



# Onondaga County Health Department

J. Ryan McMahon II, County Executive

Kathryn Anderson, MD, PhD, MSPH, Onondaga County Commissioner of Health

John H. Mulroy Civic Center · 421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, NY 13202



Division of Environmental Health  
Lisa Letteney, Director

Bureau of Public Health Engineering  
Phone (315) 435-6600  
Fax (315) 435-6606

## DISINFECTION PROCEDURE FOR INDIVIDUAL WELLS

**If the report on analysis of your water sample indicated that the water was of unsatisfactory sanitary quality for potable purposes, this was due to the fact that the laboratory testing showed the presence of Coliform Bacteria. Coliform Bacteria are primarily associated with sewage contamination because they are found in the human and animal intestinal tract where they exist in extremely high numbers. In addition to sewage, they are also found in the soil and in surface water run-off. While not all forms of coliform cause illness, their presence is an indication that a pathway exists through which other disease-causing organisms can enter the water supply. We use them as indicator organisms because they are a sign of pollution that we are able to readily identify in laboratory testing.**

Whenever a well shows the presence of contamination, it is necessary to investigate the potential sources of pollution. Health Department representatives are available to provide guidance as to the details of a properly constructed water source. It may be necessary for you to have a qualified contractor evaluate your water supply as to the required repairs. Until the source of contamination is identified and eliminated, the water supply is not considered safe for potable purposes.

Disinfection is a procedure used to destroy bacteria and most other organisms present in the water supply. This procedure will not change the quality of the water entering the well, therefore it alone should not be considered a long-term solution. If the source of contamination is not found and corrected, the contamination may reoccur.

The disinfection procedure outlined on the reverse side of this form is recommended in the following situations:

- after all sources of contamination have been identified and eliminated.
- after any changes are made in existing water system equipment or piping.
- after a new well is constructed and ready for use.

## **DISINFECTION PROCEDURE**

**FLUSHING:** PUMP WATER UNTIL CLEAR. ( IN DUG WELL, CHECK FOR AND REMOVE ALL VEGETATION, SILT, ETC.)

**DISINFECTION:** ADD SUFFICIENT UNSCENTED CHLORINE BLEACH (CLOROX, PUREX, ETC.), TO THE WELL TO OBTAIN A STRONG CHLORINE ODOR IN THE COLD WATER TAPS. THE AMOUNT OF BLEACH TO ADD IS DEPENDENT UPON THE VOLUME OF WATER IN THE WELL. HOWEVER, USUALLY BETWEEN 1 TO 2 GALLONS IS SUFFICIENT.

IF POSSIBLE, RECIRCULATE THE CHLORINATED WATER INTO THE TOP OF THE WELL FOR 15 MINUTES OR UNTIL COMPLETELY MIXED AND THE WELL CASING WASHED. RECIRCULATION CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED BY ATTACHING A HOSE TO AN OUTSIDE FAUCET.

RUN ALL COLD WATER TAPS UNTIL CHLORINE ODOR IS PRESENT. ALLOW TO STAND FOR 8-24 HOURS.

FLUSH THE CHLORINATED WATER TO THE SANITARY SEWER OR TO THE GROUND SUCH THAT IT DOES NOT RUN OFF SITE UNTIL THE CHLORINE ODOR HAS COMPLETELY DISSIPATED. PLEASE NOTE THAT DISCHARGE TO THE GROUND SHOULD BE DONE SLOWLY (+/- 2 GALLONS PER MINUTE) TO PREVENT SOIL EROSION AND TO ALLOW COMPLETE PERCOLATION INTO THE GROUND WITHIN THE PROPERTY BOUNDARIES. [DO NOT DISCHARGE ON THE LAWN, NEAR A STREAM/ANY CONCENTRATED FLOW PATH, OR INTO A RESIDENTIAL ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM.]

USE OR FLUSH DAILY FOR TWO WEEKS. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT ALL OF THE CHLORINE BE REMOVED BEFORE COLLECTING ANOTHER SAMPLE FOR LABORATORY TESTING.

**For further information you can contact:**

**BUREAU OF PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING  
TELEPHONE (315) 435-6600**