

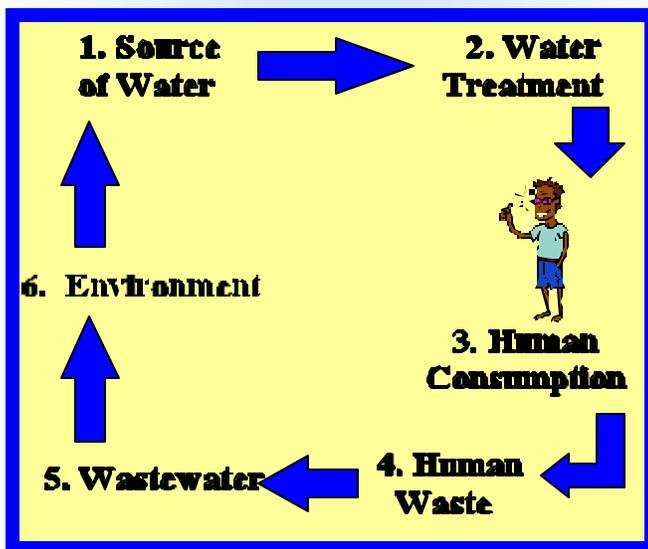
In order to protect water sources for present and future use, many municipal supplies either have, or are in the process of developing, a watershed (surface water) or wellhead (groundwater) protection plan. If you are dependant on a municipal water supply, the main things you as an individual can do to prevent the contamination of your water supply are:

- G Properly disposing of hazardous materials, so they do not end up in your usable water supply.
- G Be environmentally aware, and do your part to keep our land and waters clean.
- G Become involved in water management issues and groups in your community.

Whether you are on a municipal or an individual water supply, water conservation is a wise practice. Our water supplies are not unlimited!

Treatment

The treatment involved in supplying water to your tap follows a cycle. Water is supplied from a source, and treated at a water treatment facility. The water is then distributed to your home to use. Disposal



occurs through the use of drains and toilets. The water then ends up at a wastewater treatment facility, where it is treated and returned again to the environment. The whole cycle is repeated again.

To treat your individual water supply, a similar process occurs. Treatment may be required for hardness, iron, manganese, or other dissolved components. Instead of a water treatment facility, treatment units can be installed in your home. Your water system must be properly maintained to work at its best. Instead of a water treatment facility, your waste is treated by an onsite sewage disposal system. The efficiency of your entire water system depends on the proper selection or design of the system, properties of your soil, and proper maintenance of your onsite system. For more details on these systems, see the booklet 'Before You Construct an Onsite Sewage System' and other information available on the Department of Environment and Labour website <http://gov.ns.ca/enla/emc/qpersons>.

Did you know?

There are 82 Municipal water treatment facilities in Nova Scotia. They serve populations of 508, 000 people. The most common disinfectant used in these treatment facilities is some form of chlorine.

Why do we treat water?

Drinking water should be treated if necessary to ensure compliance with various criteria specified in Health Canada's Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. These criteria are based on both health and aesthetic concerns. In Nova Scotia, public drinking water supplies must be monitored according to the Guidelines for Monitoring Public Drinking Water Supplies. These guidelines and the Regulations they are under are available on the NSDEL website at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/water/>. To ensure that public drinking water supplies in Nova Scotia are safe for human consumption, the required monitoring program should be part of a comprehensive water supply protection program, and part of an ongoing maintenance and optimization of the water treatment and distribution systems.

Testing, monitoring and treatment of private water supplies are the responsibility of the owner. If you are an owner, test your water regularly. If you notice a change in your drinking water quality, contact the Department of Environment and Labour office nearest you.

Think about it next time you turn on the tap!

