



Dear Well Owners Network Member:

Happy New Year! Your membership and support for the Well Owners Network is greatly appreciated. Our wish for you is health and happiness in 2021 and beyond!!

A variety of topics are covered in this newsletter - shared wells, buying a home with a well, and National Radon Action Month. We also included something fun for the kiddos while they are home!

If you have questions regarding these topics, if you cannot find what you're looking for, or if you have any other questions on wells and well water, the wellcare® Hotline can help! Contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888.395.1033 or [wellcarehotline.org](http://wellcarehotline.org).

Don't forget to like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) for extra tips, industry news, and more!

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## Sharing (a well) is Caring!



In many rural areas, it is common to find one or more homeowners sharing a single well system. Modern wells allow access to groundwater, supplying water to more than 13 million households nationwide. When installed and maintained properly, wells can provide safe, affordable water for many years. If you are interested in buying a property with a shared well, there are some things you need to ask, consider, and make sure of before settling. See our tips below:

- Review the recorded agreements regarding the well, particularly the deeds of the property owners involved. You want to make sure that the deeds contain easements permitting access to, use of, and maintenance of the water system. If there is no shared well agreement, you will want to get one.
- Collect any available information on the construction, maintenance history, and condition of the well. Ask your real estate agent to contact the seller/seller's agent or contact the company that drilled the well for the well log (also known as the well record, completion report, or drilling report). The well log will include a reference number for the well, date the well was drilled, location of the well, and various construction details such as drilling method used,

depth of the well, depth and type of casing (lining of your well/visible pipe above ground), and depth and size of the pump. Most states require well contractors to file a well log when a new well is drilled, and many states have searchable databases to retrieve this information electronically. Local health departments may also keep a copy of these records.

- Have a licensed well contractor conduct a thorough well inspection, including a flow test, and have the water tested by a certified water testing laboratory. Under federal mortgage insurance guidelines, shared wells must meet minimum flow and water quality standards.

**[Continue reading for more information on recommendations and requirements for \*Sharing a Well\*.](#)**

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## **Make it Easy for Everyone!**

Get a Shared Well Agreement if one is not already in place. If you are a potential shareholder, you will want to have the current agreement updated. This agreement is essential in order to protect your access to the water supply of a shared well and to spell out the costs and responsibilities involved in maintaining the system. Many states and real estate transactions require a shared well agreement as part of the approval process.



**[Click here for a sample Shared Well Agreement.](#)**

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## Hotline HOT Topic: Are there water testing requirements when buying a home with a well?



This year our wellcare® Hotline has had an increase in calls related to buying a home with a well. The main question is whether a water test is required and what to test for. The answer is yes, it is required in most cases. However, you should have a water test conducted before closing and make sales contracts contingent on test results even if it is

not required. At a minimum, every well should be tested annually for bacteria. Check with the local health department or the wellcare® Hotline for required tests or if there are any contaminants of local concern that should also be tested for, such as arsenic, lead, nitrate, and radon.

Federal Housing Administration (FHA) insured loans require water testing if the home is served by a private well. Refer to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) testing requirements, which are the minimum standards acceptable. In short HUD says, "Water quality must meet the requirements of the health authority with jurisdiction. If there are no local or state water quality standards, then water must be potable, which may be demonstrated by compliance with the current EPA [\*Manual of Individual and Non-Public Water Supply Systems\*](#)."

For more information, download our information sheets and publications related to this topic:

[\*\*Buying a Home with a Well\*\*](#)

[\*\*Home Inspectors Guide\*\*](#)

[\*\*Real Estate Professionals: Buying or Selling a Home with a Well\*\*](#)

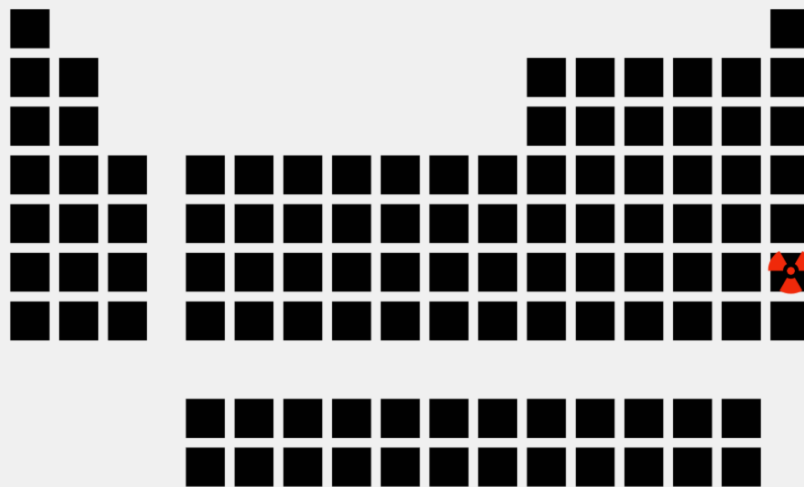
If you have any questions or concerns about buying a home with a well contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033, send us a [chat](#) or [email](#).

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## Radon and Well Water

**JANUARY IS RADON ACTION MONTH!**



You may be familiar with concerns about radon in the air of your home, but what about your water?

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that has no color, odor or taste, and comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil. Soil under the home releases radon, which escapes to the air, where it can dissolve in water and accumulate in your well. Radon can be inhaled when it is released from water while showering, washing dishes, or cooking. It can also be ingested directly through drinking water. Inhaled radon is of greatest concern as it increases the risk of lung cancer.

Radon exposure is completely preventable! Learn more about radon [here](#). [Find a certified lab in your area](#). Try ETR Labs for both [air and water radon testing](#).

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## Kiddos at Home Again?

### Make an Edible Aquifer!

Teach your children about aquifers (where your water in your well comes from) and how pollution can get into the water and pumping causes the water table to drop.

What you need:

- Small gummy bears, chocolate chips, crushed cookies, breakfast cereal, or crushed ice
- food coloring
- vanilla ice cream
- club soda or sprite
- cake decoration sprinkles and sugars
- drinking straws
- spoons
- clear cups



How to make it:

Fill a small, clear cup about one-third of the way with your first ingredient. This represents all of the sand, gravel, and rocks in the aquifer.

Cover your "gravel, sand, and rock layer" with clear soda which represents water. This is our groundwater. See how the "water" fills in the spaces around the "gravel, sand, and rock."

Spread a layer of ice cream over the soda. This layer of our aquifer is called the confining layer, which is usually clay or dense rock. The water is confined below this layer.

The next layer is our top layer of soil. Decorating sprinkles and some colored sugar can be used to represent this layer.

Add some food coloring to a small amount of soda. The coloring represents pollution. Can you think of some pollutants that can affect groundwater? Watch what happens when we pour it on the land.

Using your straw, drill a well (push the straw down toward the bottom of the cup) into the center of your aquifer.

Slowly begin to pump the well by sucking on the straw. Watch as the water table goes down. Also, watch and see how the contaminants can get sucked into the well area and end up in the groundwater by eventually leaking through the confining layer.

Pretend it's raining and recharge the aquifer by adding more soda. A real aquifer takes a lot longer to recharge, this is just an example to speed up the process.

Now it's time to enjoy your aquifer!

Adapted by <https://www.neponset.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/How-to-Make-an-Edible-Aquifer-1.pdf>



## Still Have Questions?

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

STAY CONNECTED:

