



Well Informed

Perhaps you've moved to the country and found yourself the owner of a water well or maybe you've relied upon a well most of your life.

It is when you need to help that you will want to know the basics about well maintenance. A well maintenance check up should be apart of a well owner's routine.

A list of licensed well contractors in Ontario is available through the Ontario Ministry of Environment website. A well check-up should include the following:

1. Flow Test to determine system output. Also if possible, check the water level before and during pumping. Check your pump motor performance by reviewing the amp load, grounding, and line voltage. Examination of the pressure tank and pressure switch contact is also important along with looking at general water quality (odour, cloudiness, etc.).

2. Inspection of Well Equipment is to assure it is sanitary and meets local code requirements

3. Test water regularly for coliform bacteria and nitrates. Free testing kits are available from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit

Test Your Well Regularly. Make sure your water supply is safe to drink by testing for bacteria three times a year and after major plumbing work.

Resources

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
www.cmhc.ca

GreenUp
www.greenup.on.ca

Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
www.ontario.ca/ministry-environment

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
www.mah.gov.on.ca

Otonabee Region Conservation Authority
www.otonabee.com

Peterborough County-City Health Unit
www.pcchu.ca

Trent Source Protection Plan
www.trentsourceprotection.on.ca

Additional information from:

Meredith Carter
Manager, Environmental and Technical Services
Otonabee Region Conservation Authority
705-745-5791 x 223
mcarter@otonabee.com

Terri Cox
Risk Management Official & Inspector
Otonabee-Peterborough Source Protection Area
Otonabee Region Conservation Authority
705-745-5791 x 219
tcox@otonabee.com

With support provided by



Private wells

Protect the safety of your drinking water.



DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION
Act for Clean Water
Otonabee-Peterborough Source Protection Area



WELL INFORMED

Preventing Contamination

Well water issues and groundwater contamination can come from a variety of unsuspected sources. Abandoned wells should be decommissioned to prevent serious health and safety concerns. Contact your local Conservation Authority for more information.

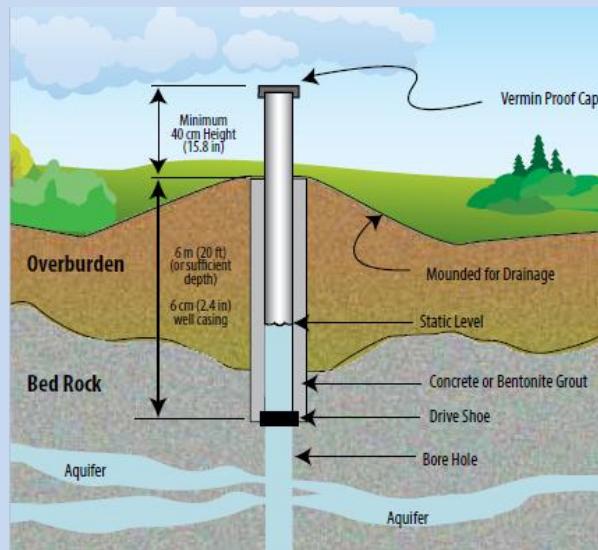
Practicing best management when it comes to your well and your own water includes avoiding some of the following activities:

Avoid the following:

- ✓ Never allow liquid or waste from garbage or manure piles to drain towards the well
- ✓ Never locate a dog run near the well
- ✓ Never treat the area around the well with pesticides or fertilizer (this is one reason why planting shrubs or flower beds immediately around your well head is not the best idea)
- ✓ Never flush oil, detergent, paint, medication, solvents, or other chemicals down the toilet
- ✓ Never drive or park motorized vehicles near your well head
- ✓ Never ignore an abandoned well or use it as a garbage pit



How Your Well is Constructed



How Well is Your Well

Some wells are at a higher risk of contamination and require extra care and attention. When it comes to your well, consider the following factors:

- ✓ Shallow wells (less than 6 metres or 20 feet deep) are at a higher risk than deeper wells
- ✓ Dug wells are at a higher risk than drilled wells
- ✓ Older wells are at a higher risk than newer wells

Another important risk factor is the type of soil and/or rock between the surface and the aquifer from which your well draws its water.

For example, coarse soils like sand and gravel are a less effective barrier to contaminants than thick deposits of fine soils like clay loams or silty clay.

Your Water. Your Well

Well owners have the responsibility for safety of their own water and are also accountable for ensuring that their wells do not contaminate the groundwater that they share with their neighbours.

Drinking contaminated water can make you and your family sick and can eventually be fatal. Too many wells pumping water in a small area may overwhelm an aquifer or a poorly constructed well can provide a gateway for contamination.

Prevention is by far the most practical solution to the problem of both groundwater and surface water contamination.

Well Installation & Maintenance Tips

- ✓ Ensure the sanitary seal or well cap is securely in place and water tight
- ✓ Seal any joints, cracks and connections in the well casing
- ✓ Direct surface drainage away from the well casing
- ✓ Ensure that the well cap is at least 40 cm above ground
- ✓ Check the well pump and distribution systems regularly
- ✓ Test for bacteria three times a year and after any major plumbing work
- ✓ Chlorinate the well and test after major repairs

Immediately investigate any changes in the quality and quantity of water.