

TIP SHEET

Small Steps Toward Better Living

DRINKWATER

Well Maintenance

Proper well maintenance is essential in helping ensure that the well continues to produce drinkable water. Otherwise you may face replacing the well and drilling a new one, which can be very costly. Follow these rules to care for your well.

Maintain Your Well:

1. Always use licensed or certified water well drillers and pump installers when a well is constructed, a pump is installed, or the system is serviced.
2. An annual well maintenance check, including a bacterial & nitrate test, is recommended. Any source of drinking water should be checked any time there is a change in taste, odor or appearance, or anytime a water supply system is serviced. Check with your local county health department to see if you should test for local contaminants such as arsenic.
3. Keep your well records in a safe place. These include the construction reports, as well as annual water well systems maintenance and water testing results.
4. Check your water level. This will let you know how much water you're using and how long your well will last.
5. Inspecting pressure control switches. Control switches are designed to turn on at a certain psi and off at a higher psi, but this system can become irregular if it needs to be replaced or a filter is clogged (and if the filter is clogged, then the control switch isn't the problem. It's the filter).
6. Test pressure tank performance. Your pressure tank takes a lot of work off of your well pump, so it's important to test pressure tank performance so you don't find yourself buying a new well pump.
7. Check for bacteria growth to ensure you and your family aren't using contaminated water. Bacteria can find their way into your well water if you've recently had well repairs, if your water well was poorly constructed, if the water gets contaminated, or if there are issues with the surrounding soil.
8. When your well has come to the end of its serviceable life (usually more than 20 years), have your qualified water well contractor properly seal your well after constructing your new system.

Protect Your Well:

1. Keep hazardous chemicals, such as paint, fertilizer, pesticides and motor oil away from your well.
2. Periodically check the well cover or well cap on top of the casing (well) to ensure it is in good repair.
3. Always maintain proper separation between your well and buildings, waste systems, or chemical storage facilities.
4. Don't allow back-siphonage. When mixing pesticides, fertilizers or other chemicals, don't put the hose inside the tank or container.
5. When landscaping, keep the top of your well at least one foot above ground. Slope the ground away from your well for proper drainage.
6. Take care in working or mowing around your well. A damaged casing could jeopardize the sanitary protection of your well. Don't pile snow, leaves or other materials around your well.
7. Be aware of changes in your well, the area around your well, or the water it provides.
8. Prevent trees from growing around your well, the root systems may break into your well and/or cause issues to the pump.

