

When Should You Disinfect Your Well?

Your well should be disinfected after a flooding event, loss of power for an extended period of time, or after your water has tested positive for total coliform bacteria and/or E. coli.

Flooding near your well can allow contaminants to enter your well head if the well head has any openings or if the underground casing is cracked.

During events where there is a loss of power, stagnant water in the pipes allows any micro-organisms in the piping or equipment to grow, which causes contamination.



Can I Use My Water For.....

- **Drinking? Brushing Teeth? Washing Fruits and Vegetables? Ice?** *No, we recommend using bottled or water that has been boiled and cooled until the system has been treated and tested.*
- **Washing Dishes?** *You can use your dishwasher as long as you use the high-heat and sanitizing rinse cycles.*
- **Showering?** *Yes, but be careful not to swallow water or get it in your eyes or any open cuts until the system has been treated and tested!*

Florida Department of Health in
Collier County

Environmental Health &
Engineering
3339 Tamiami Trail E, Room 302
Naples, FL 34112

Phone: 239.252.5530
Fax: 239.643.6870

Disinfecting Your Well and Equipment





Disinfecting Your Equipment

Disinfecting your equipment is just as important as disinfecting the well itself. Many types of bacteria can live in your treatment tanks if the tanks are not cleaned.

- Empty the tank of water or salt.
- Mix 1 cup of bleach with a gallon of water in a plastic container.
- Using a brush, scrub the side walls of the tank and base of the tank with the bleach solution to kill any bacteria that may be growing in the tank.
- Rinse the tank with clean water thoroughly. Remember you don't want bleach inside your filtration tanks!

Steps to Disinfecting Your Well

- Obtain 1—2 gallons of bleach. Unscented household bleach or liquid pool chlorine can be used. Liquid pool chlorine is stronger than household bleach, so you will not need to use as much as you may need if using household bleach.
- Turn off and drain your hot water heater. Chlorine is not effective in water above 105 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Clean the top of your well head with a solution of bleach and water (1/2 cup of bleach to 5 gallons of water). This will remove any contaminants on your well head prior to opening the plug.
- Remove the plastic plug (usually yellow, white or blue in color) from the top of your well head. Make sure you keep the plug to re-seal the well head afterwards.
- Pour the bleach directly down the well itself. If you are able, try to coat the casing of the well with bleach. Depending on the size of the opening, you may need to use a funnel to pour the bleach. Re-plug the opening afterward. If you can't access your well head, pour the bleach directly into your first treatment tank—this will disinfect the system only, not the well.
- By-pass any treatment systems you have, such as filters, softeners, permanganate systems, etc. Bleach will eat away at the filtration mechanisms within the system. Most treatment tanks have the by-pass valves at the top of the tank. If you cannot by-pass the tanks, contact the manufacturer of the tank for instructions.
- Turn on your cold water faucets, including sinks, showers and outside spigots and allow the water to run until you can smell bleach.
- Turn off the water and allow the water to sit in the pipes undisturbed for 12—18 hours to allow bleach to kill any bacteria present in the water.
- After the water sits for 12—18 hours, turn the cold water on, starting with your outside spigots, and allow the water to run until the bleach smell has dissipated. This may take up to 30 minutes to complete.

