



HOW TO DISINFECT YOUR WELL

You can disinfect your well with household chlorine bleach, such as Javex®.

Steps for disinfecting your well:

1. Use fresh chlorine bleach to ensure an effective disinfection of the well. Chlorine can evaporate and lose half of its strength in six months. Do not use scented bleach (ex. lemon-scented bleach) in order to avoid adding extra chemicals to your water.
2. If you will need a supply of water for personal use, you could fill the bathtub with water to be used to flush the toilet and fill clean containers for a supply of drinking water. Drinking water can be disinfected by boiling it for at least one minute or by adding chlorine bleach (add 2 drops of bleach per litre of water and let sit for 15 minutes). You can also use bottled water.
3. Establish the diameter of the well and the depth of the water to determine the volume of water in the well. Using the enclosed table, calculate the amount of chlorine bleach needed to disinfect the well. Mix that amount of bleach with some water before pouring it into the well.
4. Remove any carbon filters from the water system as the carbon will remove the chlorine and any pipes beyond the filter will not be adequately disinfected.
5. Turn on **ALL** household cold water faucets to distribute the bleach throughout the water system. When you detect a slight chlorine odour, turn off all the faucets. If there is no odour detected, add more chlorine until an odour is detected. Drain the hot water tank and fill with chlorinated water. Backflush the water softener and all the water filters (except the carbon filters). Let the treatment stand overnight (from 6 to 12 hours). Do not turn the faucets on or use tap water during this time.
6. After treatment, use an outside hose connection to drain the water system until no chlorine odour is detected. Chlorine can damage septic systems so ensure the water is being drained **AWAY** from the septic, leaching, or tile-bed systems.
7. Install new carbon filters after chlorination to avoid introducing bacteria back into the water system.
8. Wait about one week before testing the water again. No result is definite, unless three samples, each taken one week apart, have been tested.

**For more information, please contact the Eastern Ontario Health Unit
at 933-1375 or at 1 800 267-7120 and ask for Health Line.
Visit our website at www.eohu-bseo.on.ca.**

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If your well water continues to show bacterial contamination after you have disinfected the well twice or more, the groundwater supply could be contaminated. You may need a permanent water treatment device (such as an ultra-violet light unit, automatic chlorinator, or ceramic filters). Brochures on water treatment devices are available at your local Health Unit office.

Please note:

Before you begin disinfecting procedures, we recommend that you find the actual source of the contamination of the well water and correct it if possible to lower the risk of re-contamination.

It could be one of the following items:

- Faulty construction of the well: loose lid, seal not water-tight, well casing not extended above the flood level of the land, unsealed side walls, unscreened well vents, etc.
- Contaminated hot water tank or water softener. You will need to clean and disinfect according to the manufacturer's directions.

Table - Amount of Chlorine Bleach Required

Diameter of Well Casing in Centimetres	Amount of Chlorine Bleach per 3 metres (10 ft) of Water Depth
10 cm (4 in)	56 ml (2 oz)
15 cm (6 in)	113 ml (4 oz)
20 cm (8 in)	227 ml (8 oz)
30 cm (12 in)	454 ml (16 oz)
40 cm (16 in)	795 ml (28 oz)
50 cm (20 in)	1250 ml (44 oz)
61 cm (24 in)	1760 ml (61 oz)
76 cm (30 in)	2784 ml (98 oz)
91 cm (36 in)	3976 ml (140 oz)
122 cm (48 in)	7100 ml (250 oz)

