

Potentiometric Surface Map of the Bedrock Aquifers of Tipton County, Indiana

By
Ginger C. Korinek
Division of Water, Resource Assessment Section
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Tipton County, Indiana is located in the central portion of the state bounded by Clinton, Howard, Grant, Madison, and Hamilton counties to the west, north, northeast, east, and south, respectively. The northern half of the county is situated within the Upper Wabash River Basin, and a small portion in the southwest is within the Middle Wabash River Basin. The remainder of the southern half of the county is situated within the White and West Fork White River Basin.

The Bedrock Potentiometric Surface Map (PSM) of Tipton County is mapped by contouring the elevations of 597 static water levels reported on well records received primarily over a 50-year period. These wells are completed in bedrock aquifers at various depths and typically under confined conditions (bounded by impermeable layers above and below the water bearing formation). However, some wells are completed in unconfined settings with water bearing formations not bounded by impermeable layers. The potentiometric surface is a measure of the pressure on water in a water bearing formation, or aquifer. The groundwater level in an unconfined aquifer system is at atmospheric pressure and will not rise in a well above the top of the aquifer formation. The potentiometric surface in most wells completed in bedrock within Tipton County rises above the top of the bedrock aquifer due to the confining nature of the system.

Static water level measurements in individual wells used to construct county PSM's are indicative of the water level at the time of well completion. The groundwater level within an aquifer constantly fluctuates in response to rainfall, evapotranspiration, groundwater movement, and pumpage. Therefore, current site-specific conditions may differ due to local or seasonal variations in measured static water levels. Because fluctuations in groundwater are typically small, static water levels can be used to construct a generalized PSM. Groundwater flow is naturally from areas of recharge toward areas of discharge. The contours were determined based on the amount of data and the degree of change in water levels between wells. Bedrock potentiometric surface elevation contours have not been extended across portions of southern and central Tipton County. Some of this area is lacking in data and/or covered by more prolific unconsolidated deposits that limit the necessity to complete wells in bedrock.

Data collected to generate the PSM were standardized and validated for accuracy. Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinates for the water wells were either physically obtained in the field, determined through address geocoding, or determined based on water well records.

The location of the majority of the water well records used to make the PSM were field verified. Elevation data were derived from a digital elevation model based on LiDAR. Quality control/quality assurance procedures were utilized to refine or remove data where errors were readily apparent.

Potentiometric surface contours are developed based on the static water levels from the bedrock aquifer systems and displayed here with 10-foot contours and 50-foot index contours. Bedrock potentiometric surface contours in Tipton County range from a high of 900 feet mean sea level (msl) in the southwest edge of the county, to a low of 830 feet msl in the southeast corner of the county. Groundwater flow direction within the bedrock aquifer system of Tipton County is generally towards the north and northeast in the northern portion of the county. Groundwater flow transitions to an east southeast flow south of the major drainage divide.

The county PSM can be used to define the regional groundwater flow path and to identify significant areas of groundwater recharge and discharge. County PSM's represent overall regional characteristics and are not intended to be a substitute for site-specific studies.