



Private Well Owner Tip Sheet

June, 2017

Have a question?

Visit the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033



888-395-1033 FREE

Shock chlorination

Shock chlorination refers to using a concentration of chlorine to disinfect a water well system. It may come as a shock that the National Ground Water Association (NGWA) does not recommend private well owners attempt to disinfect their own well systems.

There are many steps to properly disinfecting a well. An untrained person is likely to make errors that not only could render the process ineffective but also create additional problems.

NGWA recommends well owners when possible use a water well system professional familiar with proper well disinfection procedures. There may be occasions when a well owner cannot get a water well professional. In such instances, the well owner should consult with someone qualified in well disinfection for instruction.

Things you should know

Household bleach is not designed for use in drinking water. Although household bleach is widely recommended for water well disinfection, it is not designed for that purpose and may present problems.

Bleach deteriorates over time, affecting its reliability as a disinfection agent. It also may contain some perchlorate, which can present a



Well owner educational offerings

The following are underwritten by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and in cooperation with the Rural Community Assistance Partnership.

Presented by the National Ground Water Association

Drought and Your Water Well

July 25, 11 a.m. EDT (10 a.m. CDT, 9 a.m. MDT, 8 a.m. PDT)

[Registration information](#)

Water Well System Components Vital to Water Quality

August 8, 11 a.m. EDT (10 a.m. CDT, 9 a.m. MDT, 8 a.m. PDT)

[Registration information](#)

Turbid Well Water and What to Do About It

August 15, 3 p.m. EDT (2 p.m. CDT, 1 p.m.

health risk. Instead, there are chemicals certified as safe for use in drinking water.

At too high a concentration, bleach can create disinfection byproducts harmful to health.

When organic matter in groundwater comes into contact with certain chemicals, such as chlorine, it can create a disinfection byproduct known as trihalomethane, a cancer-causing agent.

At too high a concentration, bleach also can corrode well system components. Corrosive water can cause the premature deterioration or damage to portions of the well with which it comes into contact.



Other potential problems may result from attempting to disinfect one's own well. For instance, removing the well cap alone could expose the open well to bacterial contamination from the outside. Great care must be taken to disinfect not only the inside of the well system but also the well cap at the completion of disinfection.

If the disinfectant is not at the proper concentration for the volume of water in the well system—or if the contact time between the disinfectant and the system is not sufficiently long—the disinfection process may not work.

Disinfection is an important procedure to perform anytime a water well is opened, serviced, or if water test results indicate the presence of bacteria. When the presence of bacteria is detected, it should first be determined whether there is a breach in the well system allowing surface water or bacteria-laden water to enter the well system.

Again, when possible use a water well system

MDT, Noon PDT)

[Registration information](#)

Shock Chlorination: What You Should Know

August 23, 3 p.m. EDT (2 p.m. CDT, 1 p.m. MDT, Noon PDT)

[Registration information](#)

Planning for a Water Well

September 6, 11 a.m. EDT (10 a.m. CDT, 9 a.m. MDT, 8 a.m. PDT)

[Registration information](#)

Presented by the University of Illinois and the National Environmental Health Association

Private Well Assessment and Outreach Workshop for Environmental Health Professionals

June 26, from 1 to 5 pm EDT (noon to 4 pm CDT, 11 am to 3 pm MDT, 10 am to 2 pm PDT)

[Registration information](#)

Presented by the University of Illinois Septic Systems 101 Webinar

July 25, at 2 pm EDT (1 pm CDT, noon MDT, 11 am PDT)

[Iron bacteria](#)

[Registration information](#)

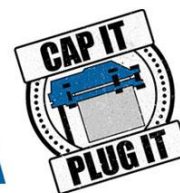
Provided by the Water Systems Council

New fact sheets:

[Caring for a Cistern](#)

[Iron bacteria and Well Water](#)

“Cap It, Plug It” is 2017 Theme



This year's Protect Your Groundwater Day theme is “Cap It, Plug It,” emphasizing the critical role of well caps and plugging of abandoned wells in protecting groundwater. Promote this event to your private well stakeholders! [Click here](#).

professional who knows proper disinfection procedure to disinfect your well.



Made possible by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the Rural Community Assistance Partnership and the National Ground Water Association.



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