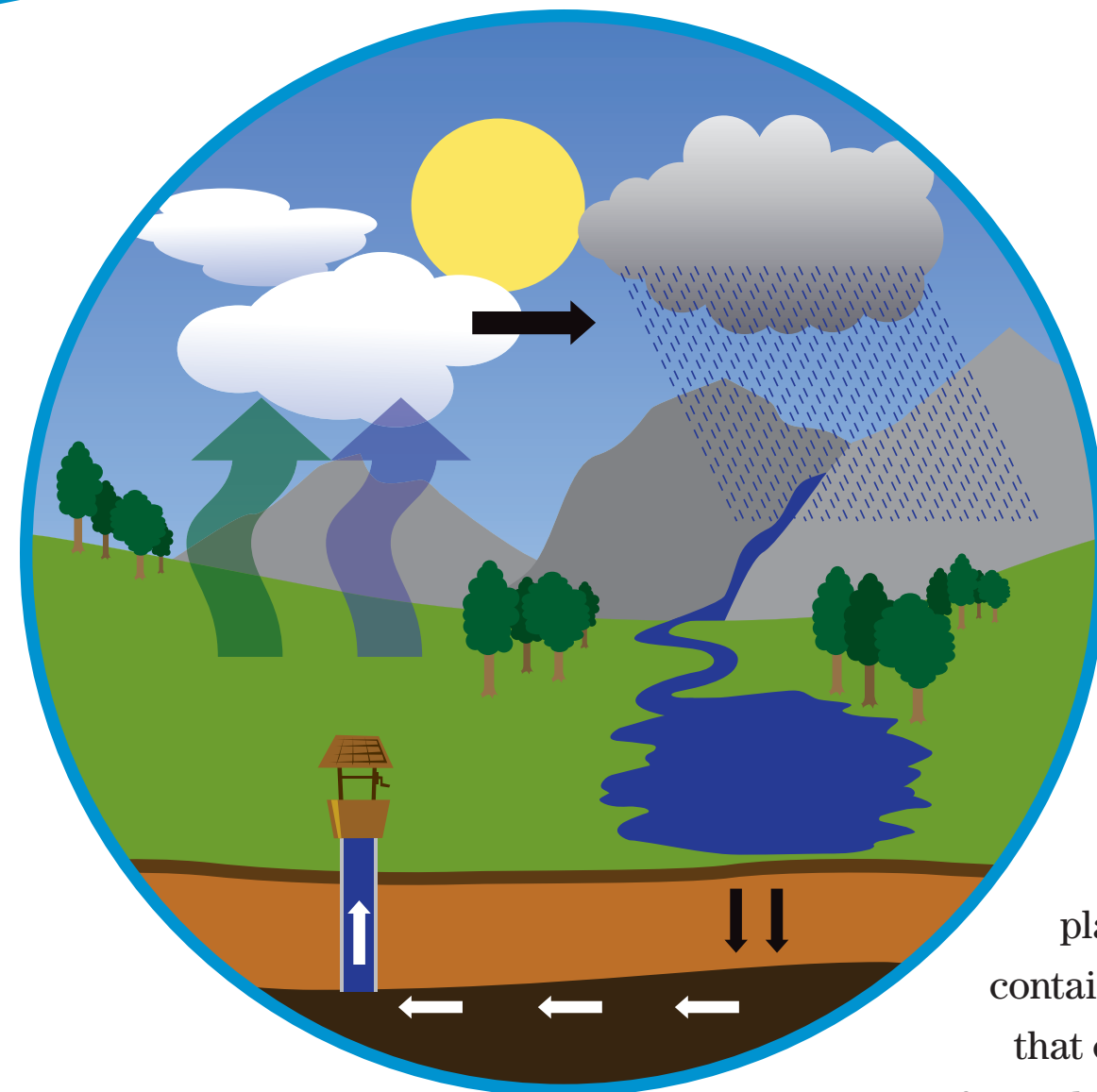


# We are all connected to water

We take water from the same source as our neighbours, and we all return it to the same source. If some or all of us are contaminating or using too much water, we will all feel the effects. Find out what you can do at [www.ontario.ca/environment](http://www.ontario.ca/environment)

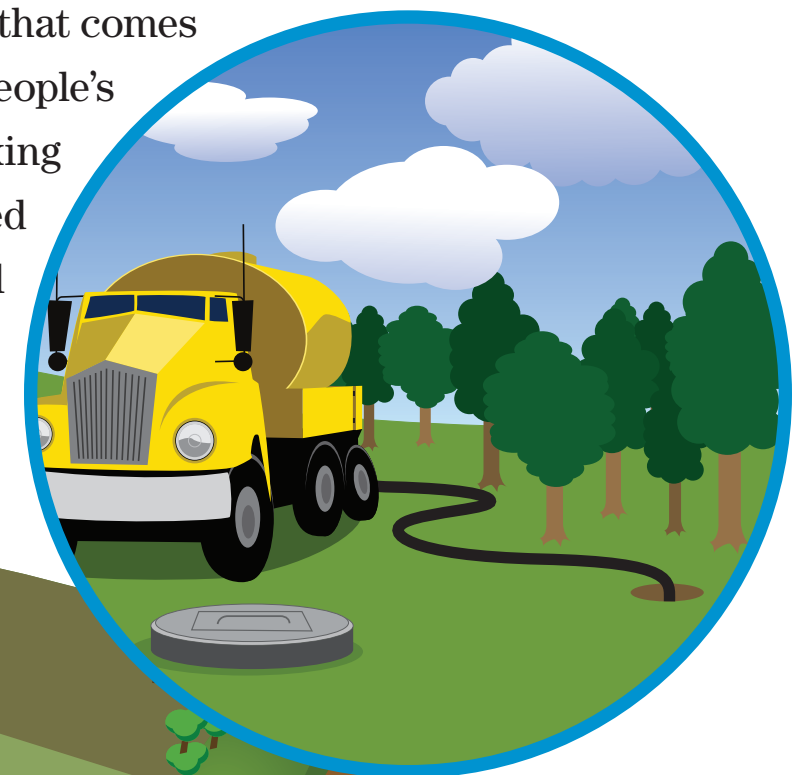


The water cycle is the way water flows through nature in a cycle that never ends.

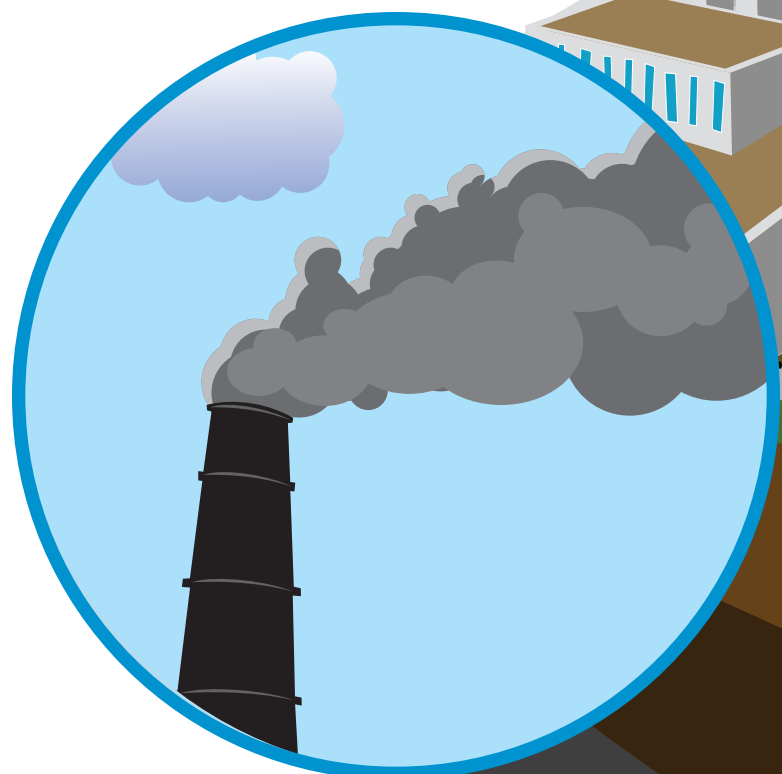


A landfill site is where a community brings its garbage. Recycling is often done here. Many landfills are lined with a thick plastic liner to stop toxins from leaking into the ground and poisoning the groundwater.

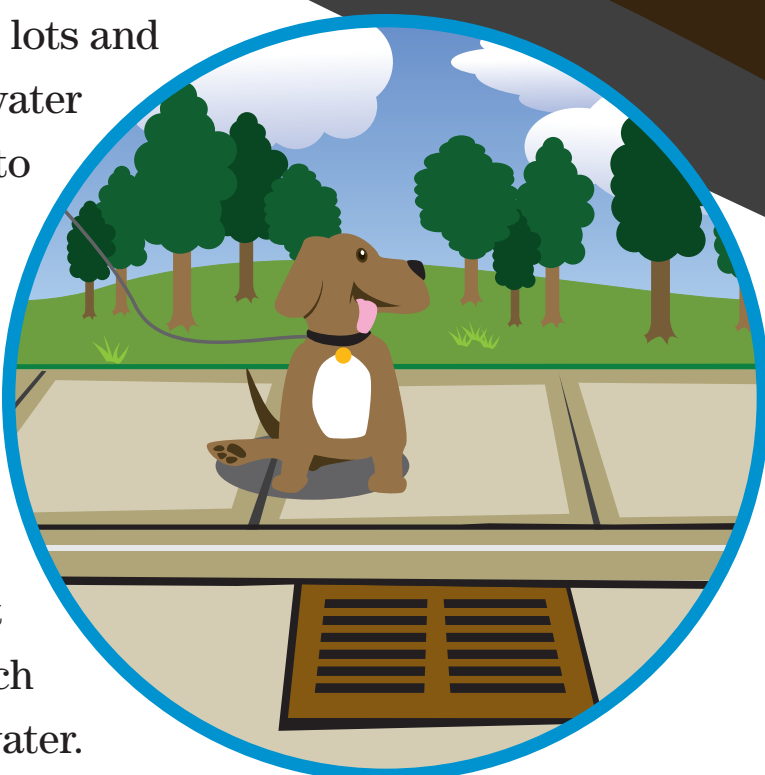
In communities where there is no water treatment plant, septic tanks are used to contain and clean the waste water that comes out of people's homes. A leaking septic tank located too close to a well can contaminate that well.



What goes up must come down! Everything dirty that comes out of a smokestack eventually falls back to earth riding on a raindrop or a snowflake. If that ride ends in a lake or a river, it can pollute our drinking water.



Sidewalks, parking lots and streets prevent water from absorbing into the ground. The water 'runs off' into lakes, rivers and sewers. Sometimes the runoff picks up impurities like lawn chemicals, road salt and dog poop, which ends up in the water.



Surface water is water that collects on the surface of the earth in rivers, lakes and wetlands. About 80% of the people in Ontario receive their drinking water from surface water sources such as the Great Lakes.



There are two types of treatment plants: 1) water treatment plants clean water and make it safe for drinking and 2) sewage treatment plants clean the water after it's been used by people and then returns it to nature. Both are very expensive to operate. The best (and cheapest!) way to treat water is to prevent it from becoming dirty in the first place.



Groundwater is actually found underground, in pools called aquifers. The water table is the where groundwater comes closest to the earth's surface. About 20% of Ontario residents receive their drinking water from groundwater sources.

