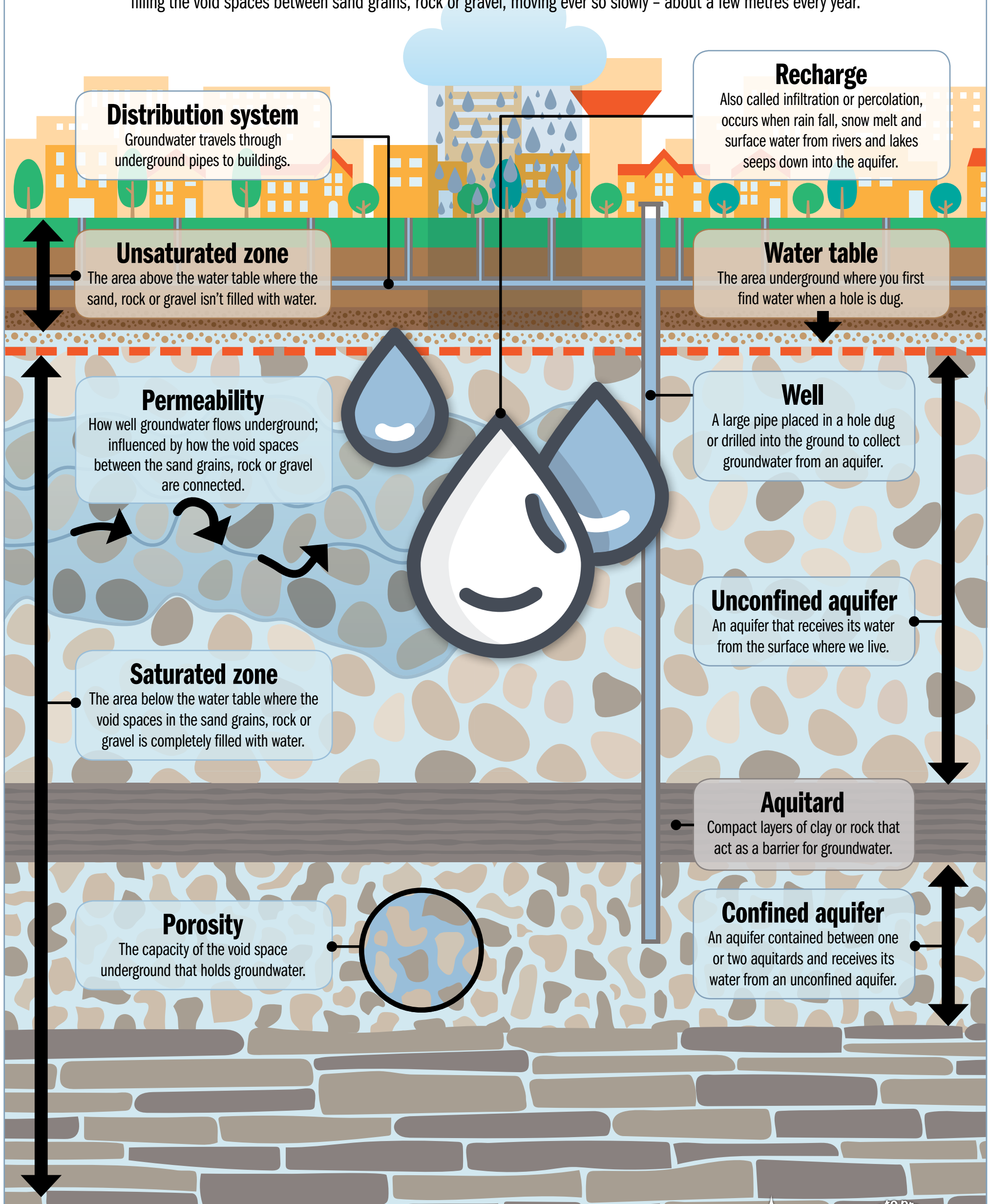


I am groundwater

Groundwater is the water you drink, cook and wash with, and so much more. Unlike surface water in rivers and lakes, groundwater is hidden. Where you are standing right now, there is groundwater underneath you. It might take some digging to get to it, but it's there.

Groundwater is in an aquifer; layers of sand, rock or gravel. Groundwater is the rain or melted snow that soaks into the ground filling the void spaces between sand grains, rock or gravel, moving ever so slowly – about a few metres every year.



Distribution system

Groundwater travels through underground pipes to buildings.

Recharge

Also called infiltration or percolation, occurs when rain fall, snow melt and surface water from rivers and lakes seeps down into the aquifer.

Unsaturated zone

The area above the water table where the sand, rock or gravel isn't filled with water.

Water table

The area underground where you first find water when a hole is dug.

Permeability

How well groundwater flows underground; influenced by how the void spaces between the sand grains, rock or gravel are connected.

Well

A large pipe placed in a hole dug or drilled into the ground to collect groundwater from an aquifer.

Saturated zone

The area below the water table where the void spaces in the sand grains, rock or gravel is completely filled with water.

Unconfined aquifer

An aquifer that receives its water from the surface where we live.

Aquitard

Compact layers of clay or rock that act as a barrier for groundwater.

Porosity

The capacity of the void space underground that holds groundwater.

Confined aquifer

An aquifer contained between one or two aquitards and receives its water from an unconfined aquifer.