



HOW TO PROTECT YOUR WELL

Your family's health depends on a safe, reliable source of water for drinking, bathing and other needs. Your well is also valuable because it represents a large financial investment. Learn more about protecting your health and investment.



HAVE YOUR WELL TESTED

Testing your well is important, simple and inexpensive. Call your county health department for details. In Greene County, the number is 417-864-1673, and the Springfield Greene County Health Department website has a list of tests, prices, and illustrated step-by-step instructions at <http://health.springfieldmo.gov/index.aspx?NID=146>

Here are some common-sense, effective things you can do:

Find out what kind of well installation you have (see box). Below-ground (pit) installations are more easily contaminated. Having a well casing that sticks up above ground level will help prevent surface water pollution. If your well is in a pit or otherwise below ground, it is important to prevent water from standing over the seal at the top of the well.

Find out how old your well is. Older wells are subject to problems, especially because they may only be cased a shallow depth. More rigid well construction standards have been in effect since 1987.



IMPORTANT FACTS

Most local groundwater comes from rain that has fallen nearby, within a few miles or closer. Sinkholes and fractures often allow surface water to mix with ground water with little or no filtration. The sources of pollution that could harm our wells are often located in our neighborhood or even on our own property.

Check your well casing and seal to be sure there are no cracks or holes in the casing and no open holes in the seal. A screened vent pipe should extend up out of a sanitary seal installation (see box) to prevent a vacuum from forming inside the well when the pump kicks on. A vacuum can suck contamination into the well.

If you must create a possible pollution source on your property, be sure to place it as far as possible from the well. Minimum separation distances are: septic tank—50 feet; septic drain (absorption) fields, manure pits, livestock/ poultry yards, cesspools, unplugged abandoned wells—100 feet; bulk fuel storage, chemical storage, municipal lagoons—300 feet.

Never store materials in your well house or near a well. Many wells have been contaminated by spills or leaks of such materials.

Be careful to prevent back-flow (see circle on back). Never have hoses submerged in wash basins, stock tanks, or swimming pools.

Have your well tested for coliform bacteria and nitrates at least yearly. Keep a record of these tests which screen for possible pollution.

COMMON TYPES OF WELL CONSTRUCTION

