



MOUNTAIN REGIONAL WATER
SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT

Customer Guidance – Drinking Water Source Protection

The Mountain Regional Water Special Service District has completed a Drinking Water Source Protection Plan in an effort to protect our community's drinking water from contamination. While not all of you live within our drinking water source protection zones, some do. However, if all of us follow the suggestions listed below, all ground water is less likely to be contaminated:

Insect Sprays and Weed Killers

Special precautions should be taken when disposing of empty containers. Rinse the container three times with water and use the rinse water in the same manner the original product was intended. Then wrap the container securely in plastic and dispose of it in the trash. Unused products should be taken to a solid waste facility.

- Minimize the use of chemical products and use only as directed.
- Consider using less toxic alternative products.
- Consider “co-planting” using companion plants that act as natural deterrents to pests.
- Use plant guards, such as paper or tin barriers to deter insects.
- Consider using traps of various kinds to trap pests.
- Hand pick weeds as much as possible or use weed killers in limited spot applications.
- Use heavy mulching around plants to deter weed growth.

Fertilizers

- Minimize the use of chemical fertilizers.
- Water lawns normally after fertilizing rather than waiting for a rainstorm.
- Allow grass clippings to remain on the lawn.
- Mow high (about 2 inches), mow often, and use sharp blades.
- Water deeply but not too often.
- Remove thatch build-up when it gets over ½ inch.

Household Hazardous Waste

The best way to handle household hazardous materials is to completely use the product before disposing of the container. If this is not possible, then the next alternative is to return unused portions to your community household hazardous waste clean-up day. Keep products in their original package with all labels intact. If the container is leaking, place it in a thick plastic bag. Pack the products in a plastic-lined cardboard box to prevent leaks and breakage.

- Do not flush household hazardous waste down the toilet.
- Do not pour household hazardous waste down the sink.
- Do not pour household hazardous waste down a storm drain.
- Do not pour household hazardous waste on the ground.
- Read label precautions and follow directions for safe use.
- Recycle/dispose of empty containers properly.
- Share what you can't use with friends or neighbors.
- Store properly.
- Use recommended amounts; more is not necessarily better.
- Use the child-resistant closures and keep them on tightly.

Livestock, Poultry, and Horse Waste

Animal waste contains many pollutants that can contaminate surface and ground waters used as drinking water sources. Probably the greatest health concern associated with livestock, poultry, and horse wastes is pathogens. Many pathogens found in animal waste can infect humans if ingested. Organisms like *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia lamblia*, and *Salmonella* can induce symptoms ranging from skin sores to chest pain. *E. coli*, which causes diarrhea and abdominal gas, has been the source of disease outbreaks in several States. Particularly virulent strains of *E. coli* can cause serious illness and even death. *Cryptosporidium* is of particular concern because it is highly resistant to disinfection with chlorine. This protozoan causes gastrointestinal illness that lasts 2 to 10 days in healthy individuals but can be fatal in people with weakened immune systems. *Cryptosporidium* was responsible for more than 50 deaths and an estimated 403,000 illnesses after contaminating a Milwaukee drinking water supply. Runoff from cow manure application sites was a suspected source of the *Cryptosporidium*.

- Don't let runoff through animal waste accumulation areas flow off of your property.
- Establish a vegetative buffer zone downslope to detain and absorb waste.
- Any manure that has accumulated in piles should be periodically hauled off and spread out on pasture or crop land.

Domestic Wells

If you have a domestic well, it is considered a potential contamination source because it can be a conduit for contamination to enter the ground water. Therefore, please do not use or dispose of toxic chemicals around your well. Pesticides should be used in accordance with label instructions and fertilizers should be used in accordance with recommended application rates. Unused wells should be properly capped and abandoned.

Thank you for helping us to protect our valuable water resources. By working together, we can ensure that Mountain Regional Water continues to provide a safe and adequate supply of drinking water to our community for many years to come. If you would like to review our Drinking Water Source Protection Plan or have questions or concerns regarding the information presented, please contact our Customer Service team at 435-940-1916.

Sincerely,

Scott Morrison
General Manager