

# Fayette County Groundwater Conservation District

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Fayette County Groundwater Conservation District  
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### ABOUT FAYETTE COUNTY AQUIFERS

Fayette County has recently been blessed with some much-needed rainfall, although some areas are still in desperate need of a lot more. Despite this rainfall, Fayette County is still suffering severe drought conditions. Many people believe that the rainfall has replenished the aquifers, and conservation is no longer necessary. Unfortunately, this is not true. In order to understand why, the Fayette County Groundwater Conservation District provides the following information to educate Fayette County residents about our aquifers.

An aquifer is an underground geological formation capable of storing and yielding water for human use, sometimes in significant quantities. The water located inside an aquifer is known as groundwater. When most people think of an aquifer, they think of a giant, underground lake, something like the Edwards Aquifer. That aquifer, which is composed of fractured limestone, has sinkholes and caverns that act as direct conduits for rainfall. So rainfall is quickly recharged into the Edwards Aquifer. The Edwards Aquifer can be recharged virtually overnight, if sufficient rain falls in its recharge zones.

Unlike the Edwards Aquifer, Fayette County's aquifers are composed of stratas, or layers, of sand, sandstone, shale, gravel, and clay. Each aquifer may be a few feet to several thousand feet thick. The layers comprising an aquifer are permeable, thus allowing water to flow through. However, some of these materials are more porous than others, which affects the aquifers' ability to store and transmit water. In Fayette County, because of our geology, recharge usually only occurs where an aquifer crops out near the land surface. Not all of our aquifers have an outcrop within Fayette County.

Recharge of most aquifers from rainfall occurs very slowly, as water seeps into the ground and down through those various layers of materials. Much of the rainfall is lost due to evaporation or transpiration - the process by which water is absorbed by plants, usually through the roots, and is evaporated into the atmosphere from the plant surface. Some of our aquifers receive less than 1 inch of effective recharge per year. (Effective recharge is that portion of recharge that does not discharge to springs, seeps or streams in the outcrop area or is not taken up by plants and evaporation.) Once a "sand" aquifer, like those in Fayette County, is damaged by overpumping, it could take decades or even centuries for water levels to recover.

The Fayette County Groundwater Conservation District encourages everyone to learn more about our aquifers and how to protect them. The District will soon be starting an "Aquifer Watch" program, enlisting Fayette County residents as volunteers to help monitor the aquifers' water levels.

More information about this and other water-related topics can be found on the District's website at [www.fayettecountygndwater.com](http://www.fayettecountygndwater.com).

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**SOURCE: FAYETTE COUNTY GCD**