



Dear Well Owners Network Member:

It's almost Fall which means it is time to get your water well system in great shape to weather the colder months ahead.

We've made it easy for you by teaming up with Tap Score for WON member discounts on well water test kits and providing you with the information you need to maintain your well in all seasons. So keep reading!

---

---

#PYGWD



Protect your  
**GROUNDWATER DAY**  
September 4, 2018

## DID YOU KNOW?

1

Only 1% of the water on earth is useable, 99% of which is groundwater.

2

The United States uses 349 billion gallons of freshwater every day.

3

Groundwater is 20 to 30 times larger than all U.S. lakes, streams, and rivers combined.

4

44% of the U.S. population depends on groundwater for its drinking water supply.

5

Groundwater accounts for 33% of all water used by U.S. municipalities.

6

More than 13.2 million households have their own well, representing 34 million people.

7

53.5 billion gallons of groundwater are used for agricultural irrigation each day. In 1990 that number was 2.2 billion.

8

The largest U.S. aquifer is Ogallala, underlying 250,000 square miles stretching from Texas to South Dakota. Scientist estimate it could take 6000 years to naturally refill the aquifer if it were ever fully depleted.

9

California pumps 10.7 billion gallons of groundwater each day, a third more than the second-highest state, Texas.

10

Groundwater is the world's most extracted raw material with withdrawal rates in the estimated range of 259 trillion gallons per year.

LEARN MORE

[www.wellowner.org/pygwd](http://www.wellowner.org/pygwd)



***Protect Your Groundwater Day***, reminding us of the importance of protecting groundwater through regular water testing, well inspection, wellhead protection, and water conservation.

The safety and purity of your drinking water and the efficient operation of your water well system depends on a well-organized maintenance plan. You can protect your investment in a quality water supply by making every day 'Protect Your Groundwater Day' and following these tips:

**Water Testing** (Download [Well Water Testing Info Sheet](#))

- Test drinking water immediately if you have no recent test results or any record of previous tests.
- Test drinking water for bacteria every year. Also test annually for nitrates if you live in an agricultural area or have an on-site septic system.
- Test if you notice any change in the taste, color, or odor of your water.
- Test more than once a year in special situations: 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.
- Test after disinfection, within one or two weeks, to make sure the water is pure. Note: Disinfecting a well is not recommended on a regular basis. Only after a new well is drilled, repairs are made to the well, or there was a harmful bacteria found.
- Test after any flooding near the well to determine if flood water carried bacteria or other contaminants into the well system.

**Well Inspection & Protection** (Download [Well Maintenance Info Sheet](#))

- Inspect your wellhead several times a year. Check the condition of the well covering, casing, and well cap to make sure all are in good condition, leaving no cracks or other entry points for potential pollutants.
- Have the well system, including the pump, storage tank, pipes, valves, and water flow inspected every 10 years by a licensed well contractor.
- If you have no inspection record and cannot determine the age of the well, have it inspected immediately by a licensed well contractor.

- When your well reaches the end of its serviceable life, contact your licensed well contractor to install a new system and properly close the old well.
- Store all chemicals at least 100 feet from your well. Keep heavy equipment and vehicles off of your lawn and away from your well to avoid damage to buried water lines.
- Allow only grass to grow around your well. Other plants can have longer roots that can damage your well casing.
- Do not pile leaves, snow, or anything around your well, and consider adding a fiberglass marker to help with locating the well during fall and winter months.
- To avoid well contamination, septic tanks should be pumped every 3-5 years based on use and family size.

For more quick tips, download our [Quick-Guide for Well Owners brochure](#).

### **Water Conservation**

- Check for leaky faucets and 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.

[Learn 45 more ways to conserve water in your home and yard.](#)



**WON members can now take advantage of deep discounts on three different well water test kits from Tap Score for a limited time.** You can [access these special discounts on the Tap Score website](#) using discount code **WCN2018**. The offer is good through September 30, 2018. See below for details or visit [wellcare.mytapscore.com](http://wellcare.mytapscore.com).

"We love Tap Score!" - Well Owner's Network



## Now you can test for anything!

For a limited time, Tap Score Water Testing Packages are available to WON members for 25% off, up to a \$200 discount. You get a comprehensive report of your contaminants along with personalized treatment recommendations.



### Essential Test

- General Chemistry
- Hardness & Alkalinity
- Toxic & Heavy Metals
- Nitrate & Nitrite
- Coliform & E.coli

Great for annual checkups

Now \$119

Incl. FREE SHIPPING

Regular Price: \$165



### Advanced Test

- Essential Test PLUS:
- Industrial Chemicals
  - Disinfection Byproducts
  - Oil & Gas Indicators

Great for 3 year assessment

Now \$199

Incl. FREE SHIPPING

Regular Price: \$265



### Extended Test

- Advanced Test PLUS:
- Radioactive Particles
  - P1AS/P1 OA/P1 OS
  - Silica

Full panel of the most important contaminants

Now \$499

Incl. FREE SHIPPING

Regular Price: \$700



### Limited time offer for WON members:

25% off on Tap Score Water Tests.  
Request your package by Sept 30, 2018:  
<http://wellcare.mytapscore.com/>

Or enter code at checkout WCN2018 for 25% Discount

POPULAR SCIENCE

"Of the three tests that we took, Tap Score was the easiest. It also had the most comprehensive results"  
- Popular Science

TAP SCORE  
mytapscore.com

For more information on how you can help protect groundwater, visit [groundwater.org](http://groundwater.org) or contact the wellcare® Hotline! Our water well experts are available to answer your questions and provide you with any information you need to maintain a safe water supply. Contact us by calling 888-395-1033 or chat with us live at [wellcarehotline.org](http://wellcarehotline.org). The Hotline is available Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. ET.

---

---

# Caring for Your Septic System

**SepticSmart Week is  
September 17-21, 2018**

Septic system maintenance is not complicated, and it does not need to be expensive. Upkeep comes down to four key elements:



## **1. Inspect and Pump Frequently**

The average household septic system should be inspected at least every three years by a septic service professional. Household septic tanks are typically pumped every three to five years. Alternative systems with electrical float switches, pumps, or mechanical components should be inspected more often, generally once a year. A service contract is important since alternative systems have mechanized parts.

## **2. Use Water Efficiently**

The average indoor water use in a typical single-family home is nearly 100 gallons per individual, per day. Just a single leaky or running toilet can waste as much as 200 gallons of water per day. All of the water a household sends down its pipes winds up in its septic system. The more water a household conserves, the less water enters the septic system. Efficient water use improves the operation of a septic system and reduces the risk of failure.

## **3. Properly Dispose of Waste**

Whether you flush it down the toilet, grind it in the garbage disposal, or pour it down the sink, shower, or bath, everything that goes down your drains ends up in your septic system. What goes down the drain affects how well your septic system works. An easy rule of thumb, do not flush anything besides human waste and toilet paper. [Learn more.](#)

## **4. Maintain Your Drainfield**

Your drainfield -- a component of your septic system that removes contaminants from the liquid that emerges from your septic tank -- is an important part of your septic system. Never drive or park vehicles on it,

plant trees away from it, and keep roof drains, sump pumps, and other rainwater drainage systems away from your drainfield area.

For more info on septic system maintenance, download our wellcare® Information Sheet on [Septic Systems](#) and the EPA's [New Homebuyers' Guide to Septic Systems](#).

---

---

## Winterizing & De-winterizing Your Well



Most vacation homes and cabins are considered seasonal homes. Some seasonal homes have private water wells that service the home. These types of homes are not designed to be used during the winter because of plumbing systems and structures that are not adequately insulated to withstand extreme cold.

When preparing to close your vacation home for the season, leaving the home vacant and unheated, you must winterize the plumbing to protect it from bursting in freezing temperatures. This process includes going through the steps to winterize your water well pump.

WSC recommends that you contact a licensed plumber to winterize your home. If you must winterize on your own, [follow these important steps and instructions](#).

### Use your well all year?

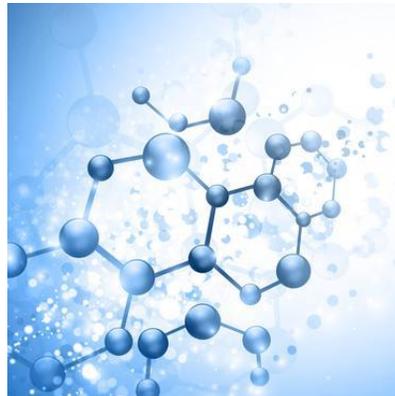
Even the south can freeze! Last year, our wellcare® Hotline received many calls from homeowners experiencing a frozen well system. Discuss options now with your licensed well contractor to protect your well and well components from freezing. Need help finding a licensed well contractor in your area? [Use our interactive map](#).

---

---

## PFAS & Well Water

Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), also known as C8, and Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) are man-made organic chemicals of a larger family of chemicals called perfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs). PFOA and PFOS have been the most produced and studied from this family of chemicals and have been used to make water, grease, or stain resistant products including carpets, clothing, furniture fabrics (e.g. Scotchgard™), cookware (e.g. Teflon®), food packaging, and for other industrial processes.



PFOA and PFOS break down very slowly in the environment and can enter groundwater through landfills, septic systems, or from a nearby industrial facility where these chemicals were produced or used during manufacturing. Other potential sources of contamination include oil refineries, airfields, and locations where the chemicals were used for firefighting purposes.

There is no taste, smell, or color associated with PFOA and PFOS, so the only way to know if your water is contaminated with these chemicals is to have your water tested.

Now you can have PFAS testing performed by a certified lab for less than \$300! If you are in an area that is at risk or you would like to have testing performed, take advantage of this [specialized testing package from Tap Score](#).

You can also contact your state or local health department for a list of state certified laboratories in your area.

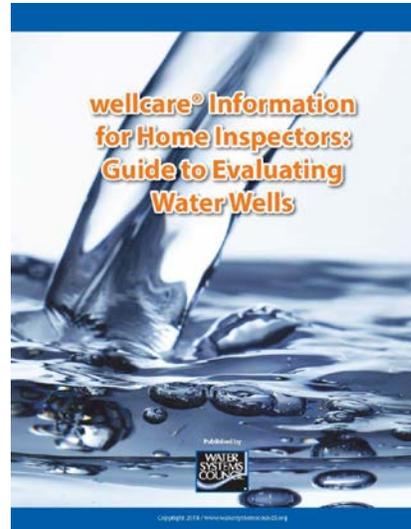
For more info on PFAS and well water, [download our info sheet](#).

---

---

# More Free Resources for WON Members

An updated version of the *Home Inspector's Guide to Evaluating Water Wells* will soon be available for free download from the Water Systems Council website. Check our social media pages for the release announcement.



## wellcare® information for Environmental Health Specialists Sealing a Well

A critical part of the groundwater protection services provided by state and local Environmental Health Specialists is the identification and sealing of inoperably damaged, contaminated, or abandoned wells. Until wells no longer in use are properly sealed, they are a safety hazard and pose a significant threat to groundwater quality.

This wellcare® information sheet includes information to help Environmental Health Specialists provide basic guidance to homeowners with concerns about abandoned wells.

### Risks of Abandoned Wells

Surface water is filtered naturally as it travels down through soil and bedrock, replenishing our groundwater supplies. This natural filtration process removes minerals, organisms, and contaminants that can pose serious health risks. An unsealed or abandoned well can allow contaminants to travel directly into the groundwater, bypassing the natural filtration process and carrying potentially harmful contaminants directly into a drinking water supply.

Contaminants can enter an abandoned well through the opening of an unsealed well, through a damaged casing or well cap, or an open annulus of a well (the gap between the ground and outside of the casing) if the casing was not grouted or the grout has been damaged over time.

In the past, wells were constructed near the house. Today, if the foundation of a house is treated for insects, such as termites, a nearby abandoned well may provide a direct path for pesticides into the water supply.

Finally, abandoned wells pose a physical and environmental threat. Children and animals have been seriously injured or drowned in abandoned wells, even if the well is as small as 8 inches in diameter. Some have found it convenient to dispose of garbage and chemicals in old abandoned wells, unaware of the environmental and health hazard this creates.

### Locating an Old Well

Some states require disclosure of old wells when a property is sold, but often the old wells have been long forgotten. An abandoned well may have been covered over with the construction of a parking area or a building, or simply hidden by overgrowth. Sometimes the only evidence of an old well is a depression in the ground or an old well casing in the yard near the house.

**Environmental Health Specialists** (previously titled Sanitarians) info sheets are getting an update! Includes: Inspecting a Well, Sealing a Well, and Septic Systems.



## Still Have Questions?

We can help! Call the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033, [complete an online form](#), or [chat with us live!](#)

STAY CONNECTED:



Water Systems Council, 1101 30th Street, N.W. , Suite 500, Washington, DC 20007