

Private Well 12-Point Check

Do at least once a year:

- ❑ Check to see well casing is watertight from water table to at least 1 foot above the ground surface (or highest flood level).
- ❑ Check that the sanitary seal is secure and watertight (and KDHE-approved type).
- ❑ Test water and file the results with other records and information about the well.
- ❑ Make sure the ground slopes away from the well for at least 15 feet in all directions.
- ❑ Shock chlorinate the well and water system.

Always do:

- ❑ Have a licensed well driller or knowledgeable landowner do all work on well or well casing.
- ❑ Fix the source of any change in water color, taste, or odor. Shock chlorinate the well.
- ❑ Maintain 50 feet (100 preferred) of open space between the well and any buildings, waste system, parked vehicle, equipment, compost, or other contamination source.
- ❑ Store chemicals such as fertilizer, pesticides, oil, fuel, or paint at least 100 feet down slope.
- ❑ Properly plug all abandoned wells, cesspools, septic tanks, and other holes not used in 2 or more years.
- ❑ Prevent backflow and back siphonage by maintaining an air gap above the container you are filling or by using an adequate backflow prevention device.
- ❑ Shock chlorinate the well after any service work on the pump, well, or water system.

There are more than 20 publications from K-State Research and Extension about private wells and water quality.

For more information or if you have questions about safe private water supplies contact:

- ❑ Local Health or Environmental office—see county government in phone book.
- ❑ County Extension office—see county government in phone book.
- ❑ K-State Research and Extension, Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, 237 Seaton Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506. (785-532-5813).
- ❑ KDHE, Division of Environment, Bureau of Water, Nonpoint Source Section. Building 283, Forbes Field, Topeka, KS 66620. (785-296-4195).
- ❑ Kansas Geological Survey, 305 Moore, Lawrence, KS 66049. (785-864-3965).

Publications from Kansas State University are available on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu>

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PROTECT DRINKING WATER

EMPOWERING LOCAL DECISION MAKERS

I N K A N S A S

OBTAINING Safe Water from Private Wells



**A TOOL TO HELP
ASSURE QUALITY OF LIFE
IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

People Need Safe Drinking Water

All Kansans need a water supply that is safe to drink. The most reliable supply of safe water is from public water supplies. They meet safe drinking water standards more than 98 percent of the time. Conversely, a recent survey shows only about 40 percent of private wells meet these same standards. Since no national or state standards apply to private water quality, the standards for evaluation could be questioned.

Reliable Safe Water

In many rural areas and some small communities and urban-rural fringes, a public supply is not available. In these cases, landowners must provide their own water. People who depend on their own well or spring still need and deserve water that is reliably safe to drink. Safe water from private wells requires wells that have these characteristics:

- located away from and up slope from contamination sources
- constructed to meet current Kansas well standards
- protected from contamination
- maintained and water tested annually

Assuring a reliable safe water supply is not simple. It requires careful attention to many details. The first settlers dug wells by hand and used water by the bucketful. Today lending institutions often require minimum flows and quality similar to public supplies.

Who is Responsible?

Since no quality regulations apply, it is up to the landowner or water user to assure a safe private water supply. The owner or user is responsible for all aspects of owning, operating, and maintaining a water system. The person needs the knowledge and skills of a service technician and a sanitarian.

Reliable, safe water from private wells occurs when the well is properly located, constructed to standards, carefully maintained, and protected from contamination.

Local Support Needed for Landowners

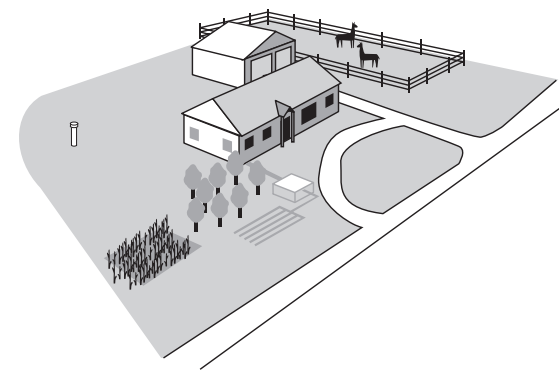
Since no federal or state regulations apply to private well water quality, there is no support from these agencies. Any assistance to landowners about a private well or spring must be local. Local government and private organizations have an important role in education, support, and resources to assure meeting needs of landowners including:

- coordination of consistent local sources of information about wells, groundwater supply and water quality
- water screening tests and certified laboratory test kits are available locally
- site visits and technical consultation to evaluate and solve problems
- competent and licensed well driller and service personnel
- knowledgeable and helpful water treatment dealers

Who Assists Well Owners?

Local resources must be available to meet the landowner's needs. Which options are available in your community?

- Education and information
 - ___ County Extension office
 - ___ Local sanitarian
 - ___ Local library
- Consultation and technical assistance
 - ___ Local sanitarian
 - ___ County Extension office
 - ___ County Conservation District
- Well drilling and well service
 - ___ Licensed well driller
- Pump and plumbing service
 - ___ Local plumber/pump installer
 - ___ Well driller
- Financial assistance
 - ___ County Conservation District
 - ___ Lending Institution
- Water testing
 - ___ Local sanitarian - screening test
 - ___ Certified laboratory



“Avoid polluting your well and minimize risk of environmental liability for groundwater,” *Morgan Powell, PE.*