

Water Words

U

ug/l:

micrograms per liter

Unconfined aquifer:

An aquifer containing water that is not under pressure; the water level in a well is the same as the water table outside the well.

Underground Injection Control (UIC):

The program administered by USEPA under the Safe Drinking Water Act that regulates the use of wells to pump fluids into the ground. (See also Injection well).

Underground injection:

Placing fluids below the surface of the ground through wells. Fluids injected include hazardous wastes, brine from oil and gas recovery, liquids used in mining, radioactive waste, sewage, natural gas and oil products and storm water runoff. Injection wells are primarily regulated by U.S. EPA's UIC program.

Underground sources of drinking water:

Aquifers being used as a source of drinking water or those capable of supplying a public water system. They have total dissolved solids content of 10,000 milligrams per liter or less, and are not "exempted aquifers."

Underground storage tank (UST):

A tank located at least partially underground and designed to hold gasoline or other petroleum products or chemicals.

Unsaturated zone:

The area above the water table where soil pores are not fully saturated, although some water may be present.

Urban runoff:

Storm water from city streets and adjacent domestic or commercial properties that carries pollutants of various kinds into the sewer systems and receiving waters. The discharge of urban runoff is subject to NPDES permitting regulated by the Water Boards' Municipal Storm Water program.

USEPA Watch List:

A list of NPDES facilities that have long-standing violations or single significant violations without formal enforcement action within a specified time period.