



FALL WATER WELL NEWS

888-395-1033 [wellcare@ Hotline](mailto:wellcare@wellcarehotline.org)
www.wellcarehotline.org

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Dear Well Owners Network Member,

Groundwater is important and as winter approaches there's no time to let your well FALL by the wayside. Everyone can and should do something to protect groundwater. Why? We all have a stake in maintaining its quality and quantity. This newsletter will guide you through protecting your well and well water through the fall and winter months ahead. As always, if you have questions on any of these topics, the wellcare® Hotline can help. Contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033 or [wellcarehotline.org](http://www.wellcarehotline.org).

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PROTECT YOUR GROUNDWATER DAY:

A call to protect public
health and the
environment

from the Cold

As colder weather sets in, you should make every effort to prevent the risk of freezing pipes. Frozen pipes become blocked with ice and as water backs up and freezes they will most likely burst. Both hot and cold water pipes can freeze, so it's best to protect both.

You can insulate your pipes with foam rubber sleeves or fiberglass insulation, wrapping the insulating material around the pipes. For extra protection in the areas of your home that are not heated, such as a crawl space, basement, or garage; pipes may be wrapped with special heating strips and then wrapped with outer insulation. For assistance, contact a plumber in your area.

In areas where freezing occurs on a regular basis, a pitless adapter can be attached to your well casing to provide a frost-proof seal between the casing and the water line running to your home. This device protects the water from



The [wellcare® Well Owners Network](#) and [NGWA](#) encourages every person to protect public health and the health of the environment by protecting groundwater, beginning on Protect Your Groundwater Day, September 8.

In the United States, 39.4 percent of the population regularly depends on groundwater, and 38.5 million Americans rely on privately owned and operated household water wells for their drinking water supply.

For household water well owners, managing your well system and property can make a difference in water quality. People who do not use household wells can also make a difference in groundwater quality - for instance, by how they store, use, and dispose of hazardous household substances, or how well they maintain their septic systems.

Additionally, with [drought](#) gripping parts of the United States, protecting groundwater through conservation is more important than ever.

Protect Your Groundwater Day is an occasion for every citizen to **ACT: Acknowledge the issue, Consider how it applies to you, then Take action.**

Well Stewardship

Private well owners are solely responsible for ensuring that their wells are constructed to local and state standards and for testing their water regularly to confirm that it is free of any natural or

freezing and permits convenient access to the well and well components without having to dig around the well.

Ask your water well professional if your well is equipped with a pitless adapter or if one can be installed in your well. If a pitless adapter can be installed, confirm your water well professional is using an adapter that has been tested to meet industry standards. PAS-97(2012) is an industry standard for pitless adapters. A listing of equipment that meets this standard is available on the [Water Systems Council website](#).

Additionally, you should inspect your well to make sure there are no cracks, or damage to the well cap or casing. Make sure that the area around the wellhead slopes to drain surface runoff away from the well, and the area is free of leaves, branches, and other debris. Keep your wellhead clear of snow.

Contact your water well professional or the wellcare® Hotline for assistance.

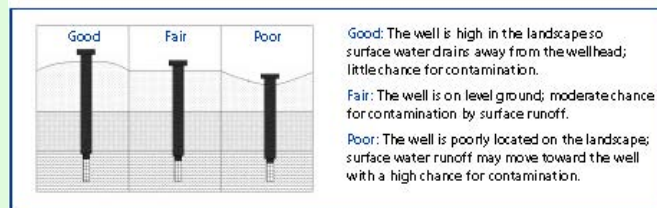
man-made impurities. Well maintenance, along with proper location and construction, is necessary to ensuring your drinking water is safe. Contamination of well water supplies generally occurs when polluted surface water or septic system discharges seep into the groundwater. Human activity can also play a role in unnecessary pollution. Practices such as annual checkups, regular testing, and keeping household contaminants and farming chemicals a safe distance from water supplies greatly reduce your risk from drinking potentially unsafe water.

Visit our [website](#) to view our wellcare information sheets on these topics or contact the wellcare Hotline.

Your Well and Wellhead

Throughout the year, you should visually inspect exposed parts of the well making sure there are no cracks or damage to the well cap or casing. Ensure the area around the wellhead slopes to drain surface runoff away from the well.

If your well does not have a well cap or sanitary seal, have one installed as soon as possible to prevent unauthorized use of or entry into the well. Never cut off the well casing below the land surface. Your wellhead should be at least 12 inches from the ground surface.



[Click to view larger image.](#)

Abandoned and improperly constructed wells can be sources of potentially polluted groundwater, which could make your drinking water unsafe. If you have an abandoned well on your property, contact a water well professional to have it sealed.

UPDATED

wellcare® Information for you about Arsenic & Groundwater

What is Arsenic?
Arsenic is a naturally occurring mineral found in soil and bedrock. Arsenic enters the water supply through erosion. Wells that are in or just below large amounts of shale or shaley soil often have higher levels of arsenic in the water.
Arsenic is also widely used in other mineral processing, smelting, glass, metal, and other industries, and can also be released into the environment during the burning or simple mishandling of these materials and arsenic to some groundwater.
Arsenic can be present in water from the discharge and use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in agriculture. It is also found in some types of wood preservatives and in some types of glass.
What are the health effects of Arsenic?
High drinking water levels of arsenic have been associated with a number of health effects. In some cases, these effects have been reported in people who drank water with high levels of arsenic for many years. These effects include skin lesions, cancer, and neurological damage. In some cases, these effects have been reported in people who drank water with high levels of arsenic for many years. These effects include skin lesions, cancer, and neurological damage. In some cases, these effects have been reported in people who drank water with high levels of arsenic for many years. These effects include skin lesions, cancer, and neurological damage.
How do I test for Arsenic?
Arsenic is not easily detected through the taste and does not usually enter the air. Drinking, bathing, or using household water with arsenic above your state's level can happen over 300 parts per billion (ppb).
What are the treatments for Arsenic in drinking water?
Arsenic is not easily removed through the taste and does not usually enter the air. Drinking, bathing, or using household water with arsenic above your state's level can happen over 300 parts per billion (ppb).
wellcare® Information on Arsenic & Groundwater July 2011

Arsenic & Groundwater wellcare® Information Sheet

Arsenic is a naturally occurring mineral found in soil and bedrock. Arsenic works its way into groundwater through erosion. Wells that are in or just below large amounts of shale or shaley soil often have higher levels of arsenic in the water. Manufacturing, farming, or simple mishandling of materials can also permit arsenic to enter groundwater.

Arsenic in drinking water has no taste or odor. The only way to determine its presence is to have the water tested. The EPA sets a maximum limit for arsenic in public drinking water

You should always hire a licensed water well professional for any new well construction, modification, abandonment, and closure.

Well Water Testing

You should test your well water immediately if you have no recent test results or any record of previous tests. It is recommended to test for a minimum of bacteria every year. Also, test annually for nitrates if you live in an agricultural area or have an on-site septic system. You should test your water if you notice any change in the taste, color or odor of your water.

Testing may be needed more than once a year in special situations such as someone in the household is pregnant or nursing, there are unexplained illnesses in the family, your neighbors find a dangerous contaminant in their water, or there is a spill of chemicals or fuels into or near your well.

In addition, it is recommended to test after any flooding in or near the well to determine if flood water carried bacteria or other contaminants into the well system. [Read information on Emergencies & Disasters and Wells here.](#)

Contact your local health department, cooperative extension office, private testing laboratory, or state environmental agency for other water testing guidelines and for test kits.

In addition, [Environmental Testing & Research \(ETR\) Laboratories](#) continues to offer discount water testing kits. Ordering is easy! View details for [ordering online](#) or contact ETR at 800.344.9977. Mention [Water Systems Council](#) to receive your discount.

For more information on Well Water Testing click [here](#).

supplies of 10 ppb (0.010 mg/L). Some states have set the limit at 5 ppb (0.005 mg/L) or even lower.

Contact your state or local health department for a list of state certified laboratories in your area. If there is arsenic in your water, a laboratory can determine how much and which type(s) of arsenic is present, through a method called "speciation." This is significant because treatment methods vary for each type. You may also wish to test for other contaminants, including iron, manganese, and pH because the presence of these contaminants may hinder the effectiveness of arsenic removal and will need to be removed before treatment.

It is recommended to test water before and after installation of the treatment device and annually thereafter to confirm effectiveness. *Do not attempt to remove arsenic by boiling water. This only serves to concentrate the contaminant.* Contact a local water

Drought and Water Conservation

Water conservation is becoming an ever-growing necessity throughout the world today as the availability of drinking water constantly diminishes through events such as [drought](#), contamination, and an increase in population. The average home in the US consumes about 80 - 100 gallons of water per person per day. Nearly 14 percent of that water is wasted. Conserving and protecting this limited resource is essential in ensuring an adequate supply of water for all your needs as well as for future generations. Below are some tips on water conservation and protection:

- Check for leaky faucets/toilets and have them fixed.
- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator for drinking.
- Shut off the water while brushing your teeth and shaving.
- Take shorter showers.
- Run the clothes washer and dishwasher with full loads only.
- Water lawn and plants only as needed. Most established lawns and gardens need just one hour of deep watering once a week to remain healthy.

For more information on Water Conservation click [here](#).

Groundwater Protection

A few more tips to help protect groundwater! Avoid mixing or using pesticides, fertilizers, herbicides, degreasers, fuels, and other pollutants near the well. Store these products at least 100 feet from your water well system.

Pump and inspect septic systems as often as recommended by your septic service or local health department. Generally, this should be done every 3-5 years depending on the demand placed on it.

treatment professional to assist with the selection and installation of any water treatment device(s).

Continue reading about [Arsenic & Groundwater](#).

If you need assistance in locating a state certified laboratory, water treatment professional, or have any questions contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033 or [online](#).

[Nitrate and Nitrite & Groundwater](#)

If you or someone you know has been in an area affected or has questions on Nitrate or Nitrite and Groundwater, contact the wellcare® Hotline or view our [wellcare® information sheet](#).

Questions about your

You should never dispose of harsh chemicals, solvents, petroleum products, pesticides or pharmaceuticals down the drain/toilet, in a dry well, or septic system. Take unused portions to a hazardous waste collection site.

Try using biodegradable or environmentally friendly pesticides and fertilizers. Or check with your local health department or waste management for hazardous waste acceptance sites to dispose of unused products. Oil based paints are accepted at most, but water based paint can be thrown in the garbage once hardened. Many pharmacies offer take-back programs for pharmaceuticals. If there are no disposal options, you can alter the medications to make them undesirable or unusable. Try adding kitty litter, coffee grounds or spices like mustard or turmeric to liquid medications and water to pills. Pharmaceuticals for pets should be handled the same as for humans. National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is September 26, 2015. [Click here for more information and to find local collection sites near you.](#)

[See our information sheets on Septic Systems and Properly Disposing of Pesticides and Fertilizers.](#)

well?



Contact Us!
888.395.1033
or online

Previous newsletters with additional tips can be found [on our website](#).

WSC has over 90 different wellcare® information sheets that can help you and your family learn more about managing a water well and protecting your water supply. Visit our [website](#) or contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033.

 Forward to a Friend

STAY CONNECTED

