



Call the **wellcare. HOTLINE** Monday through Friday or find us on the web anytime to ask your water well system and drinking water questions.

Our free, friendly service can help anyone with **wellcare.** questions: private well owners, teachers, students, realtors, developers, building companies, engineers and health department staff. Our helpful specialists will provide answers or referrals—within 24 hours.

The **wellcare. HOTLINE** is a service of Water Systems Council (WSC), a non-profit organization focused on household wells and small water well systems.

Learn the Basics of Your Well System

If you are a private well owner, you are solely responsible for the quality of your drinking water. You need to plan for the maintenance of your well system, water quality and water treatment systems.

- Test your water each year
- Inspect well components regularly
- Protect groundwater supplies
- Keep good records

The **wellcare. HOTLINE** can help.

We offer information sheets online on more than 90 different topics pertaining to well maintenance and water quality, potential water contaminants and well components.

To learn the basics about your well system, go to:
www.watersystemscouncil.org/infoSheets.php



Sample Water Well System



JOIN THE WELLCARE® WELL OWNERS NETWORK!

You can join the well owners network and receive regular information on how to maintain your well and protect your well water and receive discounts on water well test kits...it's **FREE!**

Sign up today: watersystemscouncil.org/network.php



www.watersystemscouncil.org

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Do you have
questions about
your well?



FREE, friendly service that provides
ANSWERS within 24 hours.

Call **888.395.1033**
or online at
www.wellcarehotline.org



Some frequently asked questions about wells.

wellcare[®] HOTLINE FAQs

CARE FOR YOUR WELL

Given the right care, a modern well system can serve you and your family for up to 30 years.

The **wellcare[®] HOTLINE** offers guidance on the following steps:

Protect Your Well System

Inspect your wellhead and well cap each year. Make sure the well cap is fastened tightly. Keep debris away from the well.

Take care to keep contaminants away from your well. Even small spills of pesticides, fertilizers or fuels near your well can seep into the ground. Close and seal any old wells on your property to keep contaminants from entering your drinking water supply.

Ask your water well professional to inspect your well system regularly. Keep a log of all inspections, tests, and maintenance.

Test Your Drinking Water

Test water once each year for bacteria. Other tests may be required depending on where you live and what is located near your drinking water. Contact your local health department for a list of licensed laboratories in your area. You should receive your results within two weeks of testing.

When buying a home with a well, have your water tested and the well system inspected by a professional. A water test also may be required when you sell your home.

Several **wellcare[®]** information sheets and your local health department can tell you how to treat many typical water contaminants, from arsenic to uranium.

PROTECT YOUR DRINKING WATER

The **wellcare[®] HOTLINE** offers information on a variety of water quality issues, so you can ensure the purity of your water.

Identify Potential Water Contaminants

Smells—a rotten egg smell can indicate sulfur. A stale smell might be caused by bacteria.

Taste—a chemical taste can be a sign of the fuel additive MTBE or other Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). A bitter or metallic taste might indicate iron or manganese in the water.

Stains or Off-Coloring on Fixtures

and Laundry—Black or brown stains might be caused by manganese or sulfates; yellow stains by tannins; green or blue stains by eroded or corroded copper plumbing; red rust by iron; cloudy water by turbidity; and an oily sheen by VOCs.

Avoid Seasonal Threats to Your Well

Spring/Summer—road salt, bacteria

Summer/Fall—pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers

Winter—road salt, snow piled beside the well

Understand the Mechanics of Your Well

Contact a licensed water well professional to handle any mechanical or construction issues related to your well system. The **wellcare[®]** information sheet, “Selecting a Well Contractor,” can help you find the right professional.

Q: *Where is my well located?*

A: Locate the wellhead in your yard. This is the top of your well. It should extend at least 12 inches above the ground to keep contaminants from entering the system. Surface water should drain away from the wellhead.

Q: *How do I get a well drilled on my property?*

A: WSC recommends that you hire a licensed well contractor for any well construction or repairs. For more information on selecting a well contractor, please visit our website at www.watersystemscouncil.org.

Q: *What would cause low or no water pressure or flow?*

A: Some possible reasons for low or no water pressure or flow are:

- no water pressure or flow due to a power failure
- no water pressure or flow due to a well that has gone dry
- no water pressure or flow due to an inadequate water supply
- Low water pressure or flow due to a filter that has become clogged
- Decreased water pressure or flow due to the lowering of the water table.
- Low water pressure or flow due to a leak in the system piping or a mechanical problem.

You should not attempt to resolve any of these issues on your own. Contact a licensed well contractor.

Q: *What distance should my well be from my septic system?*

A: Your well should be at least 50 feet from your septic system and drain field. But, you should check with your local or state health department to learn what the requirements are in your area.

Q: *How often should I get my water tested?*

A: WSC recommends having your water tested at least annually for bacteria. You may want to test for more than bacteria depending on where you live. You should also test your water whenever there's any change in the color or smell. The **wellcare[®]** hotline can help you find a state certified laboratory or tell you about test kits you can use to test your water.

Q: *Should I have my water tested for radon?*

A: If radon has been found in your home or if you are in a high risk area, have your water tested for radon by a state certified laboratory.

Q: *Should I disinfect my well system annually?*

A: No. Disinfection is only recommended if bacteria are found in your water or if suggested by your water well professional.

Q: *I have no water, what should I do?*

A: First check the power source to see if a fuse is blown or a breaker is tripped. If it is, try resetting the breaker. If this doesn't solve the problem contact a water well professional for further assistance.

Water Systems Council strongly recommends that you do not attempt to fix problems yourself. Please contact a licensed well contractor or pump installer for diagnosis and repair.

Call or visit today! 888.395.1033

www.wellcarehotline.org