



The Katharine Ordway
Natural History Study Area

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ORDWAY BULLETIN
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MACALESTER
COLLEGE

located at 9550 Inver Grove Trail (Dakota County Road 77), Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

The WATER-SUPPLY at ORDWAY.

As our world continues to take inventory of its natural resources and becomes more concerned about their adequacy and about our proper usage of them the matter of water supply becomes increasingly important - and of concern to all of us. The obvious pollution of streams and lakes has plunged us into this problem but there are other factors which exacerbate the impending water shortage - increased industrialization; dramatically-increased irrigation, which has lowered the water-level in the Great Plains region to an alarmingly low level, possibly below its ability to recover.

The water at Ordway comes from one drilled well which pumps it up from the Shakopee Limestone aquifer. As one stands at the well-head he is about 240 feet above the source of the water for the well penetrates that much overburden of till and gravel in order to reach the water-table. It is an interesting comparison that the surface of the Mississippi River is just 240 feet below the site of the building. This coincidence is congruent with the outflow of the spring, which is just above the level of River Lake and the River. It is dramatically apparent how the limestone stratum tilts gradually toward the River and serves as "the water carrier" (aquifer).

Ordway's water, like most water supplies hereabouts, is quite hard - a natural result of the limestone aquifer - and this is corrected by a water softener which processes the drinking and lavatory water. What is not needed nor desired is the high iron content of the water, the cause of considerable staining of the porcelain fixtures. Actually the water is good-tasting and quite healthful and the high iron content is a nuisance rather than a drawback. Presumably the iron comes from the metallic components in the soil which are leached downward by run-off waters. The water is clear and it is several days before iron deposits show themselves on the porcelain and similar places because the iron is in a colloidal condition and is very difficult to remove by filtration. Still it is good water.

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/khc

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