

Where does our water come from?

San Miguel de Allende's water comes from groundwater drawn from the Upper Rio Laja aquifer.

Public and private wells tapping into the aquifer supply nearly all our household, agricultural, and commercial water.

Public wells in the urban area, and in some of our rural areas, are managed by SAPASMA, an independent agency governed by a board of directors appointed by our municipal government.

How much water do we have?



For decades we have been pumping ground water at a far greater pace than it can be replenished. A growing population, wasteful practices, and inequitable access and distribution of water are some of the actions that contribute to the mismanagement of this vital resource.

Our aquifer is one of the most over-exploited in Mexico. Already some of our wells have been closed because they were drawing water from

the bottom of the aquifer, which contains harmful levels of fluoride and arsenic.

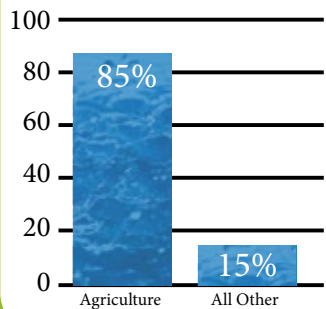
Other wells are known to be polluted by harmful bacteria, pesticides and other toxins which all pose serious health threats.

While it is difficult to predict how long we can rely upon our aquifer, it is essential that we diligently manage it today for our long term water security.

Without the aquifer's water, we will need to rely on our already stressed local reservoirs and water that must be transported over long distances at great cost.

The growing trends of drought, population growth, and corporate control of water require us to take action now to ensure that we have an affordable, clean and sufficient supply of water for all of our needs.

Where Does Our Water Go?



"The age of the groundwater in the deepest part of our aquifers ranges from 10,000-35,000 years old, "young" water closer to the surface has been used up, indicating that this resource is non-renewable on a human scale."

Dr. Marcos Adrián Ortega 2002

Important Facts

- Industrial agriculture consumes 85% of our water because of wasteful irrigation practices and water thirsty crops.
- Illegal pumping from our rivers and unpermitted wells make it difficult to efficiently manage our water.
- Climate change is altering global weather patterns. Many parts of Mexico are becoming arid and unable to support life due to decreasing rainfall.

What can we do?

- Acknowledge the urgent need to conserve, capture, and reuse water.

Make a commitment to change our habits TODAY!

- Grow crops that require less water and use water saving technologies for irrigation.
- Ensure that our rivers and reservoirs are protected and restored and that all of our wastewater is treated before going into our waterways so we have a healthy source of water.
- Implement water saving methods at home, in your garden, and at work.
- Talk with family members, neighbors, and friends about the need to conserve water.
- Urge our government representatives to make a safe, clean, and abundant water supply a priority and ensure an equitable distribution of water for all.
- Support the goals and spirit of the Agua Vida SMA campaign to protect our water, by volunteering and providing financial support.



WATER IS LIFE

and too precious to waste

Thank you for caring about saving water. These are simple ways you can make every drop count.



Stop the leaks

Fixing leaking pipes and faucets inside and outside your home, will save hundreds of liters of water per month.

Be a water-smart gardener

Choose drought-resistant plants for your garden; reduce the size of your lawn; use mulch; improve your soil; and water in the morning or evening to save thousands of liters of water every month.

Turn off the tap

Each minute that water flows from your tap, 8 liters of water goes down the drain. Think of the 1,000s of liters you can save each year by simply turning off the tap when you brush your teeth, shave, wash dishes, etc.

Capture and Reuse your water

Think of ways to catch your water before it goes down the drain and use it to water your plants. A few ideas include placing a bucket in your shower, disconnecting your sink and catching the flow in a bucket, installing a rain catchment barrel, or building a cistern.

Think “water” when you shop

Purchase only environmental and socially friendly products or make your own!

For more detailed water saving tips visit:
www.aguavidasanmiguel.org

AGUA VIDA SMA is a campaign of the Citizen’s Observatory for Water and Sanitation (OCAS), comprised of private citizens and the following organizations:

- Amigos de la Presa
- Casita Linda
- El Charco del Ingenio
- FAI-Cedecal
- Rotary Club of San Miguel de Allende, Mid-day
- Salvemos del Rio Laja
- Sociedad Audubon de Mexico
- Via Organica

Our goal is to create awareness about our water supply in San Miguel de Allende and promote a fair and sustainable focus to its management and distribution.

Visit our website to learn more about Agua Vida SMA, our water, and what you can do.

www.aguavidasma.org

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*Water is the source
of all life and too precious
to waste.*

Conserve · Capture · Reuse
Make every drop count!