

Well Owner Information Package

Protect your health and our shared groundwater

Now that you have a well on your property, you are legally responsible for the proper maintenance and abandonment (plugging and sealing) of your well.

A poorly maintained or improperly abandoned well could result in contaminated well water and groundwater, and it could affect your health.

The following tips will help you protect your well:

- Test the quality of your well water on a regular basis and look for changes in the water's appearance (e.g. colour, taste, odour)
- Keep surface water and foreign materials (e.g. insects and mice) from entering the well by securing the well cap in place and checking your well regularly for signs of rust and wear, cracks, holes or gaps in the well's structure
- If materials get in your well, safely remove them
- Keep ponded water, vehicles, pet waste, salt and fertilizer away from the well
- Make sure the ground around your well slopes away from your well
- Ensure the well is accessible for future repairs and maintain the minimum above ground height (typically 40 cm above the surface)
- Check for and identify abnormal sounds. They could indicate wear on the well's pump, waterlines or electrical cables or other issues
- Check the pump's efficiency. If the pump is continually running or losing pressure, it may be a sign of a crack or hole in the waterlines
- Ensure your septic tank system works and is pumped out regularly to prevent contamination of your well water

For information on testing the quality of your well water, visit:

- publichealthontario.ca (search "water testing") to request a drinking water sample collection kit for free bacterial testing
- ontario.ca/page/list-licensed-laboratories to find a licensed laboratory

for chemical testing (note: laboratories charge a fee for this service)

Inspecting your well can be dangerous work. If you are not familiar with wells, let an experienced and licensed well technician do the work.

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Before inspecting a well, make sure to:

- Shut off the power supply to the pump
- Assess the structure of the well and nearby ground to make sure they are stable before approaching the well
- Carefully remove the well cap and take all necessary precautions to make sure people and animals cannot fall into the well

If you no longer use your well or aren't maintaining it for future use as a well, it must be properly abandoned (plugged and sealed).

If you have a water quality or quantity problem or your well is in need of repair, upgrade or abandonment, see the licensed well contractor list on ontario.ca/findwellcontractors.

For more information on properly maintaining or abandoning your well:

- visit ontario.ca/propertywells
- call 1-888-396-9355 (WELL)
- email wellshelpdesk@ontario.ca

For more information on your legal obligations, the Wells Regulation (under the Ontario Water Resources Act) is available at ontario.ca/laws.

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