

POST-FLOOD TESTING & DISINFECTING OF PRIVATE WELLS

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Test Your Well Water After a Flood

Water wells can be contaminated and be unsafe for consumption and use after a flood. Floodwaters can contaminate private wells with the following:

- Sewage
- Animal waste
- Chemicals
- Soil and debris
- Other pollutants

It is important to know whether your well is contaminated and needs to be disinfected. Testing is the best way to determine if your well water is safe.

Uvalde County Well Water Testing

Uvalde County residents can submit private well water samples through the Uvalde County Sanitarian, Josh Packer. Water sample bottles and the required submission forms are available at his office or at the Uvalde County Extension Office, both of which are located at the Uvalde County Fairplex. Water samples are accepted on Tuesdays and transported to a laboratory in Kerrville for testing on Wednesdays.

Additional Resources:

[Map of Water Testing Labs in Texas](#)

Safe Drinking Water

Until your water is tested and determined safe:

- ✓ Strain water if sediment is visible
- ✓ Bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute
- ✓ Allow water to cool
- ✓ Store in clean, covered containers

Before Disinfecting Your Well

⚠ If the well casing, electrical components, or equipment were damaged during flooding, contact a qualified well professional before disinfecting.



Disinfecting Your Well

1. Flush the System

Run the well pump for 15-20 minutes.

2. **Chlorinate the well.** Use bleach with a chlorine concentration of 6% (typically household bleach). To determine the water depth in the well, subtract the static water level (the distance from the ground surface to the water surface within the well) from the well's total depth. If the static water level is unknown or you are unsure, use the total well depth as the measurement

Water Depth in Well (feet)	Well Diameter (Inches)				
	4	6	8	24	36
10	6 cups	7 cups	8 cups	20 cups	2.5 gal
20	7 cups	8 cups	10 cups	2.5 gal	4.5 gal
50	8 cups	10 cups	14 cups	5 gal	10.5 gal
100	10 cups	16 cups	22 cups		
150	12 cups	20 cups	30 cups		
200	14 cups	1.5 gal	2.5 gal		
400	22 cups	2.5 gal	4.5 gal		
4 cups = 0.25 gal; 8 cups = 0.5 gal; 12 cups = 0.75 gal; 16 cups = 1 gal					

⚠ Caution: Excessive chlorination can be harmful.

3. **Mixing directions.** Put uncontaminated water in a five-gallon bucket until 3/4 full. Mix in the necessary amount of bleach. Remove the well cap and pour liquid mixture into the well.
4. **Mixing the bleach with well water.** Connect a hose to the closest outdoor faucet and run the water onto the ground for 1-2 minutes, or until you detect a chlorine smell. Place the hose into the well opening where the bleach was added and let the water recirculate into the well for 15-20 minutes. When finished, remove the hose and reinstall the well cap.
5. **Chlorinate the lines.** Turn on each faucet connected to the well (kitchen, bathrooms, outdoor spigots, etc.), beginning with the one closest to the well. Let the water run until you notice the smell of bleach, then turn it off and move to the next faucet. After all faucets have been treated, shut off power to the well pump and leave it off overnight.
6. **Flush the chlorinated water out of the system.** Open any outdoor spigot and allow the water to discharge onto the ground, away from your septic system. Make sure the water does not drain into creeks, streams, or areas where it could harm fish or vegetation. Let the water run until the bleach odor is no longer present.

