AddyLab

360 750-0055

Your water sample is UNSATISFACTORY due the presence of coliform bacteria. The presence of coliform bacteria indicates that your well is contaminated by surface water, by broken pipes, or well systems repairs without disinfection. Coliform bacteria in themselves are not hazardous but indicate the potential for disease causing bacteria. This procedure was adapted from a Cowlitz County Health Department handout on private well disinfection.

Recommended Procedure for Disinfection of Contaminated Wells

Before attempting to disinfect you water system:

1. **Check all pipes near the well and pump to make sure that they are tight and in good condition.**
2. **All pump and well seals should be checked and replaced if damaged.**
3. **Make sure safe distances are maintained between the well and potential sources of the contamination (i.e., sewers, pastures, wildlife, etc.)**
4. **All filters should be removed and cleaned, including faucet filters and aerators.**
5. **Perform all pipe repairs prior to the disinfection procedure.**

DISINFECTION PROCEDURE:

1. **Purchase one (1) gallon of fresh regular household chlorine bleach.**
2. **Mix the bleach with approximately four (4) gallons of water and pour the mixture down into the well. Splash the mixture along the inside of the well casing or well opening if possible.**
3. **Place a hose with running water down into the well to mix the well water with the bleach. Five to ten minutes is often sufficient for mixing.**
4. **Allow the bleach to remain in the well for at least two (2) hours.**
5. **After two (2) hours, open all the cold-water faucets inside and outside the house until the odor of bleach is detected.**
6. **After detecting the odor of bleach, close the faucet and allow the bleach to remain in the pipes for at least four (4) hours, preferably overnight**
7. **Drain most of the treated water from the system by use of an outside faucet to prevent the chlorinated water from entering the septic tank. Debris seen in the water during draining is common.**
8. **The water system can now be returned to normal use.**
9. **A water sample can be taken after chlorine smell is gone for a minimum of two (2) days to determine if disinfection was successful.**

Highly contaminated wells may need more than one disinfection.

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