



Calaveras County

Environmental Management Agency

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Environmental Health Department

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Measures to be taken for Disinfection of Water Supplies

If your water supply has been impaired and is suspect to contamination, you should attempt to obtain an alternative source of supply such as bottled water or other beverages for drinking. Should you be in a position whereby it is necessary to continue to drink water from the suspect water supply, you must treat the water by one of the following methods:

Bring water to a rolling boil for a minimum of three (3) to five (5) minutes. If unsure as to effectiveness of disinfection, you may want to boil water up to ten (10) minutes.

Disinfect with unscented household chlorine bleach. Use two (2) drops of chlorine bleach per quart of water or eight (8) drops per gallon. For cloudy water, first strain through a clean cloth, then add four (4) drops of chlorine to each quart, or sixteen (16) drops to each gallon. Stir or shake the water after the chlorine has been added and let stand for thirty (30) minutes before consuming.

*** Do not use contaminated water to make ice, brush your teeth or wash dishes.**

Disinfection of Private Domestic Water Wells

Disinfection of a well is recommended to eliminate disease-causing organisms. Disinfection generally involves five (5) steps:

- 1) Remove the threaded inspection plug from the cap on top of the well. Place a funnel in this entry port and pour one (1) to three (3) gallons of domestic 5.25% chlorine bleach into the well.
- 2) Open all faucets until the odor of chlorine is detected at water outlets, including faucets or fittings, sprinklers, drip lines, irrigation lines, etc.

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- 3) Close all outlets and allow water to remain in all water lines and well, preferably overnight or longer if possible. Be sure to limit water usage during these critical hours.
- 4) The next day or after an appreciable period of time, open all outlets until the odor of all chlorine has disappeared. The water supply should then be free of all chlorine.
- 5) Have the water sampled by a state certified laboratory for bacteriological quality.

Should you wish to be more precise in the disinfection process, introduce one gallon of bleach per 1000 gallons of water. You may calculate this as follows:

- a) Determine the amount of water in the well using the following formula

TOTAL WELL DEPTH - STANDING WATER LEVEL = FEET

_____ - _____ = _____.

- b) Take the gallons per foot (gpf) using the chart below times the number of feet to determine capacity.

_____ ft x _____ gpf = _____.

WATER IN WELL x GALLON PER FOOT = TOTAL GALLONS

- 4" Well has .65 gallons per foot
- 5" Well has 1.04 gallons per foot
- 6" Well has 1.47 gallons per foot
- 7" Well has 2.00 gallons per foot
- 8" Well has 2.61 gallons per foot

- c) Determine the amount of chlorine needed to disinfect the well. Remember, you only need to use one gallon of 5.25% bleach per thousand (1000) gallons of water!

- d) Follow procedures outlined in items 2 through 5 above.

Note: Disposal of chlorinated water should be done away from trees, shrubs, lawns, ponds and streams and into a sanitary sewer. It is important to avoid discharging highly chlorinated water in large volumes into septic tank systems.

Water Availability

Should water be in scarce supply, alternative temporary sources may include hot water tanks and toilet tanks (if no chemical disinfectant is used). Be sure to disinfect all suspect sources.

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