



## **DISTRICT SANITARIAN**

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### **GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR DISINFECTION OF PRIVATE WELL/WATER SYSTEMS**

Private wells and water systems should be disinfected when coliform contamination has been confirmed or is likely to have occurred. Coliform bacteria are indicators of surface water or fecal (sewage) contamination. Disinfection should take place after an inspection has determined that the well and water system is free from any apparent source of contamination. A water sample for coliform bacteria analysis can then be taken 2-3 days after the disinfection procedure to determine if the water is safe for drinking and cooking. Although there are many ways to properly disinfect a well, the following procedure has proven to be effective by the State Laboratory of Hygiene in most cases:

- 1) Mix one gallon of household laundry bleach with 100 gallons of water. If your well is more than 150 feet deep, mix two gallons of bleach with 200 gallons of water. If you do not have a container for mixing the solution all at once, you can mix 25 gallons at a time in a clean plastic garbage can.
- 2) Remove the cap from the well and pour the entire bleach and water solution into the well.
- 3) Rinse down the sides of well casing with a garden hose for 5 to 10 minutes. The rinse water should be from a hose bib on the water system being disinfected. This procedure circulates the bleach through the water system to insure better disinfection.
- 4) If you wish to disinfect your plumbing system, turn on all the cold water taps until you smell the bleach. Then turn the taps off. Hot water lines do not need disinfection.
- 5) Let the bleach remain in the system for at least eight hours and preferably 24 hours.
- 6) Pump all the bleach out of the water system by running the water through a garden hose to an area where the bleach will not damage lawns, shrubs, gardens or septic systems. Pump until you can no longer smell the bleach.
- 7) Two or three days after disinfection, a sample from the well should be submitted for bacteria analysis.
- 8) Occupants should continue to use water from a safe source (bottled or other well) for drinking and cooking purposes until laboratory results confirm the water is safe.