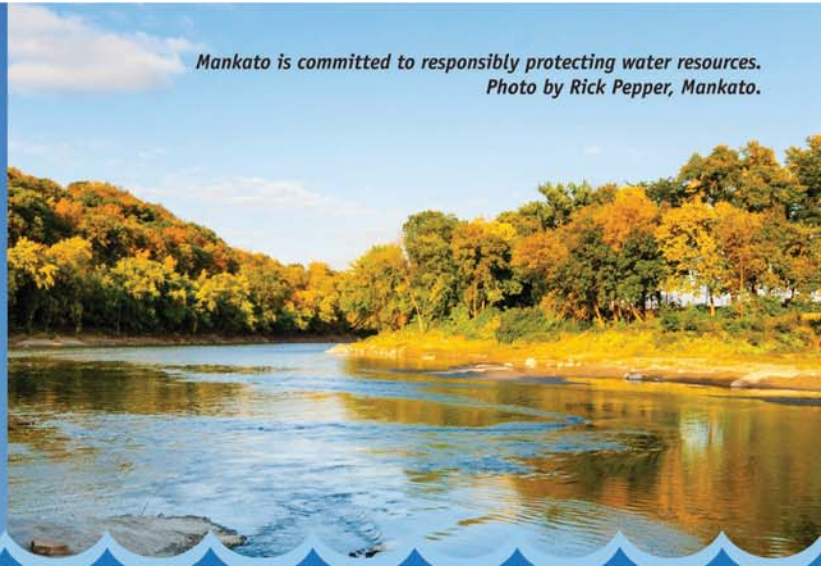
City of Mankato

Leading the way...



One of Mankato's water tower, which is used to store water.



Mankato is committed to responsibly protecting water resources. Photo by Rick Pepper, Mankato.

It takes a community effort to protect public wells

The city of Mankato relies on groundwater for its drinking water supply. Shallower collector wells (60 feet deep) make up more than 60 percent of the supply, so it conserves deep well aquifer resources. To help protect these resources, the city developed a wellhead protection plan.

Wellhead protection is an ongoing need for communities. It helps protect drinking water by managing possible contamination sources in an area that supplies water to public wells. Everyone has an important part to play in protecting drinking water wells—today and for the future.

To develop its wellhead protection plan, the city:

- formed a planning team.
- identified land area to be protected.
- identified possible sources of pollution and level of vulnerability* in the source water and wellhead protection area.
- determined ways to prevent groundwater pollution.

** Mankato's deep wells were found to be non-vulnerable.*



Mankato's water meets and exceeds state and federal standards for high-quality water.

Be environmentally friendly

As water travels over the land's surface or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, and can pick up substances resulting from animal or human activity that can pollute wells. Since everyday activities can have an impact on water sources, residents can help protect this resource by being an environmentally aware citizen. Much can be done to help protect these resources, such as wise land and chemical use. When wells are protected, treatment and drilling costs can be avoided.

Get involved

To protect local groundwater:

- Help identify land uses and possible sources of contamination.
- Recognize and manage possible sources of contamination.
- Use hazardous products as directed and dispose of them properly.
- Conserve water--check for leaks and be efficient when using water.

For more information about Mankato's wellhead protection plan, or opportunities in public decisions that may affect water quality, contact staff at 507-387-8665.

Groundwater, water table and aquifers

Groundwater is water that fills small spaces between rock particles, such as sand and gravel, or cracks in solid rock. Rain, melting snow, or surface water becomes groundwater by seeping into the ground to fill these spaces. The top of the water-saturated zone is called the water table. When water seeps in and reaches the water table, it moves toward points, such as wells, rivers, or lakes, where it can exit. An aquifer is any type of geologic material, such as sand or sandstone, that supplies water wells or springs. Since aquifers are confined, they are typically protected from surface water run-off. If contamination occurs, it's primarily through unsealed or improperly maintained wells, so it's important to ensure proper well maintenance.

The groundwater, which supplies wells, often comes from within a short distance (a few miles or less) of the well. How fast groundwater moves depends on how much the well is pumped and what type of rock particles or bedrock it is moving through.

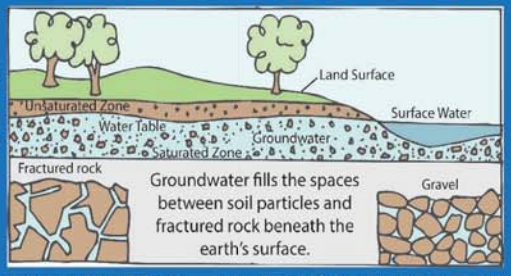


Image courtesy of The Groundwater Foundation, www.groundwater.org.

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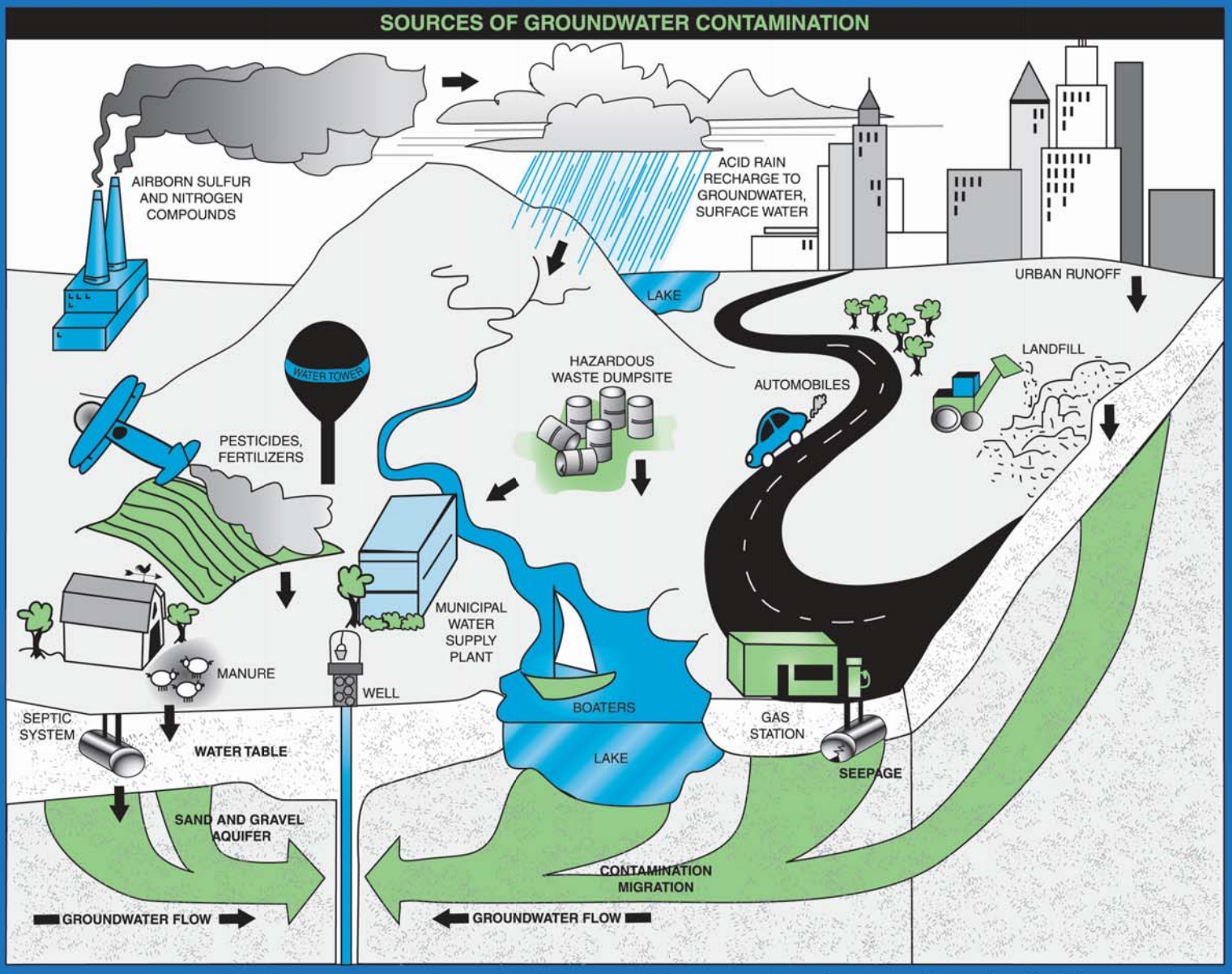

Image courtesy of The Groundwater Foundation, www.groundwater.org.

Help protect water resources by knowing the sources of groundwater contamination.

The Minnesota Department of Health serves as lead agency for the state's program and assists communities with defining wellhead protection areas and plan development to protect wells. Learn more at health.state.mn.us/water/ or telephone 651-201-4700.

The Minnesota Rural Water Association, in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, provides technical assistance to public water suppliers to help meet the system's wellhead protection goals. Learn more at mrwa.com, or telephone 1-800-367-6792.

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