



## 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 your life.

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

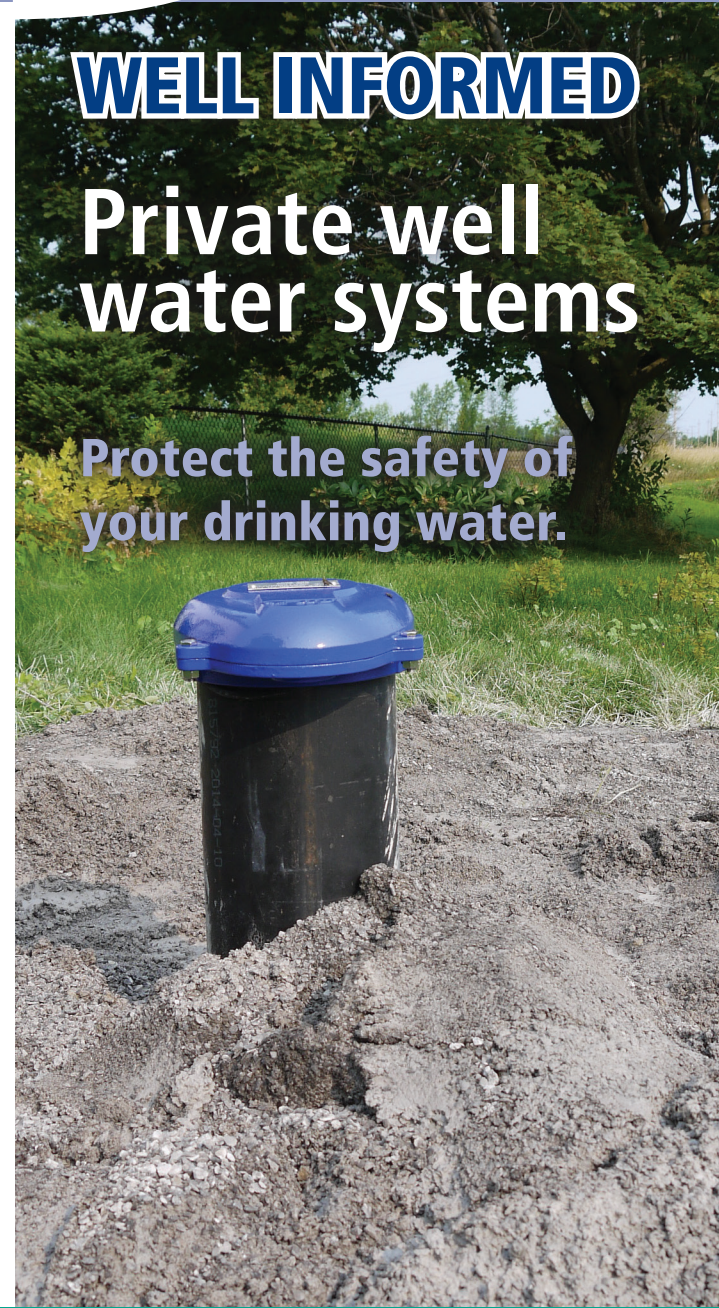
A list of licensed well contractors in Ontario is available through the Ontario Ministry of the Environment website. A well check-up should include the following:

- 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** 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 Ottawa Public Health.

**Test Your Well Water Regularly**  
*Make sure your water supply is safe to drink by testing for bacteria three times a year and after major plumbing work.*  
 Visit for more details: [www.ottawa.ca/en/residents/water-and-environment/free-well-water-testing](http://www.ottawa.ca/en/residents/water-and-environment/free-well-water-testing).

- Well Information**
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation  
[www.cmhc.ca](http://www.cmhc.ca)
  - Ministry of the Environment  
[www.ontario.ca/ministry-environment](http://www.ontario.ca/ministry-environment)
  - Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
[www.mah.gov.on.ca](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca)
  - Ottawa Public Health  
[www.ottawa.ca/health](http://www.ottawa.ca/health)
  - Raisin-South Nation Source Protection Region  
[www.yourdrinkingwater.ca](http://www.yourdrinkingwater.ca)
  - Well Aware  
[www.wellaware.ca](http://www.wellaware.ca)
  - Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Region  
[www.mrsourcewater.ca](http://www.mrsourcewater.ca)

For more information  
**[Ottawa.ca/sourceprotection](http://Ottawa.ca/sourceprotection)**  
 Information in this pamphlet provided by the Raisin-South Nation Source Protection Region



# WELL INFORMED

## Private well water systems

Protect the safety of your drinking water.



## 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.

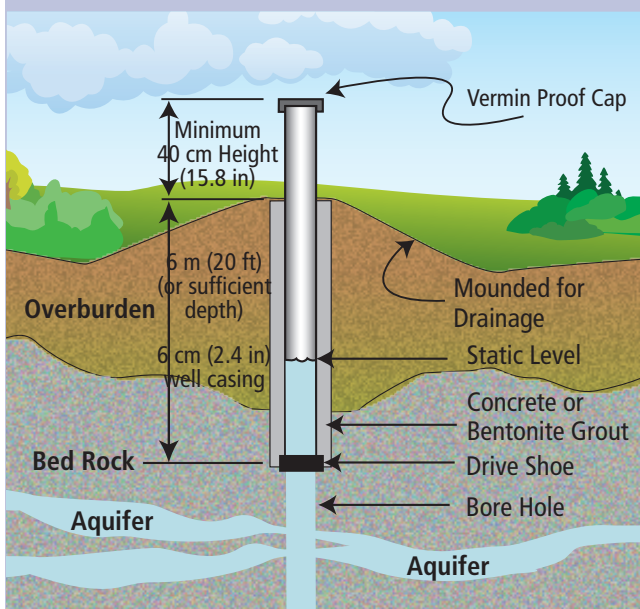
Practicing best management when it comes to your well and your own water includes avoiding some of the following activities:

### 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 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 neighbors.

Drinking contaminated water can make you and your family sick and can even 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**

