



Your Water, Your Life

We need to regularly test our well water for contaminants because it is not always obvious to our taste buds. Yearly testing for bacteria and every 3-5 years for other contaminants is recommended. However, this is not often possible or affordable.

Also consider testing if:

- You notice changes in smell and taste.
- You suspect physical symptoms are caused by your water.
- You experience runoffs or spills that may get into your water.

FOR MORE ON TESTING YOUR WATER

Community Science Institute
607-257-6606 • info@communityscience.org

Your Water Protection Committee

The committee was instituted by the Town Board in May of 2020. The Town Board then passed a Drinking Water Protection law in January of 2022. The law empowered the Town Planning Board to assess site plans (for commercial developments and/or housing) as they impact the quality and quantity of groundwater resources. This law is meant to:

- Assure that there are control measures to prevent the contamination or depletion of groundwater
- Review the placement of water wells vis-à-vis separation from contaminants
- Review the water demand from a site plan proposal
- Assure that there is a spill protection plan
- Review the description of proposed storage facilities of hazardous wastes

We consider the Enfield Creek Valley to be significantly sensitive to any change affecting the groundwater. The Water Protection Committee is continuing to work on ways we can be more proactive in protecting our drinking and surface water. Possible water protections include monitoring places in the town where contaminants may easily enter the water supply, and recommending strategies for adding protection to Enfield's waterways.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Enfield Town Board: www.townofenfield.org
- Enfield Water Protection Committee: www.townofenfield/water
- www.tompkinscountyny.gov/health, 274-6600
- Your Well Protect Your Family's Water brochure: www.health.ny.gov/publications/6628.pdf

Protecting Enfield's Water

Our Water, Our Life

The lands that we live on were inhabited by the Gayogóh:nq̓ people and their ancestors for thousands of years, since the glaciers retreated from the Finger Lakes. They are still here, all around Cayuga Lake.

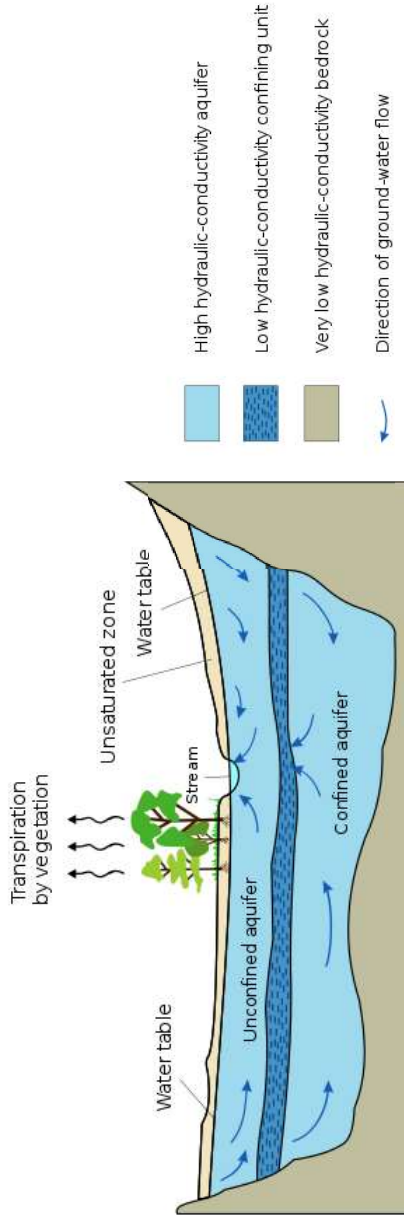
Our Water Protection Committee joins our Indigenous neighbors in a goal of preserving the natural world, especially our water, for future generations. We have been honored to have the participation of a Sachem of the Gayogóh:nq̓ Council in our committee.

Enfield is entirely dependent upon groundwater for drinking water. Protection of the local groundwater resources from potential sources of contamination is thus especially important. In 2021, a townwide survey of residents' water quality was conducted.

2021 Enfield Well Water Survey

- 10%** had bacteria contamination issues.
- 10%** reported heavy metal, nitrates or methane gas contamination.
- 20%** used water treatment devices.
- 15%** had issues during dry spells.
- 50%** wondered if issues were caused by septic systems, or chemicals leaks from storage or transportation.

Later in 2021, the Town arranged for the NYS Department of Health to test 22 wells randomly and throughout Enfield.



Important results included:

- (1) 10 of the wells tested positive for total coliform bacteria, only 2 of which were positive for E coli, the immediately hazardous bacteria.
- (2) Nitrate levels were low in all the wells.

We value the water that we have inherited. Generally speaking, the quality of our water is excellent and we would hope to pass it on that way, to future generations.

Enfield Water Systems

The water that we pump from our wells comes from the aquifer, which are waters under our land — underground rivers or lakes. Although our aquifer seems plentiful, it is crucial that we monitor it. Aquifers in other parts of the country and the world are being drained and not replenished by rainfall and snow melt.

The Enfield aquifer comes to the surface in creeks. Although this is not our drinking water, protecting them from contamination is equally important. They are the habitat of our fish, birds and animals. And they eventually become the source of drinking water for other people.

The vast majority of our surface waters drain into the Cayuga Lake Inlet via Enfield Creek through Treman Gorge. Two smaller creeks, Willow and Glenwood begin in Enfield. A small part of Enfield is also crossed by Taughannock Creek, a major creek which eventually goes over Taughannock Falls into the lake.

Protecting Our Water from Surface Contaminants

New York State has laws designed to protect our well water by requiring specific distances (in feet) between wells and potential contaminants.

drainage ditches/wetlands/streams	25
septic systems	50-200
barnyard animal pens	100
cemeteries	100
fertilizer or pesticide mixing areas	150
manure pits, fields /w spread manure	200
chemical or petroleum storage areas	300