

Vadose Zone Encyclopedia Article

Vadose Zone

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Vadose Zone

The unsaturated zone between the land surface and the **water table**. The vadose zone (from the Latin *vadosus*, meaning shallow) includes the soil-water zone, intermediate vadose zone, and capillary fringe. The pore space contains air, water, and other fluids under pressure, which is less than atmospheric pressure. Thus, the water is held to the **soil** particles by forces that are greater than the force of gravity. Saturated zones, such as perched **groundwater** aquifers, may exist in the vadose zone and water pressure within these zones is greater than atmospheric pressure.

See Also

Recharge Zone; Zone of Saturation