin" on the surface of water.

Surface Water: Water above the surface of the land, including lakes, streams, ponds, floodwater and runoff.

Unconfined Aquifer: Groundwater that is below permeable materials, often right below the water table.

Unsaturated Zone: The zone immediately below the land surface where water infiltrates but is not filled with water.

Water Table: The top of the saturated zone. Materials below are filled with water. Materials above are permeable to water.

Well Cap: Seals installed on the top of well casings used to prevent any solid material or insects from entering the well.

Well Casings: A steel or plastic pipe which serves as the lining of a well, preventing it from caving in and protecting ground water from contamination.

Well Screen: A protective covering that prevents wells from being clogged with materials such as sand and gravel.

Wells: A hole drilled or bored into the earth to obtain water.