



Dear Well Owners Network Member:

The start of summer also marks the beginning of hurricane season (June 1-Nov. 30) and forecasters are predicting 13 named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes in 2018.

Don't let your summer become a bummer by being unprepared if your water well is impacted by a flood or natural disaster. We've gathered all the resources you'll need to maintain and manage your water well in the event of an emergency, so keep reading!



#Itonlytakesone storm to demolish an entire town. Be prepared before

these storms strike! Take the time now to write down your hurricane plan. Know where you will ride out the storm and get your supplies now.

There are many resources available to help with #HurricanePrep and preparation for other natural disasters:

- American Red Cross - [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org)
- Department of Homeland Security - [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)
- Environmental Protection Agency - [epa.gov](https://www.epa.gov)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency - [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)
- National Weather Service - [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov)

For local resources visit our [Emergency Agencies page](#).

Emergencies/Disasters and Wells

If a natural disaster has occurred on or near your property, there are some things you need to know about your drinking water supply. If in doubt about your water supply, follow local or state health department drinking and bathing advisories.

Remember that there is danger of electrical shock from any electrical device that has been flooded; consult a certified electrician. Rubber boots and gloves are not adequate protection from electrical shock.

Septic systems should not be used immediately after floods. Drain fields will not work until underground water has receded. Septic lines may have been broken during flooding or other storms. Contact a local septic service immediately. Only trained specialists should clean or repair septic tanks because tanks may contain dangerous gases.

In most emergency situations, obtaining bottled water is the most commonly promoted way to access safe drinking water. However, if the water only needs to be disinfected to be potable, there are four main options to treat water to make it safe for consumption:

- Boiling
- Chlorination
- Distillation

- Water treatment devices certified for microbial reduction of bacteria, cysts, and viruses

Do not rely on water treatment filters or devices that are NOT certified for microbial reduction as they may not provide the protection necessary for emergency situations. Consult a water professional or manufacturer for more information.

Prepare yourself in advance by downloading our wellcare® Information Sheet on [Emergencies & Disasters and Wells](#) and by finding the emergency agencies in your state on our [Emergency Agencies interactive map](#).

The wellcare® Hotline can also help! 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. The Hotline is available Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. ET.

Managing a Flooded Well

If you live in an area that was recently flooded, your private well may be in danger of contamination from pollutants carried by flood water or at risk of shock from waterlogged well equipment. Here are some steps you should follow after a flood:

- **Do not drink or wash with your well water.** You could get sick from contaminants washed into the well by the flood.
- **Do not turn on the well pump.** There is a danger of electrical shock and damage to your well or pump if they were flooded.
- **Contact your water well contractor** for help in dealing with the impacts of the flood on your water quality and well system.



You should suspect water contamination any time your well casing becomes flooded, if your well is shallow and you are near areas that have been flooded, or if you notice taste, color, or sediment changes in your water.

Find a safe alternative source for drinking, cooking, and washing until a water test proves your water is safe. If you can't find a convenient source of safe water, boil your well water vigorously for one minute. If you live in an altitude greater than one mile above sea level, increase boiling time to three minutes.

Many times when your area experiences flooding or a natural disaster, your local health department or state environmental agency will provide free or low cost testing for well owners. If free or low cost water testing is not available, please contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888.395.1033, visit our [Water Well Testing](#) page, or consider using [Tap Score](#) or [ETR Labs](#) for extensive testing.

For more information on managing a flooded well, download our wellcare® Information Sheet on [Managing a Flooded Well](#).

Disinfecting a Well

If your well has been flooded, you will need to disinfect it. Luckily, disinfecting your well at home is fairly simple using household bleach and food grade white vinegar. Make sure to use a new bottle of unscented bleach, as it can lose potency over time. Don't use stabilized swimming pool chlorine products or non-chlorinated "pool shock" products, as they are not effective enough to clean drinking water.

Watch this video to see how it's done:



Download our wellcare® Information Sheet on [Disinfecting Your Well](#) for more information.

Drought and Wells



Summer can also deliver drought conditions that can result in problems for your water well. During periods of drought, there are some things you can do to manage water levels and help prevent your well from going dry:

Measure water levels --

Knowing the exact yield of your well is critical to managing the

use of water or considering options to expand the supply.

Manage water levels -- If you have a low yielding well - producing less than five gallons per minute - you should be very careful how much demand you place on it. Conserve water as much as possible.

Add water storage -- Adding storage can help provide greater capacity when water levels are low and allows your well to rest and recharge. *Bonus!* It helps prolong the life of your well pump as it reduces the need for your pump to cycle as often.

Ask your water well contractor about some other options to reach water within your existing well. Download our wellcare® Information Sheet on [Drought and Your Well](#) for additional tips on managing your well during a drought.

Well Financing Options

Too often, urgently needed water well repair is not done because well owners cannot afford it. This video from the National Ground Water Association (NGWA) shows the financing options available for well owners:



Additional resources for obtaining financing for water well repair or improvements include the [Water Well Trust](#), the [Rural Community Assistance Partnership](#) (RCAP), and [USDA Rural Development](#).

Water Testing for Irrigation Wells

When testing the quality of water that is used for gardening and lawn irrigation, several specific measurements will help determine the effect the water will have on soil and plants. For example, water containing high concentrations of sodium can decrease plant growth.



Other substances present in water may clog household irrigation systems and discolor walkways and exteriors including physical solids such as sand and silt, and dissolved solids like hardness, iron, and manganese.

Learn more about the water tests that are important for gardening and lawn irrigation. Download our wellcare® Information Sheet on [Testing Water for Gardening and Lawn Irrigation](#).

More Free Resources for WON Members

Coming Soon!

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.

Available for free download: [Real Estate Professionals: Buying or Selling a Home with a Well](#) and [Renting a Home with a Well](#).





We noticed an error on the formatting of our recently printed ***Well Owner's Manual***. If you received a copy of our Well Owner's Manual with this error, please [email Charlene Bean](#) or call 888-395-1033 for a new copy. We regret the error.



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:

