



Fall

If you have a septic system, keep it in good working order and have the system pumped out regularly, at least every three years. Also avoid putting hazardous substances, such as medicines, paint, paint thinners, cleaning agents, and solvents down the drain. Poured or flushed into household plumbing, these substances can pass through a septic system without being treated and contaminate groundwater.

Maintain your vehicle and inspect it regularly for leaks so that fuel and other harmful liquids don't soak into soils or travel into nearby streams.



Winter

Use sand instead of salt to manage ice on impervious driveway or sidewalk surfaces. Excessive application of salt can result in high sodium and chloride levels in drinking water supplies, which can have harmful health effects in humans.

Install reduced-flow showerheads, faucet aerators, and low flow toilets when possible. As noted above, water conservation reduces the demand on groundwater resources.

If you see activities that could adversely impact your local drinking water supply, please contact your local Health Department.

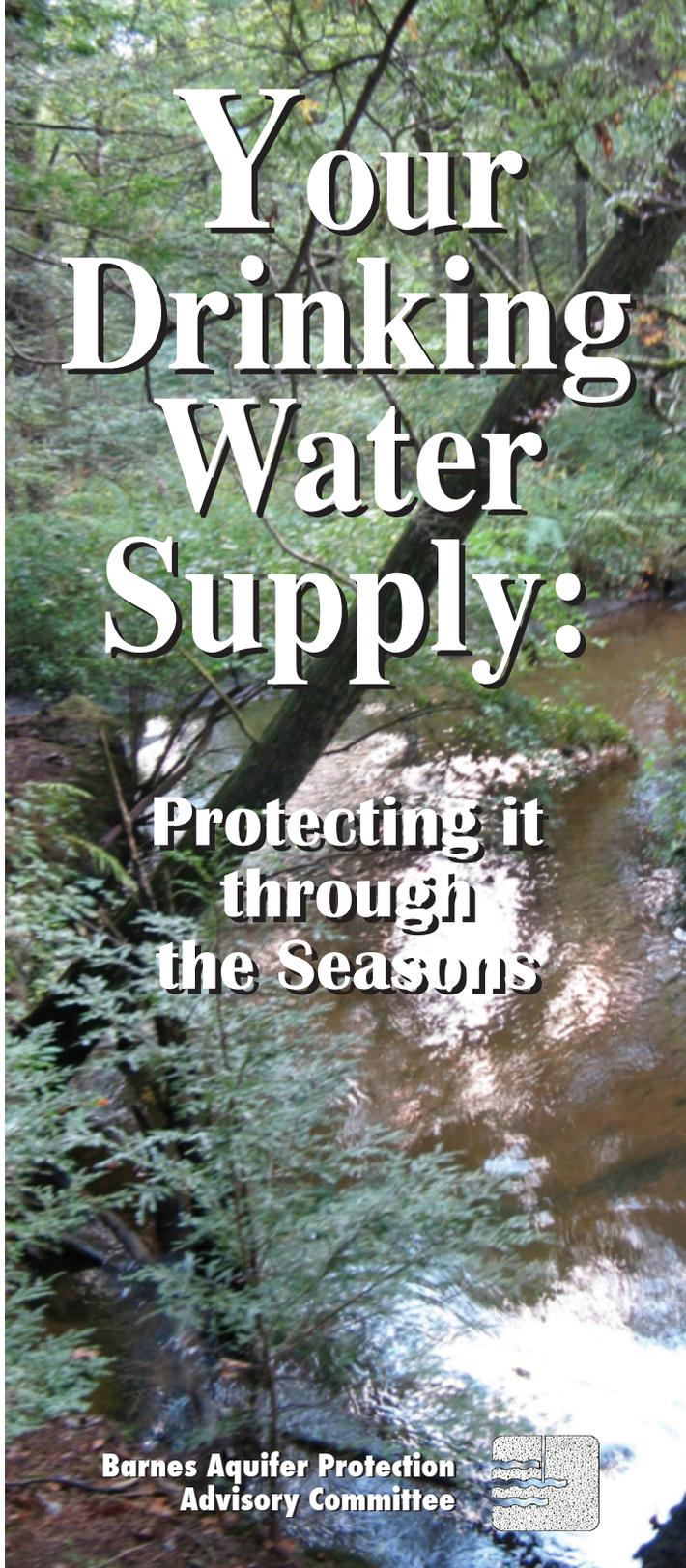
Public vs. private water supply

Municipal water departments work to provide safe drinking water to those connected to the public water supply. Preventing groundwater contamination around your home or business, however, goes a long way toward keeping harmful contaminants from entering the water supply in the first place.

Private well owners carry primary responsibility for maintaining the quality of their well water and for preventing health problems. They must be especially careful to protect against harmful land use activities that can contaminate a well. For more information and resources, see: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/drinking/private-wells.html>

For more information, visit: www.pvpc.org/bapac

May 2014



Your Drinking Water Supply:

Protecting it through the Seasons

Barnes Aquifer Protection
Advisory Committee



Tips for Protecting Your Drinking Water Supply through the Seasons

The journey of water to your tap involves drawing from the Barnes Aquifer, a precious groundwater source that literally runs beneath your feet. This groundwater source is fed by nearby rivers and streams, as well as rain and snowmelt that soak deep into soils.

You can think of your property, and the larger surrounding area of Easthampton, Southampton, areas of Westfield, and west Holyoke, as a giant sponge that soaks up not only rainfall but whatever may get washed into storm flows.

So our activities aboveground can have important consequences for our drinking water sources below.

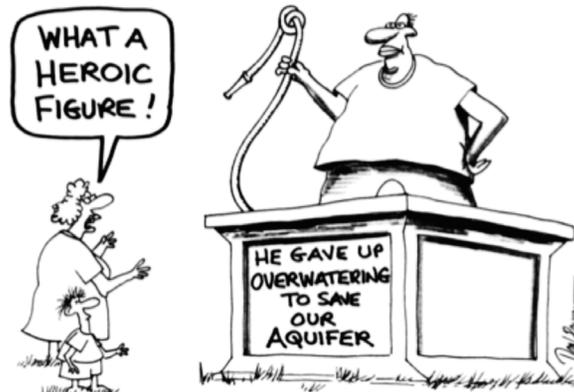
Following are a selection of important tips for how you can help ensure that our drinking water supply remains healthy and safe.

Spring



As you do your Spring cleaning, be sure to dispose of hazardous and toxic chemicals properly. Check with your local Health Department about upcoming Hazardous Waste Collection events to dispose of such materials as lawn fertilizers and pesticides, paints, varnishes, photographic solutions, paint thinners, waste oils, antifreeze, wood preservatives, and household cleaners.

Do not drain your car's used oil onto the ground or into storm drains. Bring your used oil with your sales receipt to service stations that have proper disposal facilities.



Summer



Avoid using chemical pesticides or fertilizers on your lawn and garden. Some of these chemicals dissolve in rain or irrigation water and percolate through the soil into groundwater. These products can also present problems for groundwater supply if not properly stored or disposed. Good information on taking a chemical-free approach is available on the following websites:

Greenscapes: www.greenscapes.org

Safe Lawns: www.safelawns.org

Eliminate or reduce outdoor watering whenever possible. A rain gauge will help. If you note that there has been an inch of rainfall during the week, you don't need to water at all. Supplemental watering should be done in the early morning to avoid evaporation. Water conservation is critical to reducing demand on groundwater resources.