

DISINFECTION OF DRINKING WATER WELLS

There are two methods of introducing chlorine into the water system.

A. IF THE WELL LOCATION IS KNOWN AND ACCESSIBLE

1. Remove the cap on the well casing.
2. Make a diluted bleach solution (Full strength bleach is corrosive to the well casing):
 - a. one quart of household bleach to five gallons of water
3. Pour the bleach solution into the well. Avoid pouring water directly down the well casing, as it can cause corrosion.
4. Turn on each water faucet, one at a time, allow the water to run until you can smell the bleach from that faucet, and then turn off the faucet. Repeat this procedure for each faucet, both hot and cold water in kitchens, bathrooms, and any other rooms with water outlets. If you cannot smell chlorine after a reasonable amount of time, repeat step 2.
 - Do not forget to run the hot water taps, bathtubs, showers, outside taps and flush toilets to ensure that all of the pipes in the system have received chlorine.
5. Allow the water to remain in the pipes a minimum of six hours. You may choose to let the chlorinated water remain in the lines overnight.
6. Run the water through an outside garden hose for fifteen to thirty minutes and shut the water off for an equal amount of time allowing the well to rest and recover the water level. You may need to repeat this step multiple times until the smell of the chlorine has weakened. The chlorine should disappear after two days depending on water use. The water can be tested after you can no longer smell the chlorine.
7. Attached are two DPD total chlorine test tablets. Before sampling your water, place one tablet in a cup then add about an ounce of your water. If a pink color immediately appears, there is still chlorine in the water and you will need to repeat step 6.
8. If there is no chlorine remaining in the system, you may sample your water for another bacteriological test.

B. IF THE WELL LOCATION IS UNKNOWN OR NOT ACCESSIBLE AND THE WATER PUMP IS AVAILABLE

- This method will disinfect only the plumbing and will not disinfect the well
1. Shut off the electricity to the pump.
 2. Open any water taps to draw off all water pressure.
 3. On the water pump itself, open the priming port, pressure port or tee and pour up to one cup of household bleach directly into the pump.
 4. Close up the pump.
 5. Turn on the electric switch and allow the pump to build pressure.
 6. Turn on each water outlet and allow water to run until you can smell the bleach in the water. If you cannot smell chlorine after a reasonable amount of time, repeat step 3.
 7. Follow step 5 through 8, listed above.
 - If the well casing is under ground, you will be required to bring the casing at least 18 inches above ground level. Contact a representative of the Health Department Water Resources Division for specifics.

Heavily chlorinated water is harmful to humans and animals but minor amounts of chlorine as in public water supplies or in private wells after being run-off is not harmful. The Health Department recommends that private water wells be disinfected whenever plumbing work has been done or the system drained and bacteria might have been introduced. At least 70% of all water wells sampled pass a bacteriological analysis. After a thorough disinfection, closer to 100% pass such testing.

