



SOUTHWEST PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

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Public Health issues district-wide recommendations For private wells that were surrounded or submerged by flood water

Residents using private wells that have been flooded by the recent severe weather should take precautions against waterborne illnesses by boiling well water for two minutes and then straining it before consumption, Southwest Health District Environmental Health Director Dewayne Tanner warned today.

He emphasized that the recommendations are only for private wells that were underwater. "If flood water didn't cover your well, then you need not take these precautions," Tanner said.

"Although Southwest Health District has issued a Boil Water Order for flooded private wells in seven out of the District's 14 counties, we are well aware that every county has private wells that flooded during the recent heavy rains," said Tanner.

"Regardless of whether a boil water order is in effect in your county, if your private well flooded, please limit consumption to bottled water or boil well water for two minutes at a rolling boil and strain it before using it to brush their teeth, prepare food or drink," he said. However, the water need not be boiled for other domestic activities, such as washing laundry or bathing, he said.

Disinfection of flooded private wells cannot begin until water covering the affected wells recedes.

Fees for testing well water will be waived for residents in flooded areas whose private wells were underwater.

Materials needed for emergency disinfection of flooded wells

- One gallon of non-scented household liquid bleach
- Rubber gloves
- Eye protection
- Old clothes
- A funnel

Steps to disinfect flooded private wells

Step 1

If your water is muddy or cloudy, run the water from an outside spigot with a hose attached until the water becomes clear and free of sediments.

Baker	Calhoun	Colquitt	Decatur	Dougherty	Early	Grady
Lee	Miller	Mitchell	Seminole	Terrell	Thomas	Worth

Step 2

Determine what type of well you have and how to pour the bleach into the well. Some wells have asanitary seal with either an air vent or a plug that can be removed. If it is a bored or dug well, the entire cover can be lifted off to provide a space for pouring the bleach into the well.

Step 3

Take the gallon of bleach and funnel (if needed) and carefully pour the bleach down into the well casing.

Step 4

After the bleach has been added, run water from an outside house into the well casing until you smell chlorine coming from the hose. Then turn off the outside hose.

Step 5

Turn on all cold water faucets, inside and outside of house, until the chlorine odor is detected in each faucet, then shut them all off. If you have a water treatment system, switch it to bypass before turning on the indoor faucets.

Step 6

Wait six to 24 hours before turning the faucets back on. It is important not to drink, cook, bathe or wash with this water during the time period – it contains high amounts of chlorine.

Step 7

Once the waiting period is up, turn on an outside spigot with hose attached and run the water into a safe area where it will not disturb plants, lakes, streams or septic tanks. Run the water until there is no longer a chlorine odor. Turn the water off.

Step 8

The system should now be disinfected, and you can now use the water.

Step 9

If you are not sure about performing the disinfection procedure, contact a licensed, professional well installer for assistance.

Step 10

Contact your county health department for water testing at least five days after disinfection.

Other flood-related material is available on-line at the Southwest Health District web page,

www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org.

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