

GROUND WATER

Myths & Facts

Myth #1: Groundwater always flows from north to south.

Fact: Depending on location, groundwater can flow in *any* direction — but usually follows land contours.

Myth #2: Groundwater flows in underground caverns and rivers.

Fact: Groundwater flows through cracks and pores between soil and rock particles.

Myth #3: Groundwater drawn from wells has been underground thousands of years.

Fact: Typical private drinking water wells in our area yield groundwater a few years to a few decades old.

Myth #4: If well water is stained — it *must* be polluted.

Fact: Stained water doesn't necessarily mean that it's contaminated.

Myth #5: If water tastes good — it's safe to drink; if it smells bad or tastes bad, it's unsafe to drink.

Fact: You can't judge groundwater by its taste or smell *alone!* A sudden change in flavor or odor should be investigated.

Myth #6: Everything we put on the ground pollutes water.

Fact: *No!* Soil bacteria, air and water can break down many but not *all* substances.

Myth #7: One simple test can determine that your well is safe.

Fact: Wells should be tested regularly for bacteria and nitrates. But, there are many chemicals that can enter groundwater that won't show up on a regular water test.

—Groundwater
Wisconsin DNR publication

Open Letter To All Interested Parties:

On February 28, 1995 Minnesota OSHA issued a letter informing employers and manufacturers that riding lawn mowers and similar equipment with 20 horsepower motors or greater will be cited under Minn. Statute §182.653, subd. 2, if they are not equipped with a rollover protective structure (ROPS) and seatbelts.

This letter is being sent to you now to inform you that until May 1, 1996, the ROPS and seatbelt requirements will not be enforced on routine (programmed) MNOSHA inspections. However, MNOSHA will continue to look at this issue when it conducts unprogrammed inspections based upon imminent dangers, employee complaints, referrals, or notification of an employee death or serious injury.

If an unprogrammed inspection before May 1, 1996 reveals a failure to use rollover protection and seatbelts on an affected vehicle, Minnesota OSHA will issue a citation of §182.653, Subd. 2 to the employer unless a written plan can be provided at the time of the inspection describing the planned implementation of rollover protection and seatbelts, including:

- 1) A schedule for conversion of affected equipment, and
- 2) Interim abatement procedures designed to minimize the potential exposure to employees.

If you have questions about this procedural change, please contact your nearest OSHA office or call the St. Paul office at (612) 296-2116

**Minnesota Department
of Labor & Industry**

Sincerely,

Terry Mueller
OSHA Management Team