ENVIRONMENTAL WATER SYSTEMS®
*Quality Water Filtration Crafted in the USA Since 1987.*

# Well Water Disinfection Procedure or Chlorinating a Well

Materials and tools used in well construction are commonly contaminated with bacteria that live in soil and these can be introduced into the water system while constructing or repairing the well. It is very important that the water system be disinfected following construction and repairs.

Bacterial contamination can also be a result of flooding, cracks in the well casing, and seepage from sewage systems. It is important to monitor well water for bacteria on a regular basis. The EPA recommends testing for coliform bacteria annually and possibly more frequently if a problem is suspected.

If your test results indicate there is bacteria present, steps should be taken to disinfect the well.

**A complete and proper well disinfection procedure.**
*(as recommended by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources)***

1. Bypass all or any water filtration and treatment equipment.
   Do not let water run through any point of entry systems unless instructed to do so.
2. Remove well cover. Pour the required amount of bleach/chlorine into the well.
   Do not use laundry bleach containing scent additives. See Table Below.
3. Run ALL faucets in the house, one at a time, until you smell the chlorine in the faucet.
   This ensures that the whole plumbing system will be disinfected.
4. Connect a garden hose to an outside tap (or an indoor tap with the correct thread fitting). Put the other end of the hose into the well, turn on the faucet, and from time to time move the hose so that the chlorinated water bathes the sidewalls of the well casing. Do this for at least six hours. Turn off the tap and remove the hose from the well.
5. Replace the well cover.
6. DO NOT USE THE WATER for at least twelve hours. Forty-eight hours is optimal.
7. Run the water to waste but NOT IN THE SEPTIC SYSTEM for several hours or until the chlorine taste is diluted enough be unobjectionable. The best way to run the water to waste is to use the garden hose mentioned above (item 4). Direct the hose into an area where chlorinated water will not cause environmental damage or affect the water supply of others. For a typical well this may take 3-4 hours.
   NOTE: To avoid pump overheating and possible damage, turn off the water when flow is at a trickle and wait at least 15 minutes before turning on the pump again.
8. After a week of use, retest for bacteria.
9. In some cases, one chlorination treatment will NOT be sufficient. Repeat disinfection procedures as needed.

| Well Depth | Amount of Liquid Household Bleach or Chlorine |
|---|---|
| Up to 150 ft. | Minimum One Quart up to Two |
| 151 to 300 ft. | Minimum Two Quarts up to Three |
| Over 300 ft. | Minimum One Gallon and One Cup crushed swimming pool tablets |

Any disinfection and/or chlorination products should be handled in accordance with the manufacturer's directions. It is strongly recommended you wear eye protection and gloves when handling these products and that you are in a well ventilated area. Do not drink well water containing high levels of chlorine. The water should be tested for bacteria after the disinfection procedure is complete. Until the water is tested and found to be free of bacteria, bring the water to a rolling boil for at least one minute (five minutes would be optimal) before consuming or using for food preparation.

** This may not be, and is not the only procedure to completely disinfect a well testing positive for microbiological contamination. However, it is a complete procedure and indicates the severity of the problem that must be completely addressed or face the consequences of health issues or the complete closure of your water source, by local code.

**All water filtration equipment and treatment systems require that water be microbiologically safe.**

Water testing positive on a constant basis may require a residual disinfection device or system that disinfects incoming water for human consumption and usage. Municipally treated water supplies principally disinfect to keep water safe to the general population, as well as, treat and filter, as needed, and test continuously pursuant to strict regulations.

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For the most complete information on well water - review, download or print out the "Guide For The Private Well Owner".