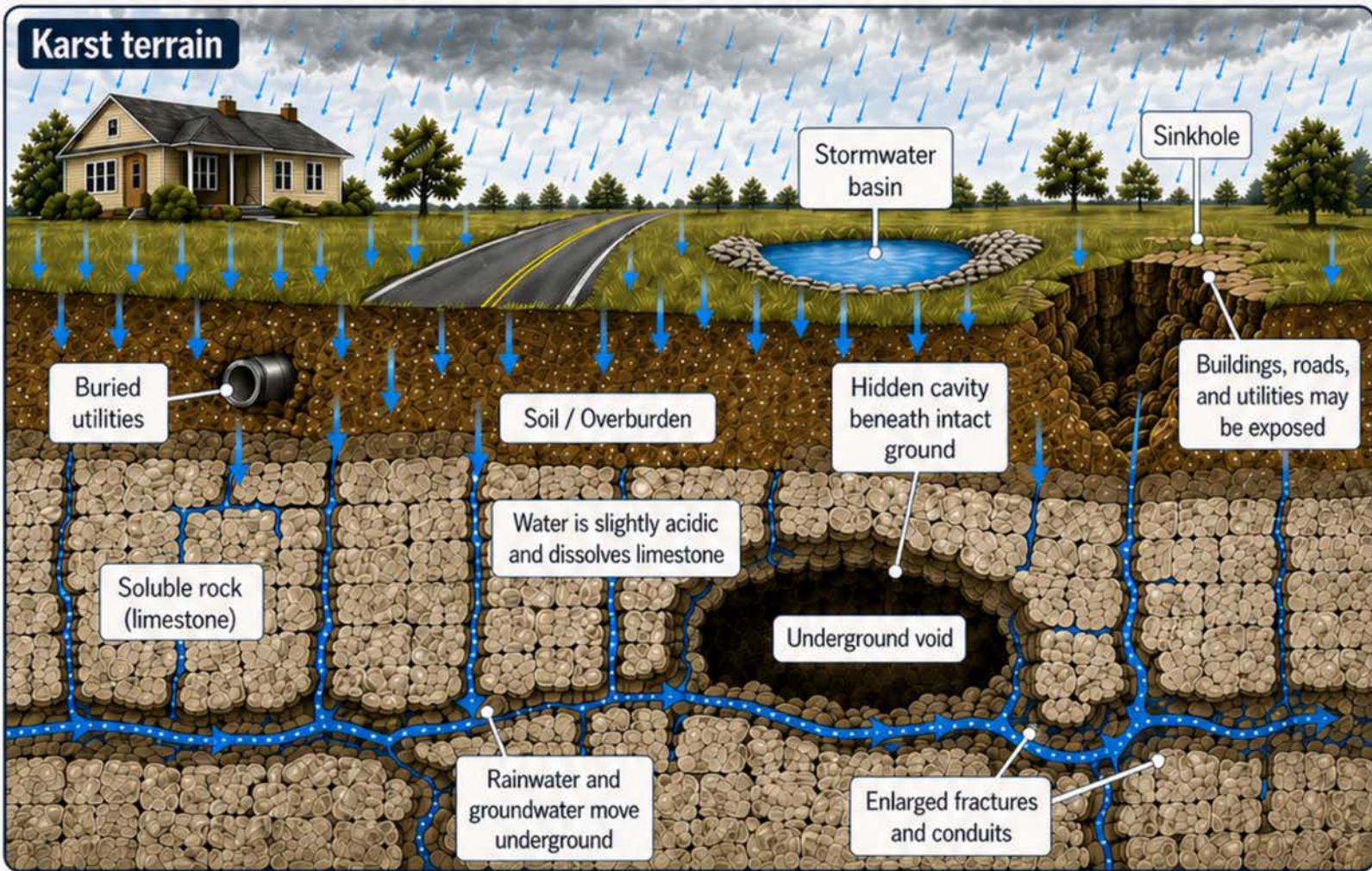
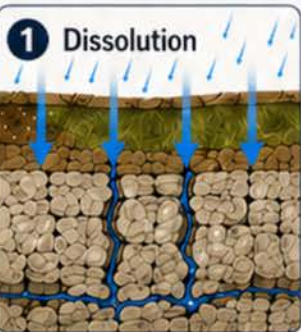


Why Karst Terrain Can Produce Sinkholes

Soluble rock can dissolve underground, creating hidden voids that may lead to surface collapse.



How a sinkhole can form



1 Dissolution
Slightly acidic water infiltrates through cracks and openings and dissolves limestone.



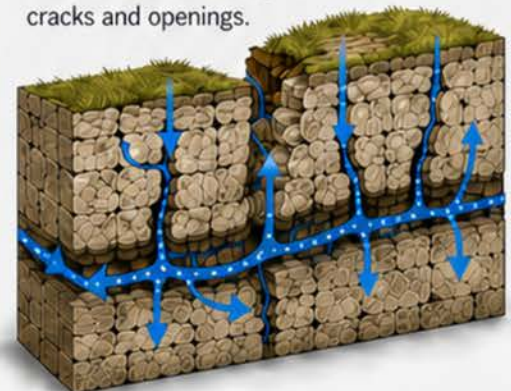
2 Hidden cavity
Dissolution enlarges fractures and creates a void. A soil bridge remains at the surface.



3 Sinkhole collapse
The soil bridge fails, and the ground collapses into the void, forming a sinkhole.

Groundwater movement in karst

Water can enter through cracks and openings.



Rainwater and groundwater move underground



Limestone dissolves over time



Hidden cavities may form below the surface



Surface sagging or collapse can occur



Policy takeaway: In karst areas, underground conditions can strongly affect surface stability. Building codes, stormwater design, groundwater protection, and infrastructure siting should account for the possibility of sinkholes and hidden voids.

