

DISINFECTION OF WELLS

Calcium hypochlorite is recommended for the super chlorination of wells. Chlorine must be distributed throughout the water column of the well. Liquid household chlorine bleach will not distribute over the entire water column. Use products that list "Calcium Hypochlorite" as the active ingredient; other forms of chlorine are not suitable for the use in wells. Do not use stabilized chlorine tablets or hypochlorite products containing fungicides, algacides, or other disinfectants. Use calcium hypochlorite products containing at least 65-75% available chlorine.

STEPS TO TAKE FOR DISINFECTION OF WELLS

- ❖ CAUTION: Be sure to read all cautions about calcium hypochlorite before using. You may want to keep a container of fresh water nearby while chlorinating the well in case the concentrated chlorine accidentally comes in contact with your skin or eyes. Work in a well-ventilated area.
- ❖ To determine the amount of calcium hypochlorite needed, you need to know the depth of your well. For a 6-inch diameter drilled well, use 36 tablets or 9 ounces of granular calcium hypochlorite per 100 feet of well depth. It is recommended that the calcium hypochlorite be prepared in an aqueous solution before introduction into the well. To prepare the solution, add the determined amount of calcium hypochlorite to a clean plastic five-gallon bucket of water and mix to dissolve.
- ❖ Remove vent pipe on the wellhead (see figure 1 below) and place the chlorine solution in well through the exposed opening. (Using a funnel may be helpful to direct the solution into the vent pipe opening).
- ❖ Connect a garden hose to the faucet at the wellhead or to a tap closest to the well. Direct hose into vent pipe opening and turn on water. Continue running the water until you smell chlorine. This will circulate the chemicals into the water column. **Note: It may take up to an hour or two to smell the chlorine.**
- ❖ Once the chlorine smell is present in the water, turn the faucet off at the wellhead. Working your way from the well, open all taps in and outside the house one at a time until the chlorine can be smelled at each tap. Once the chlorine can be smelled at a tap, turn off the tap. This also includes the hot water tank. Be sure to turn off the water heater to prevent damage from accidental drainage.

Do not use the water system for 24 hours in order to allow the chlorine adequate time to disinfect the system.

- ❖ After 24 hours, connect a garden hose to the wellhead or to a tap closest to the well to pump the chlorine out of the well. Use the hose to direct the water away from vegetation and away from your septic drainfield area. Continue pumping until the chlorine odor is no longer present. CAUTION: Highly chlorinated water can damage plants and grass. Do not allow the chlorine-rich water to enter any surface water body or storm sewer. Also, do not discharge significant amounts of chlorinated water into the septic tank or over septic field.
- ❖ Once the chlorine odor is no longer present, work your way from the well and open all taps in and outside the house one at a time until the chlorine smell is gone. CAUTION: Be sure all of the chlorine is out of the water before drinking it. The presence of chlorine can be tested using a pool chlorine test kit.
- ❖ If you are chlorinating your well due to a positive coliform bacteria test, then the Environmental Health Division (EHD) recommends that the well be re-tested for the presence of coliform bacteria. Do not assume that the chlorination process has worked. Wait for valid laboratory results to confirm the safety of your water supply.

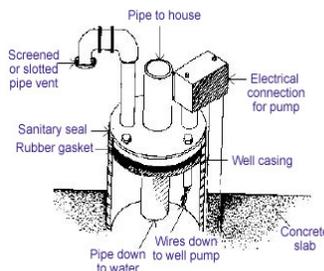


Figure 1. Typical Wellhead