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Disinfecting a Well

The procedure below provides an easy way to disinfect your own well. The well and the plumbing system will need to be disinfected, or “shocked,” with chlorine bleach.

Materials needed:

- 1 gallon of household bleach that contains sodium hypochlorite (look at the label)
- 5 gallon bucket
- Chlorine test strips (purchase where pool supplies are sold)

Procedure:

1. **Turn off** the power to the well pump.
2. Mix a solution of **1 gallon of bleach** into a **five gallon bucket** of **water**, filling the bucket to the top.
3. Remove the well cap, then dump the bleach/water solution into the well.
4. Connect a garden hose to an outside faucet and place the hose into the well.
5. **Turn on** the power to the well pump.
6. Turn on the outside faucet with the hose connected to it and run the water inside the well casing until **chlorine is detected** coming out of the hose. Use a chlorine test strip to verify chlorine is present.
7. **Shut off** outside faucet and remove the garden hose from the well.
8. Replace the well cap.
9. Run water through **all** of the cold water faucets starting from the faucet that is closest to where the water is coming in from the well (pressure tank) to the faucets that are furthest away. For each faucet, the water needs to be run until **chlorine is detected**, use a chlorine test strip. Once chlorine is detected, that faucet can be shut off. (This is to distribute chlorine throughout the **whole** system)
10. Leave the chlorine in the water system for at least six hours (the longer the chlorine is left in the system, the better).
11. After six hours or more, flush the chlorine out of the well by running the outside faucet(s) until chlorine can **no longer be detected** using chlorine test strips.
12. Flush the chlorine out of the inside plumbing by running all of the cold water faucets inside of the house until chlorine can no longer be detected using chlorine strips.
13. When chlorine can **no longer be detected**, using chlorine strips, a retest for coliform bacteria can now be completed.

Call Water Laboratories to schedule a retest - 763-441-7509

*This method is not guaranteed to work, however many of our clients have had success using it. The MN Department of Health recommends [a different method](#), which uses less bleach. Be sure to follow proper [safety procedures](#) when handling bleach. Be sure to always use caution when working with electricity and water.