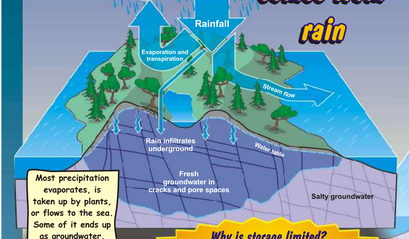
Waterscape Gulf Islands

protecting and conserving our island water

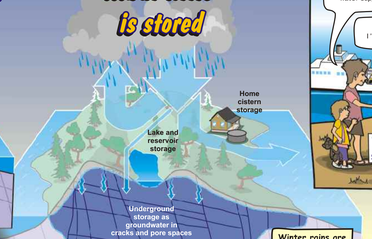
All our water comes from rain



Most precipitation evaporates, is taken up by plants, or flows to the sea. Some of it ends up as groundwater.

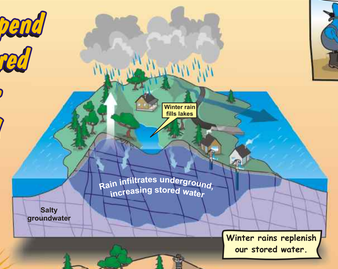
Why is storage limited?
The Gulf Islands lack high mountains with winter snow that store water into the summer months. As well, there are few lakes and most are small and the water that can be stored in fractured rock under the islands is limited.

...but little is stored

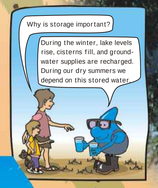


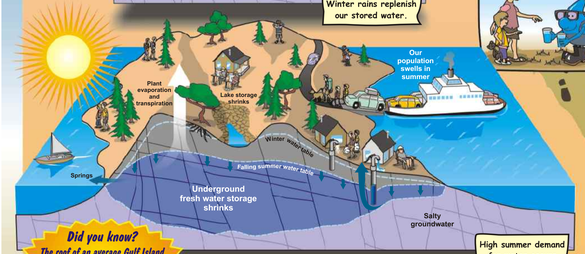
Winter rains are stored in lakes, cisterns, and underground.

We depend on stored winter water!



Winter rains replenish our stored water.





Did you know?
The roof of an average Gulf Island home can capture 91 000 to 105 000 litres (20 000 to 23 000 gallons) of water in a year with an average rainfall.

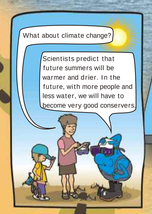
Summer – our island goes dry

High summer demand for water occurs as supplies dwindle.

Our changing climate: more droughts coming?

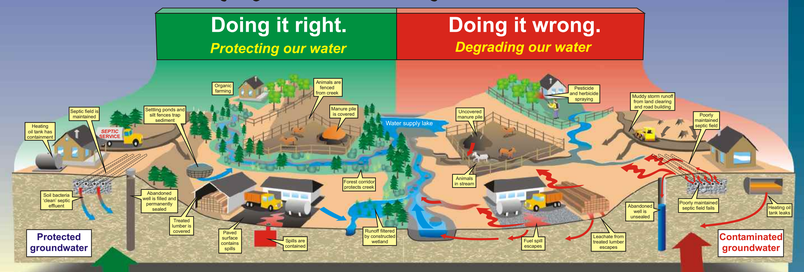
Gulf Islands: in the coastal dry belt

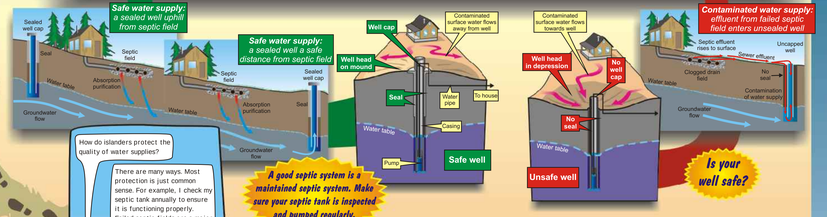
Water demand will increase as our population grows, but climate scientists predict that the risk of more prolonged and frequent summer droughts will increase in the future.



Photograph courtesy of Jonathan Grant

Keeping water clean: it's just common sense

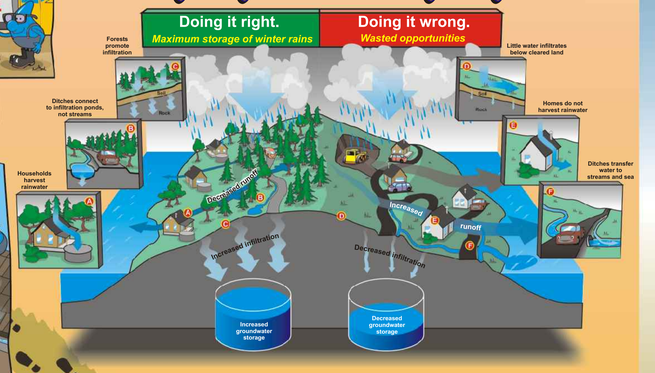




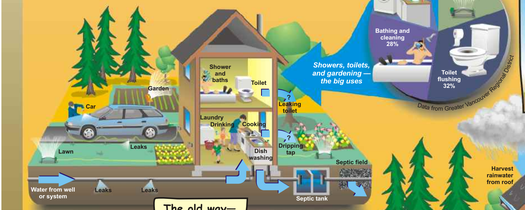
A good septic system is a maintained septic system. Make sure your septic tank is inspected and pumped regularly.

Is your well safe?

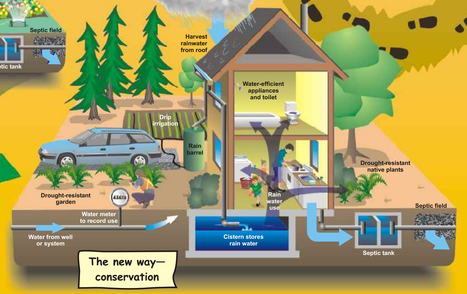
Having enough water: increasing storage



Conservation is crucial



The old way—wasteful homes



The new way—conservation

We are the solution!
The biggest users of water on the islands are homes and tourist accommodations. So, water conservation at home is crucial!

Nature needs water too!

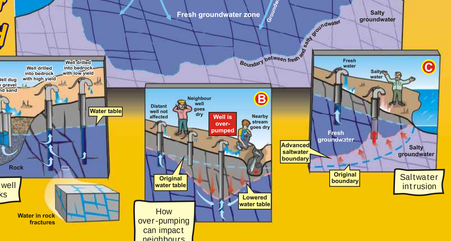
Stream-side forests protect streams.

How wetlands work

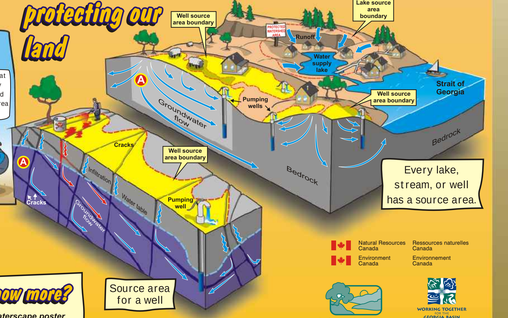
Be careful!
Over-pumping of groundwater wells can reduce vital springs that maintain stream flow and wetlands through the summer.

Our deep storage: water underground

How groundwater works



Protecting our water means protecting our land



Want to know more?

The *Gulf Islands Waterscape poster* is on the internet at
www.islandstrust.bc.ca
and
www.geoscape.nrcan.gc.ca

Government of British Columbia
Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wat/gws/gwia.html

The British Columbia Groundwater Association
www.bcgwa.org/education.htm

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