

Top 10 Groundwater Myths

MYTH #1

Groundwater always flows from north to south.

IN FACT

Depending on location, groundwater can flow in any direction.

MYTH #2

Groundwater comes all the way from Canada and Lake Superior.

IN FACT

Groundwater originates as local precipitation -- which seeps into the ground and reaches the water table.

MYTH #3

Groundwater flows in underground caverns and rivers.

IN FACT

Groundwater flows through cracks and pores between soil and rock particles!

MYTH #4

Groundwater drawn from household wells has been underground thousands of years.

IN FACT

Typical private drinking water wells in the Midwest yield groundwater a few years to a few decades old.

MYTH #5

Groundwater is always pure because soil filters out all impurities.

IN FACT

Harmful bacteria in water can be filtered out by soil, but many chemical pollutants are not changed and remain in the water.

MYTH #6

If well water is stained it must be polluted.

IN FACT

Stained water doesn't necessarily mean that it's unsafe to drink!

MYTH #7

If water tastes good -- it is safe to drink.

IN FACT

You can't judge groundwater by its taste or smell alone! A sudden change in flavor or odor should be investigated.

MYTH #8

One simple test can determine that my well water is safe.

IN FACT

Wells should be tested regularly for bacteria or nitrates. But there are many chemicals that can enter groundwater that won't show up on a routine water test!

MYTH #9

Pouring a small amount of waste on the ground won't cause a problem.

IN FACT

Even small amounts of hazardous substances disposed of improperly can cause groundwater pollution.

MYTH #10

Artesian water is the purest water available.

IN FACT

Artesian supply is no guarantee that water is safe! Artesian water can be contaminated.