

Disinfection of Wells

Your well has tested positive for bacteria and therefore can be unsafe for drinking. In order to correct this problem, you must disinfect your well. Water Testing Labs of MD is not directly involved in the disinfection process. We can provide you with some general guidelines to follow if you wish to proceed with the disinfection process yourself, or you could contact someone in the well drilling business to provide you with this service. In order to get a good bacteriological test, it is necessary to disinfect the entire plumbing system.

General Guidelines:

1. Bypass any filters or water conditioning systems.
2. Use any liquid laundry bleach, such as Clorox. Pour approximately one gallon of bleach into a five-gallon bucket of water, if you know the depth of the well, you may use 1 gallon of bleach per 100 ft. Remove the well cap and pour this mixture down into the well. Do not use the water during the chlorination process.
3. Put the end of a hose from an outside tap into the top of the well. Turn the water on and discharge into the well for about three hours; this mixes the bleach into the water in the well. Turn off the water and remove the hose from the well. Replace the well cap.
4. Open all of the taps inside and outside of the house and let water flow until a strong chlorine smell appears. Turn the taps off.
5. Let the system sit undisturbed for at least 24 hours. During this period the chlorine will have a chance to kill the bacteria in the water system.
6. Following the waiting period, it is necessary to flush the chlorinated water out of the system before the water can be retested. Run the water from an outside tap through a hose until the chlorine odor has disappeared, do not run into the septic system. Flush all inside taps. When the chlorine smell is gone, continue to run the water through an outside hose to get the chlorine out of the rest of the plumbing system. This usually takes 2-3 days.
7. Shut water off for at least 12 hours. This will allow the water level to rise and pick up any residual chlorine off the walls of the well. After this period, allow water to run for at least another 24 hours.

Sometimes small amounts of chlorine will remain in the water even though you can't smell it. Unless all the chlorine is gone, another water sample cannot be collected. Running the water as much as possible will help get rid of the chlorine. Call us for some free chlorine test tablets that will allow you to detect small amounts of chlorine.

Water Testing Labs of MD provides this information as a courtesy. We are in no way responsible for the chlorination/disinfection process. We are in the business of water analysis. After the well has been disinfected please call to schedule a retest.