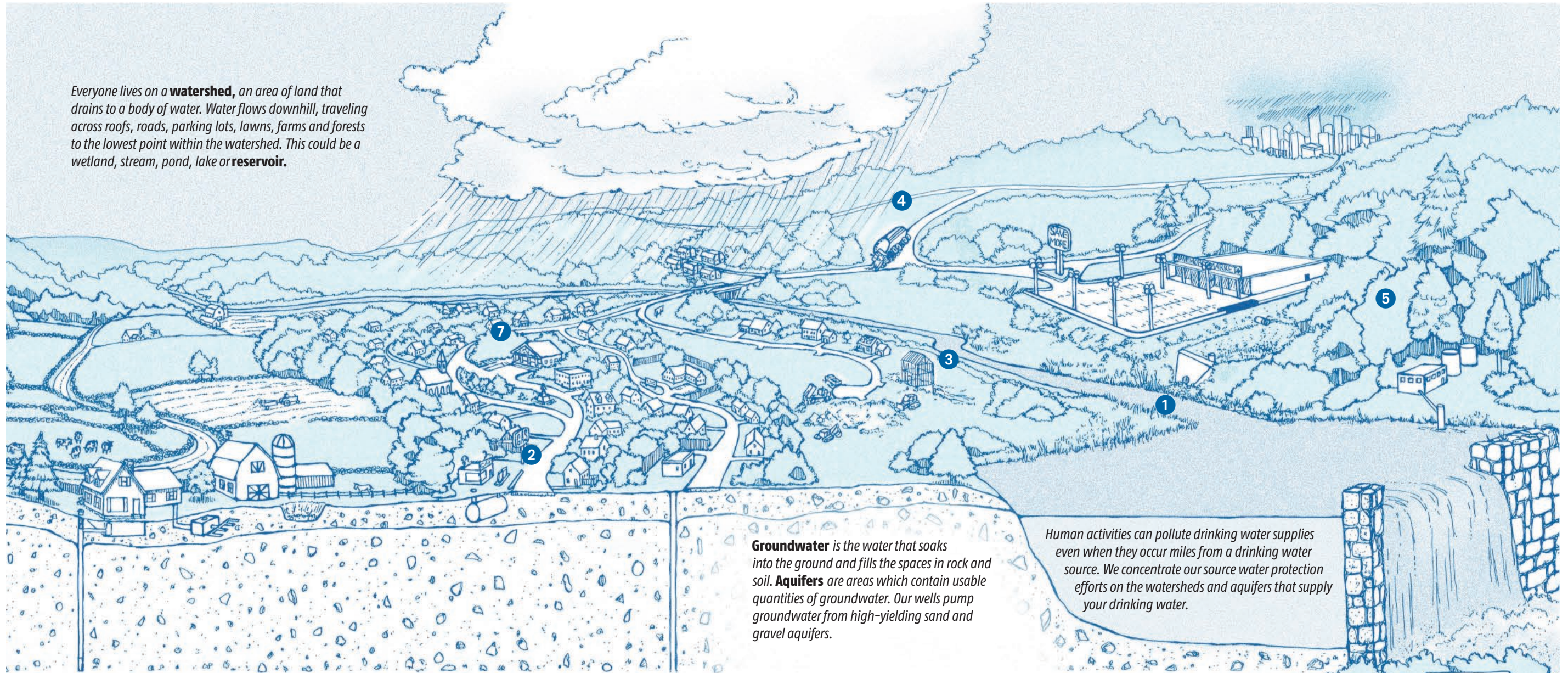


Source Water Protection

The drinking water provided by the Regional Water Authority comes from a network of reservoirs and wells that are replenished by water from surrounding watersheds and aquifers.

Everyone lives on a **watershed**, an area of land that drains to a body of water. Water flows downhill, traveling across roofs, roads, parking lots, lawns, farms and forests to the lowest point within the watershed. This could be a wetland, stream, pond, lake or **reservoir**.



Groundwater is the water that soaks into the ground and fills the spaces in rock and soil. **Aquifers** are areas which contain usable quantities of groundwater. Our wells pump groundwater from high-yielding sand and gravel aquifers.

Human activities can pollute drinking water supplies even when they occur miles from a drinking water source. We concentrate our source water protection efforts on the watersheds and aquifers that supply your drinking water.

1 Sample Collection: Our water quality technicians sample and test water from streams, lakes and wells to monitor the biological and chemical composition of our source water. This allows us to identify sources of pollution.

2 Watershed Inspections: Our watershed inspectors visit over 2,000 business, residential, and construction sites annually to identify potential sources of pollution. Among the things we inspect are fuel and chemical storage, waste disposal, wastewater discharges, stormwater systems and erosion controls.

3 Site Plan Reviews: Every year our environmental analysts review hundreds of site plans for development proposals within our watersheds and aquifers. We then provide recommendations to local land use commissions and developers which are intended to avoid any adverse impacts on your drinking water sources.

4 Spill Response: We are on call 24 hours a day to respond to oil and chemical spills and illegal dumping on our watersheds and aquifers.

5 Land Ownership: We own over 25,000 acres of mostly forested land, which is the most beneficial type of land use for source water protection. We participate in partnerships with towns, land trusts and other parties to acquire additional open space lands.

6 Education: Our water science program at the Whitney Water Center teaches 12,000 children a year about the relationship between human activities and the environment.

7 Governmental: We participate in state and local regulatory processes to strengthen source water protection laws.



HazWaste Central: To keep chemicals found in household products from entering the environment, we coordinate the operation of HazWaste Central. This program collects over 600 barrels of hazardous waste each year from residents of participating towns. These wastes are disposed of or recycled in an environmentally responsible manner.



Illustration: Diane Blasius