

# Vital Groundwater

By Arnold Kawuba

Did you think that all the water you drink comes from reservoirs? There is a source of water that is located in SO many places all around the world. It is called **groundwater**, and you drink it everyday. The vegetables you ate last night were probably raised using groundwater. Although we benefit from groundwater everyday we hardly ever think about it.

Groundwater is water that is stored deep underground. How does it get there? It comes from the snowstorms in the middle of January, the rain in the spring, and hail and sleet. Due to gravity, water falls from the atmosphere in the form of rain, snow or sleet. If the water lands on soil, sand or gravel, it can be absorbed back into the ground. The Earth keeps soaking up all the water like a sponge. The water keeps soaking down in until it reaches a layer of rock. Rocks do not absorb the water. The point where the water accumulates is called an **aquifer**. It can also be called the **saturated zone**.



Outside the city, groundwater is pumped up into wells. From there, the water is carried into houses through pipes. Many houses may tap into the same aquifer. Within cities, water supplies usually come from large reservoirs. But these reservoirs can also be fed by groundwater.

When there is a drought, water supplies may become low. If there is no rain, there is no water to restore groundwater levels. Also, when large areas are paved over for parking lots, highways or housing rainwater is carried off through storm drains and sewers. The rain water cannot get back into the ground to renew groundwater supplies.

Where's a really easy place for you to find groundwater? At the beach! Just dig and dig into the sand and you will get down to groundwater.