



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Environmental Health Division

FLOOD RECOVERY GUIDE: WELLS

Floodwaters may contain bacteria and chemical pollutants with the potential to contaminate water supply wells. Do not drink water from a well that was submerged or you suspect may have been contaminated by floodwaters. Instead, follow a four step well recovery process before the well is returned to service:

1. Inspect the well for damage After floodwaters have receded inspect the wellhead for damage to the well casing and well seal. Turn off the electricity to the well pump to prevent electrical shock. Visually inspect the electrical connections at the well head and verify the well seal and plumbing are intact. Contact a well or pump contractor to repair any damaged components.
2. Purge potentially contaminated water
Turn on the electricity to the well and open the spigot at the wellhead to purge the well. If there isn't a spigot at the well head then open the closest outside spigot to the wellhead. Run the pump until the well water appears visually clear and verify that purged water will not flow back into the well.
3. Disinfect the well
Use calcium hypochlorite products containing at least 65-75% available chlorine; household bleach is not recommended. Follow all manufacturers recommended safety requirements when handling calcium hypochlorite products. Chlorinated water must be circulated through the well and home and allowed to sit for 24 hours to Adequately disinfect the water supply system. Follow the well disinfection guidelines on this [link](#)
4. Test your well water
5. Verify you have purged the well and water supply system of residual chlorine.
[Contact the Chatham County Health Department](#) or [private laboratory](#) to have your well tested for total and fecal coliform bacteria at a minimum before using. Discuss additional sample analyses with the Health Department or private laboratory if you suspect chemical contamination of your well.



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