

Tips for Protecting Your Water Supply:

SOURCE: Alberta Environment website

1) Test water quality

All water well sources should be tested when the supply is first connected and then on a regular basis (i.e. annually for bacteria & about every five years for chemical analysis). Test the water more often if you notice a significant change in the water quality, if a toxic spill occurs nearby, or if a change occurs in land use or activity. A thorough chemical and bacteriological analysis of water for household use can be done through your local health unit. Alternatively, water samples can be taken to private labs for testing. These labs will supply sample bottles and correct procedures for sampling. **IF YOU ARE DRINKING YOUR WELL WATER, TEST FOR BACTERIA SEASONALLY (TWICE A YEAR)!** Be sure to keep all records of water quality tests for future reference and monitoring

2) Treat water

Water quality tests will point out any problems that need to be corrected. The water may have a poor taste, odor or color, or be high in total dissolved solids (TDS). Iron bacteria are a common well water problem in Alberta. Treatments for these and other problems may include chlorination, special filters, water softeners, ultra-violet sterilization or reverse osmosis purification.

3) Monitor the supply

Monitoring your water sources is an important step to ensuring a lasting water supply. You will have advance notice of changes to the water supply and a chance to make changes before the problem is serious.

4) Maintain the well and water system

Regular maintenance such as shock chlorination is necessary and recommended annually. Well design should allow for this required maintenance.

5) Protect from contamination

Both dugouts and wells are susceptible to contamination from various sources. Keys to prevent contamination include proper location, proper design, plugging abandoned wells, fencing, runoff controls and grass cover around dugouts.