



# COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH BUREAU

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CARE OF SMALL WATER SUPPLIES WHEN COLIFORM BACTERIA IS FOUND

(These instructions are not intended for public water systems)

(Para obtener este documento en español vaya a - <http://www.mtyhd.org/waterforms>)

Coliform bacteria normally live in the soil, on plants and in the intestinal tract of humans and other warm-blooded animals. Coliform bacteria is not naturally present in groundwater. If water sampling shows the presence of coliform bacteria, this indicates that there is contamination in your water supply. If coliform bacteria are present, other organisms that cause disease can also be present in your water supply.

#### **FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE SYSTEM USERS, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE BACTERIA BE DESTROYED BY DISINFECTION.**

- All users must be notified of the reasons for disinfection and precautions to be taken.
- During this process, the water may be used for toilets and bathing. Water should be provided from another source for cooking and drinking purposes. Beware of laundering clothes while chlorine is in the system, as it will bleach clothing.
- Please follow the procedures listed below to be sure that your water supply is properly disinfected and protected from future contamination.

#### **1. Routine Protection of Water Supply:**

- A. Seal all openings in the top of your well. The pump housing or well cover must be completely waterproof and insect-proof.
- B. Be sure that the cement slab around the well casing is not cracked and that it drains rain water away from the well.
- C. Electrical wires going into your well casing must be enclosed in electrical conduit. The conduit must form a waterproof and insect-proof seal with the well casing.
- D. All storage tanks and pressure tanks should be periodically cleaned and flushed out. All storage tank covers must be completely waterproof and insect-proof (all openings must be screened).

#### **2. Chlorination Procedures:**

##### **Concentrating of Liquid Bleach- Sodium Hypochlorite (Unscented)**

Sodium Hypochlorite	Down Well Casing	Storage tank- per 10,000 gallons
Standard Laundry Bleach $\approx$ 6%	Half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) gal	1 gal
12.5%	One quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) gal	Half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) gal

**\*Verify concentration and adjust accordingly**

- A. Chlorinate your well by pouring one-half gallon of laundry bleach or one-quarter of 12.5% sodium hypochlorite down into your well casing. Do not use the discharge pipe from the submersible pump.
- B. Chlorinate all storage tanks by adding one gallon of laundry bleach or one-half gallon of 12.5%

sodium hypochlorite per 10,000 -gallon tank capacity to the tanks when they are full. Overflow the storage tank to allow the chlorine to contact all surfaces within the tank.

- C. Open all cold-water taps until a chlorine smell is detected at all taps.
- D. Close all taps. Leave the chlorine and water in the distribution lines for at least 24 hours.
- E. After 24 hours, flush your well and tanks by opening all cold-water taps until the smell or taste of chlorine has subsided. (If superchlorinated, discharge tanks to waste after 24 hours.)

**AFTER YOUR WATER SUPPLY IS PROPERLY PROTECTED AND CHLORINATED, HAVE YOUR WATER TESTED BY A STATE-CERTIFIED LABORATORY. SEND A COPY OF THE LABORATORY REPORT TO THIS DEPARTMENT WITHIN 30 DAYS OR AS OTHERWISE DIRECTED. INCLUDE THE NAME OF THE WATER SYSTEM WITH THE REPORT.**

**Be sure to do the following to ensure your safety and that of your family, pets, and livestock.**

- Keep children and animals away from the well area while disinfecting.
- No one should use water from the water system until the disinfection procedures are done.
- **Use extreme caution** when working with electricity and water. Together, water and electricity can be deadly.
- Always follow the manufacturer's use and safety directions.
- Avoid eye and skin contact. Wear protective goggles or a face shield and rubber gloves when working with bleach.
- Do not mix bleach with other chemicals as they may form harmful gases.
- Do not leave bleach or the bleach solution unattended.
- Disinfection can create harmful gases. The area around the well must be well ventilated.
- Harmful gases can accumulate in well pits and create a lack of oxygen.

**If you are unsure of these instructions, please call the Health Department and ask for a Drinking Water specialist.**

Example images for disinfection products:



Sodium hypochlorite -12.5%  
\*NSF approved for drinking water



Clorox bleach or store brands ≈ 6%  
\*No additives including scent

**Known locations to obtain chlorine:** grocery stores, hardware stores, pool supply, and drug stores. (List may not include all locations.)