

Water — The Substance That Never "Dies"

Is it possible that the same water that boiled last night's potatoes carried Columbus' expedition to the New World? That the water coming out of your faucets flowed down the River Nile centuries ago?

Yes, for thanks to a process known as the water cycle, water never "dies". The bond that unites two hydrogen atoms with one oxygen atom to form the life-giving substance H₂O is so strong that it is almost impossible to break. Changes do occur when water is heated or cooled. But while it may "fade away", it never is destroyed. Thus, even the "fresh" water we use in our own homes has been around a long time.

On the other hand, although it is true that there is "water, water everywhere", unfortunately it also is true that often there is "not a drop to drink". The problem is that an adequate supply of the right quality water does not exist everywhere, and the situation is not improving as the number of users grows.

In their new book, *The Water in Your Life*, William Laas and Dr. S. S. Beicos, technical director of the Water Conditioning Division, Morton Salt Company, explain that the water cycle is partially responsible for the water shortages that plague parts of the world. Water often evaporates from one place on the earth's surface and returns to another during the second stage of the cycle.

Water is evaporated continuously from its liquid state on the earth's surface by the sun's power. It becomes "water vapor" and rises as the sun's energy warms it. Eventually it meets cooler atmospheric conditions and returns to earth as rain, snow, hail or sleet. The cycle is endless because it is powered by the sun's limitless energy.

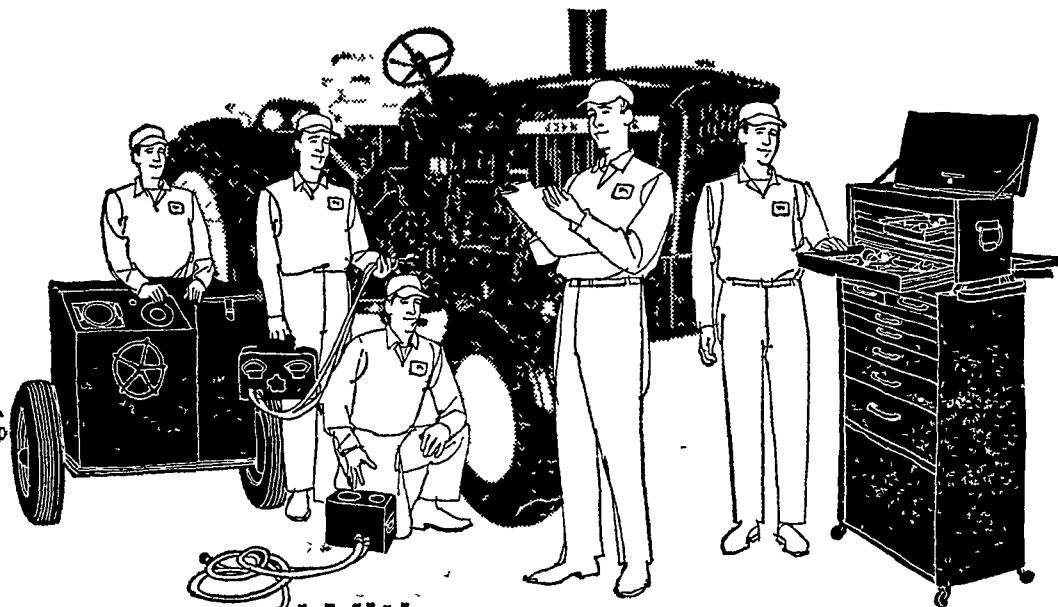
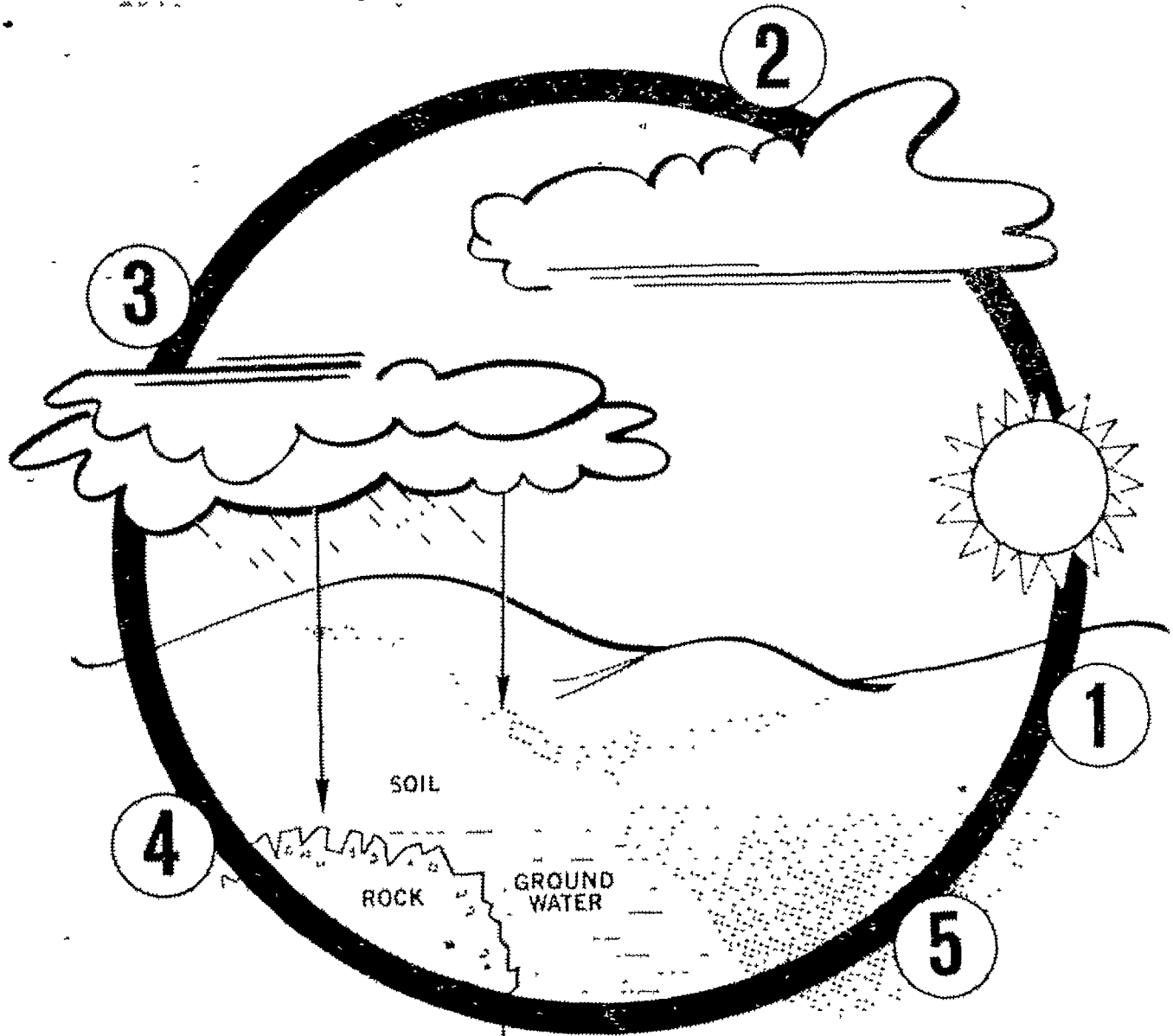
Since virtually none of our water ever has been lost, we use the same supply century

1. Water at earth's surface is heated by sunlight and evaporates; the water vapor becomes part of the air we breathe.
2. As warm air rises and cools, the water vapor forms small particles of liquid or ice such as clouds.
3. The particles in the clouds grow until they fall to

earth as rain or snow. Some rain or melted snow soaks into earth and dissolves some of the minerals. Some rain and snow falls into streams, lakes and oceans. Eventually, the water again is heated and the cycle repeats.

abounds, such as on the eastern seaboard. Thus, we have to balance the more constant—more efficiently manage the (Continued on Page 14)

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