

City of Bend Water Sources and Protection

OUR WATER SUPPLY

The City of Bend's primary drinking water source is surface water from the Bend Municipal Watershed. This federally protected watershed was established in 1926 by joint agreement with the US Forest Service. Our pristine spring fed source originates within the federally protected and isolated headwaters of Bridge Creek, and the Middle Fork of Tumalo Creek, high up in the Cascades.

When water demands increase during the summer irrigation season, we tap the deep Deschutes Regional Aquifer at nine well fields located throughout the water distribution system. This aquifer is unlike any in the United States as the porous Upper Deschutes Basin readily absorbs both snowmelt and rainfall each year and recharge this aquifer an estimated 3,800 cubic feet per second (cfs) annually. Averaged over the year, that is equal to about 2.4 billion gallons per day of recharge to the regional aquifer. In comparison, due to implementation of our successful WaterWise Program, rate modernization efforts and other efficiency measures, the City has been successful at keeping our typical groundwater use at around 2 billion gallons *per year*, and groundwater provides about about half of our total annual production over the last decade. The other good news is this groundwater recharge zone along the Cascade crest which recharges the regional aquifer, also feeds the springs within the Bend Municipal Watershed. Rather than having to pump this spring water, we capture it as surface water and let gravity bring this part of our water supply to town with no carbon footprint.

Bend is fortunate to have this resilient and climate adapted, dual-source of water and both our surface and groundwater have comparable water quality. These sources are further safeguarded from contamination in accordance with Oregon State Health Authority requirements, Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations and best management practices for water supply systems. Our surface water is now filtered by a state-of-the-art membrane filtration facility which became operational in 2016.

The City works closely with the U.S. Forest Service based on our 1926 Agreement and Special Use Permits to continually protect our high-quality surface water from the from the risk of fire and other contamination threats. Our Stormwater Program has also secured federal permits which are focused on safeguarding the Deschutes Regional Aquifer from contamination risks through ongoing efforts to monitor and protect identified critical areas around wellheads and water facilities.

Find Out More:

Use our growing City of Bend Website for the Latest Information on Water Supply and much more: <http://www.bendoregon.gov/water>