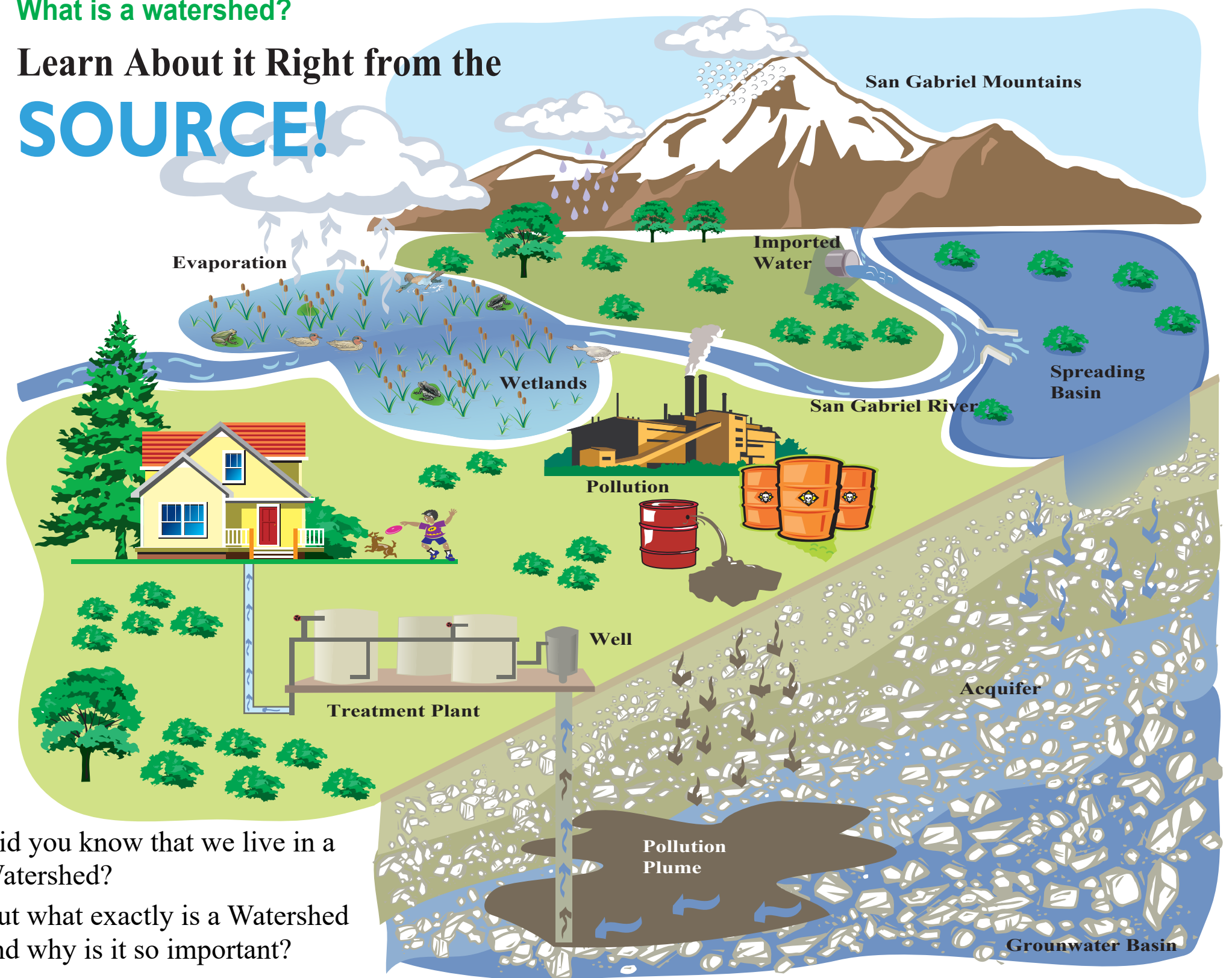


What is a watershed?

Learn About it Right from the SOURCE!



Did you know that we live in a Watershed?

But what exactly is a Watershed and why is it so important?

Let's find out...

A watershed is an area of land where water from rain or snow drains into a river or lake, or seeps into the earth and becomes groundwater.

As rainwater and melted snow travel over the surface of the land they can pick up soil, oil, pesticides, fertilizer and other materials.

Protecting our watershed is important because it is the main source of drinking water in the San Gabriel Valley.

Rain and runoff from melted snow flow down the **San Gabriel Mountains** and into the San Gabriel River.

Groundwater collects in **Aquifers**—large underground areas of sand and rock saturated with water.

Imported Water is brought in from the Sacramento Delta to help replenish the groundwater supply when there is not enough rain or water runoff to fill up the **Groundwater Basin**.

Imported water and local runoff is diverted to large pond-like structures called **Spreading Basins**. From here the water trickles downward and seeps into the aquifer below.

The **San Gabriel River** is our valley's centerpiece. It too brings us water and creates important aquatic habitats called **Wetlands**. Rivers and wetlands are examples of surface water.

Surface water is found above the ground and includes rivers, wetlands, lakes, streams and ponds.

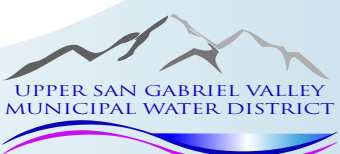
The sun's heat causes surface water **Evaporation**. The water vapor then condenses in clouds and returns to the earth as rain, hail, sleet or snow.

Pollution from factories can contaminate our groundwater supply making it unsafe to drink. Storm water that runs off from our streets can also contain harmful impurities that impact our local water supplies. This pollution seeps into the earth and creates an underground **Pollution Plume** as it mixes with the groundwater.

Wells pump the contaminated groundwater to the surface through pipes that extend deep into the groundwater basin. Contaminated water that is pumped from the ground must be treated or "cleaned" at a **Treatment Plant** to make it safe for us to drink.

As you can see, a Watershed is like a natural machine with many different parts that work together to produce a lot of the water we use everyday. But like all machines, if any of the parts are damaged the machine may not work properly. We can all help keep this fabulous watershed machine in good repair and making high quality water for years to come.

Over 1 million people call the San Gabriel Valley home. Every year they use more than 78 billion gallons of water. About 75% of that water used in San Gabriel Valley comes from the local watershed. The Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District Watershed Restoration Program is working hard to help keep the watershed healthy and functioning properly. Our program includes many opportunities for local schools and the public to volunteer to work on watershed projects. To find out more, visit our website or give us a call.



Please feel free to contact Upper District staff or your elected representative if you have any questions or comments
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Visit the Upper District Website
www.upperdistrict.org

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