



TIPS TO PREVENT WATERBORNE ILLNESS

Today's water wells are drilled or bored. In the past, wells were dug. If a well is to provide you and your family with a safe supply of drinking water, there are a few sensible precautions you can take.

1. Make sure your well is constructed properly. On newer wells, make sure the sanitary seal (the covering over the casing, usually steel) is secured with all the bolts. On older dug wells, make sure the concrete slab that covers the brick casing is free of cracks or holes. These areas can allow contamination to enter the well quite easily.
2. Keep sources of contamination away from the well. A septic tank should not be any closer than 50' from the well; the seepage field should be no closer than 75'. Sources of contamination should be located downhill from your well. Soil around the well casing should be sloped away. Fill in any depressions around the casing.
3. If there is an outside hydrant that could have a hose attached, provide a vacuum breaker. Hoses lying in troughs or used in chemical applications may siphon unwanted contaminants into your well. If using a vacuum breaker, check with the manufacturer's recommendations to prevent freezing.
4. If using agricultural chemicals, make sure there is an air gap of at least 1" or a proper vacuum breaker between the source of water and the chemical. This can help prevent chemicals from siphoning into your water supply. Also, avoid mixing chemicals near the well in case of a spill.
5. Have your water analyzed at least once a year. Water is analyzed for coliform bacteria and nitrates. Coliform is an "indicator" organism of contamination. This contamination may come from dirty screens on faucets, dirty hands touching the inside of the water bottle dirty filters on water system or contamination of the water supply.

If your water supply is found to have coliform bacteria present, our office will send information to you on how to chlorinate your well. After the chlorine is no longer in the supply, the water can be resampled.

6. Nitrates found in water may be naturally occurring, come from run-off from a farm field or be introduced into the supply from your septic system. Nitrate concentration is mainly of concern for pregnant women and infants under 1 year of age. If the nitrate concentration in your water supply is greater than 10 milligrams per liter of water, bottled water should be used. **Do not boil water with high nitrates, this will only increase the concentration.**
7. If there are any wells no longer in use or are poorly constructed, the well is required to be sealed. Please contact our office in regard to sealing abandoned wells.

Contact the Logan County Department of Public Health if you have any questions or concerns about your well or if you feel you may have become ill from drinking the water. We can be reached at 217-735-2317.