



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
 PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
**IMPORTANT HEALTH GUIDANCE:
 WATER WELL DISINFECTION**

If your well has been damaged or flooded, contact a licensed and bonded well contractor or pump installer to determine the extent of the damages and what must be done to either repair or decommission the well. Also, contact the Environmental Health Services Division if your well has been damaged because a permit may be required to ensure the repairs are made correctly.

In addition to when a bacteriological test confirms the presence of bacteria, a well MUST be disinfected after flooding, repair, maintenance, contamination or if the water system has lost pressure. Original Chlorox household bleach is an effective sanitizer.

1. Pump well water to a waste line or appropriate site until clear and colorless.
2. Stop pump, turn OFF electrical power to pump.
3. Open well by removing cap and add bleach based on the volumes in Table 1 below (note: the numbers provided are for 100 feet of pipe; if for example your well is 400 feet you would need to multiply the amount of bleach to be added by 4).

Table 1

Chlorine Required to Dose 100 feet of Pipe to 50 Parts Per Million (ppm)	
Diameter of Pipe Casing	5.25% Sodium Hypochlorite (Household Bleach)
2 inches	.25 cup
4 inches	1.125 cups
6 inches	2.5 cups
8 inches	4.25 cups

4. Wait 30 minutes, then surge the well by turning the pump off and on. If possible, use the chlorinated water pumping from the well to wash down the casing.
5. If there is a tank, add bleach based on Table 2 below, otherwise skip to Step 6.

Table 2

Tank Capacity / Amount of Water to be Treated	5.25% Sodium Hypochlorite (Household Bleach)
1,000 gallons	1 gallon
2,000 gallons	2 gallons
5,000 gallons	5 gallons
10,000 gallons	10 gallons
25,000 gallons	25 gallons

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6. Open taps at the farthest end of the water system and throughout the house until chlorine odor is detected, then close the taps.
7. Let the chlorinated water remain in the well, the storage tank, and in any piping in the house for at least 24 hours.
8. Flush water to a waste line or appropriate site until there is no chlorine odor in the water.
9. Test your water for coliform bacteria to be sure that it is safe for drinking.
10. Bacteria may regrow in your water system so it is important to retest your water between two to four weeks after disinfection. If bacteria is detected, repeat the disinfection procedure.

For more information, please go to:

<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/health/publichealth/ehs.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/drinking/private-drinking-wells.html> <https://www.epa.gov/privatewells>

<https://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/f&web.pdf>

Environmental Health Services

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