

PROCEDURE FOR DISINFECTION OF WELLS

Wells that have been newly constructed, repaired or found to be contaminated with coliform bacteria, should be thoroughly disinfected and flushed before a sample is collected for bacterial examination/re-examination. Where possible, all exposed surfaces and piping above the water line should be flushed with a strong chlorine solution (made by mixing a cup of bleach in a gallon of water). The well, pump and piping are then disinfected by the following steps:

- 1) Drilled Well: 1 - 1½ gallons of any household bleach per 100 feet of well.
Dug Well: ½ - 1 gallon of bleach per 25 feet of well.
There are also chlorine tablets available. They are more concentrated than liquid bleach (if you use these tablets, crush them before you put them into the well to make sure they dissolve, remember to be careful doing this).
- 2) Pour half to three quarters of the chlorine into the well (dug or drilled well) washing down the sides of the well casing as best you can.
- 3) Run water from each tap (including dishwasher, washing machine any outside faucets and run a hot water tap to get chlorine into the hot water tank) until a chlorine odor appears. Pour the remainder of the chlorine into the well, again taking measures to wash down the sides of the casing or pit.
- 4) Allow the system to stand idle for at least 8 hours (overnight would be sufficient).
The chlorine can be flushed from the system with normal use (remember if you have chlorine in the line to your washing machine you want to remove it before doing a load of laundry).
- 5) After chlorine odor is gone wait a few days, then take a sample to a private laboratory for bacterial analysis to determine whether contamination has been eliminated.

It should be remembered that disinfection is no assurance that water entering the well will be free of contamination. The cause of the contamination should be determined and eliminated if possible (is the well capped securely?). Until the water is proven free of coliform bacteria, all water for drinking or kitchen use should first be boiled for 2 minutes.

*The Health Department does not guarantee the above outlined procedure will provide a satisfactory water supply report. Some wells do not respond to disinfection and may require a permanent disinfection device (hypochlorination or ultra-violet light) connected to the system.

Please feel free to call the Health Department for additional help or information.