



Caring for the “Natural State”

LIVING ON KARST

The Ozark region is a karst topography characterized by sinkholes, caves, underground streams and aquifers that supply our wells and springs. Sinkholes — natural surface depressions or drainage points — serve to conduct surface water to underground passages. The comparatively rapid transmission of groundwater flow through sinkholes in karst provides little opportunity for natural filtering or other purifying effects. As a result, surface pollutants enter a water supply more easily in karst than in other terrains.

HERE'S WHAT WE CAN DO.

MINIMIZE LAND DISTURBANCE:

The extraction of rocks, soil, vegetation and water will clearly interrupt the processes that produce and maintain karst. Such uses should be carefully planned and executed to minimize environmental impact.

PROTECT SINKHOLES:

- Ensure that sinkholes are marked and secured with fence, rope or taped very clearly.
- Check carefully for signs of the sinkhole enlarging, especially toward buildings, septic tanks, drain fields, and wells (flowing water into a sinkhole will continue or accelerate its growth). This can be done by pushing a thin hard metal rod into the soil. Areas near the sink will offer less resistance to the rod than the unaffected soil.
- Do not throw any waste into a sinkhole or use it as a drainage system. Pesticides and other wastes seep easily through the sinkhole into the aquifer - your drinking water.
- Stabilize a sinkhole if it is a hazard to health and safety.
 - Contact a specialist (see agencies listed on back).
 - Create a vegetated zone. A 100 foot wide grass filter strip is ideal. A wide natural buffer of trees and understory vegetation around sinkholes is more effective in removing sediment from deeper sinkholes and holes located in gullies or ravines.



HERE'S MORE **WE** CAN DO.

PROTECT WELL WATER:

- Situate wells away from barns, feed lots, livestock pens, sinkholes, dumps, septic systems and fuel tanks to keep polluted surface water out.
- Line well with welded steel pipe, grouted in place.
- Keep fertilizer, pesticides, petroleum products and other chemicals away from zone around wells.
- Keep standing water from accumulating around wells.
- Check your water at the County Health Unit.

SEEK ADVICE:

Arkansas Department of
Environmental Quality (ADEQ)

www.adeq.state.ar.us

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

www.agfc.com

Friends of the North Fork & White Rivers, Inc.

www.friendsoftherivers.org

Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District

www.swl.usace.army.mil/offices/contact.html

Your County Cooperative Extension Office:

Baxter County – (870) 425-2335

Fulton County – (870) 895-3301

Independence County – (870) 793-8840

Izard County – (870) 368-4323

Marion County – (870) 449-6349

Stone County – (870) 269-3336



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