



Emergency Disinfection of Private Wells After a Flood

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Materials needed

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

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.

Step 2

Determine what type of well you have and how to pour the bleach into the well. Some wells have an 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.