Disinfecting Your Well

Well disinfection is usually completed after a well has been constructed, after any repairs or maintenance to the well, after a water sample has indicated that the well water contains *E. coli,* or repeated samples indicate the water contains total coliforms.

Routine well disinfection is not recommended. This procedure is only a temporary method of disinfection used to eliminate a one-time case of bacterial contamination. Disinfection is not a substitute for eliminating an on-going source of contamination or a defect in the well construction. It is important to identify and correct the source of bacterial contamination before disinfection in order to ensure the continued safety of your water supply. A licensed well contractor may be required to inspect and advise on requirements.

Once the well has been disinfected, the well water must be tested to ensure that it is safe for drinking.

Do not drink the water until you receive 3 results, taken 1 to 3 weeks apart, indicating the water is safe to drink.

Well Disinfection Procedure

1. Measure the diameter of the well.
2. Calculate the depth of water in the well by subtracting the distance from ground level to the resting water level from the well depth.
3. Using the table to the right, measure the amount of bleach (5.25% solution) needed. Make sure to follow safety precautions on the product label.
4. Mix the chlorine with water in a bucket. Then, pour the mixture into your well by allowing it to run down the inner wall of the casing. If possible, mix the water in the well. This can be accomplished by attaching a hose to a tap, and running water from the well through the hose and back into the well. Well water should be agitated while avoiding the suspension of sediment from the bottom of the well into the water columns
5. Remove or bypass any carbon filters on the system. The filters will remove the chlorine from the water and as a result, any pipes beyond the filter will not be disinfected. Replace filters after disinfection to avoid reintroducing bacteria into the system.
6. Run the water at every internal and external faucet until chlorine odour is detected. Once chlorine odour is detected, turn off all faucets.
7. Drain the hot water tank and fill with chlorinated water.
8. Back-flush the water softener and all water filters (except carbon filters).
9. Let the chlorinated water stand in the system for at least 12 hours, preferably overnight.
10. Remove the chlorinated water from the well by turning on an outside tap with hose attached and run the water until the chlorine smell is no longer detected. Ensure the waste water is directed away from the septic system. Run all indoor faucets until the water no longer smells of chlorine.
11. Test the well water 3 to 5 days following disinfection. Do not drink the water until you receive 3 results, taken 1 to 3 weeks apart, indicating the water is safe to drink.

Volume of Bleach to Add per 3 meters (10 feet) of Water in Well		
Casing Diameter		Volume of Unscented Bleach (5.25% Solution)
Millimeters	Inches	Millilitres
50	2	6
100	4	30
150	6	60
200	8	100
250	10	200
300	12	250
400	16	400
500	20	650
600	24	900
900	36	2000 (2 L)
1200	48	3600 (3.6 L)

Disclaimer: The information contained in this factsheet is not intended to replace or be a substitute for a consultation with a licensed well contractor. Please consult a licensed well contractor for specific information on disinfection procedures.