

PROTECTING PEOPLE AND PROPERTY

AFTER THE FLOOD

YOUR WELL

After a flood, well owners should:

- Ensure water supply is safe to use;
- Protect groundwater resources.

If your water supply well has been exposed to flooding, it may be contaminated with colourless, tasteless and odourless bacteria or chemicals that can cause serious illness in humans and pets. Immediately discontinue use; boiling well water does **NOT** make it safe. Obtain and use potable water from a safe source.

Be safe; be aware:

After a flood, check for potentially hazardous risks around your well. If electrical wires connected to pumps in your well were damaged, it may create a risk of electrocution. Also, the ground around the well may have eroded creating potentially hazardous conditions.

To bring a well back into service safely, consider contacting:

- a qualified registered professional or a licensed well driller (or digger) to evaluate and service a drilled (or dug) well;
- a licensed pump installer and, if necessary, a certified electrician, to evaluate and service the well pump.

Note - Residential private well owners can work on and disinfect their own well. However, there are safety considerations and many technical steps required to properly clean and disinfect a well; consider contacting a qualified professional or qualified technician as noted above.

Initial steps include:

- follow sanitary practices;
- remove debris from well;
- thorough pumping of well.

Disinfect your well:

The purpose of disinfecting a well is to destroy bacteria that may have been introduced during a flood. Chlorine (bleach) compounds are most often used because of their potency and effectiveness; do not use scented or splashless chlorine (bleach).

Public Health Ontario provides an online well disinfection tool that calculates the amount of chlorine required to disinfect water supply wells at:
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/laboratory-services/well-water-testing/well-disinfection-tool>

Test your well water:

Protect yourself and your water well; if you suspect contamination, test your water as soon as possible.

To test your well for bacterial contamination, contact Public Health Ontario at 1-877-543-8931 for assistance. To test your well for chemical contamination, contact your local Public Health Unit or the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks at 1-800-565-4923 for assistance.

