



Dear Well Owners Network Member:

Every spring we send you paragraph after paragraph on how to take care of your well. Although it is imperative to follow a maintenance plan, details can get lost in those paragraphs! This spring we want to change things up a bit and give you a quick and easy checklist (don't worry we included some of those pesky paragraphs!).

Our water well experts put together your spring checklist, important tips to get your well ready for the seasons ahead, and covered your cistern and septic systems if you have those too. Let's get right to it!

SPRING Forward into Your Well Maintenance Plan

First, let's get acquainted with your water well system. See our well diagram below. This is a redesigned well image that we believe is a clear illustration on how your water well may look.

Remember this is intended to represent some of the components that can be included in a water well system and is not intended as an installation guide. Check local or state codes for actual requirements and restrictions.

Your Spring Checklist



Inspection

- Inspect your wellhead for damage to the casing or well cap. If you notice any damage contact your licensed well contractor for repair.
- Make sure only grass is growing around your wellhead. Remove any debris (leaves, branches, etc.) from the area and make sure the ground slopes down away from your wellhead to ensure water does not pool around or flow toward it.
- Have your well system, including the pump, tank, pipes, valves, and water flow, inspected every 5 years (or immediately if you have no record) by a licensed well contractor.

A few additional tips: Keep heavy equipment and vehicles off of your lawn to avoid damage to the well, pipes underground, and help prevent contamination. Consider adding a fiberglass driveway marker next to the wellhead to help locate the well and avoid any damage from lawn mowers.

If you have any questions about your well system, contact your licensed well contractor or the wellcare® Hotline at 888.395.1033 or [visit our website](#).

Testing

- Test your water for the most common contaminants that pose a health risk: arsenic, bacteria, lead, and nitrate.
- Test your water for contaminants of local concern. Your local Health Department and the wellcare® Hotline can help! Contact us at 888.395.1033 or [visit our website](#).

To locate a certified water testing laboratory in your area [try our interactive map](#).

Treatment

Follow the inspection and maintenance schedule provided by your water treatment device manufacturer or water treatment professional. To locate certified water treatment professionals in your area visit Water Quality Association's [website](#).

Important tip: Before deciding on water treatment or to make sure the device is working properly, have your water tested.

For more information on well inspection, water testing, and treatment visit our [website](#) or [download our FREE Well Owner's Manual](#).

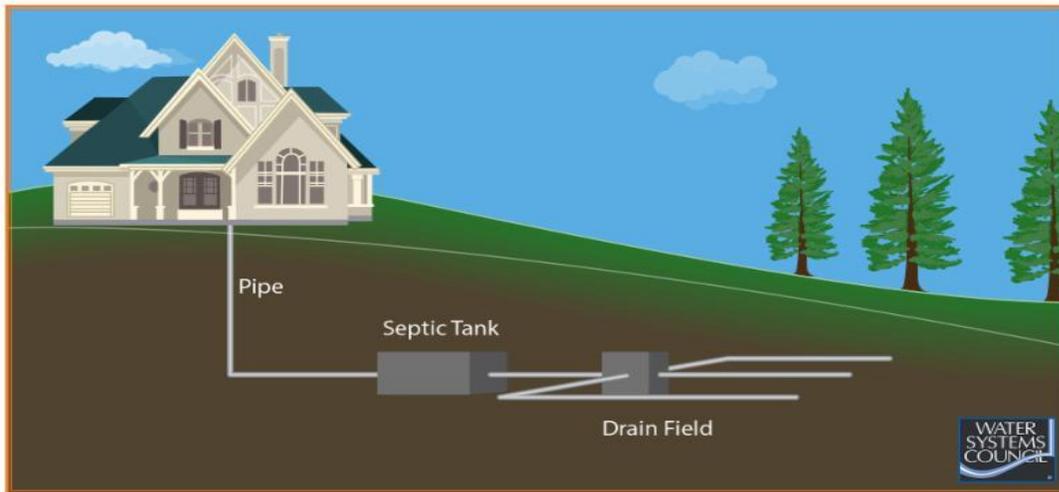
How to Care for Your Cistern

Wait, what is a Cistern?

A cistern is a large tank used to store water. Cisterns can be located either above or below ground, and they come in a range of sizes and shapes with varying features. A below ground cistern can be quite large and tends to be more efficient than an above ground cistern because the surrounding soil provides insulation, reducing the amount of water lost to evaporation. Most cisterns require an additional pump to access water, especially if it is installed below ground. Cisterns also have a cap or cover to keep animals, plants, and insects away from the water. Many homeowners have cisterns to back up their water well system during dry seasons, and in some cases, a cistern is used as the main source of water for a household.

Now that you know what that large tank is in your yard, [keep reading to learn how to care for it!](#)

Don't Leave Out Your Septic System



A poorly maintained wastewater treatment system (also known as your septic system) can pose a serious threat to the quality of your drinking water and can require expensive repairs. Just like your well, you should have a maintenance plan for septic system. Our experts did it again...they've created a checklist for your septic system too!

- Have your septic tank inspected for capacity and leaks.
- Pump your septic tank every 3-5 years based on use and size of your household. Your septic service professional can provide recommendations.
- Repair the septic tank or drainfield system as needed to prevent leaks of bacteria and nutrients into groundwater.

More tips: Never drive or park a vehicle on the septic as this may crush buried lines or compress the soils around the leach field which can lead to failure.

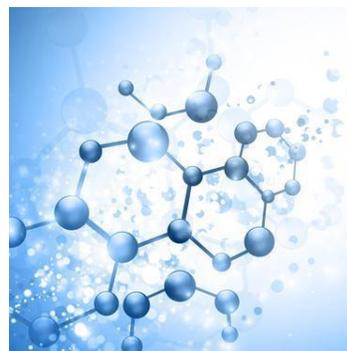
If you have any questions about your septic system, contact your septic service professional or the wellcare® Hotline at 888.395.1033 or [visit our website](#).

If you need assistance locating a professional, check with your local health department or search these websites: [NOWRA](#) and [NAWT](#).

[Download our free wellcare® information sheet on Your Septic System.](#)

PFOA and PFOS in Your Well Water?

Although most of the population has been exposed to low levels through personal care products, studies have shown that elevated levels of man-made chemicals PFOA and PFOS can pose serious health risks. EPA currently provides a Health Advisory level of 70 ppt for public water supplies but are non-enforceable and only provided for guidance.



The bad news is that these chemicals are being found more and more in groundwater supplies across the country, putting our water supplies and health at risk. The good news is that on February 14th, 2019, the US EPA announced their plan to officially move forward with developing a maximum contaminant level (MCL) for PFOA and PFOS, two of the most produced and studied members of the large PFAS (perfluoroalkyl substances) family of chemicals. Although the process of developing an enforceable MCL is long, this announcement means that the process for regulation of PFOA and PFOS in drinking water has finally begun. Due to slow federal regulatory processes and the rapid emergence of this contaminant, some states are developing state-level regulation for public water supplies. Contact your county Health Department or state Environmental Agency to ask if your state has developed its own limit on PFAS in water supplies.

Our wellcare® Hotline has received calls about PFAS contamination from the following locations:

- AL - Colbert, Franklin, Winston, Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan Co
- CO - El Paso Co (Security, Widefield, Fountain)
- DE - New Castle Co (Newark)
- MA - Hampden Co (Westfield)
- MD - Calvert Co (Chesapeake Bay, CBD)
- MI - Kent and Crawford Co
- NH - Hillsborough Co (Litchfield and Merrimack)
- NM - Curry Co (Clovis)
- NY - Rensselaer Co (Petersburgh, Hoosick Falls), Washington Co (Cambridge, White Creek, Jackson)
- PA - Bucks and Montgomery Co
- VT - Bennington Co (North Bennington)
- WA - Island Co (Whidbey Island), Spokane Co

WI - Eau Claire and Marinette Co
WV - Washington (Wood Co)

The Environmental Working Group at Northeastern University provides an [interactive map](#) of EPA known contamination sites.



What does this mean for you? Test. Test your well water to know confidently that your well water is safe to cook with and drink as these chemicals are not readily detectable through taste, smell or visual inspection. Although testing for PFAS can be pricey, our friends at SimpleWater offer the best pricing and provide excellent service while doing so. SimpleWater was founded at the University of California in Berkeley and developed mytapscore.com to provide useful, efficient and affordable water testing services.

Access SimpleWater's PFOA and PFOS testing on their [website](#) or contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033 with any questions. [Download our information sheet on PFOA and PFOS & Well Water.](#)

Get Ready for the 20th Anniversary of Groundwater Awareness Week



National Groundwater Awareness Week

Think 

March 10-16, 2019

20th Anniversary

National Groundwater Awareness Week is March 10-16, 2019. [Learn the importance of groundwater and how to protect this precious resource](#) then pass it on!

Put a Stop to that Drop!



March 18-24, 2019

Fix a Leak Week

Fix a Leak Week is right around the corner. Make a date to fix those leaks March 18-24, 2019.

[Learn how to find leaks, fix leaks, and repeat](#) anytime!

More Free Resources for WON Members

New Information
sheet: Wildfires
and Wells



Now available to download free: [Environmental Health Specialists information sheets](#), [Home Inspectors Guide to Evaluating Water Wells](#), [Quick Guide for Well Owners brochure](#) (with fillable contact section), and [Well Owner's Manual](#).



Still Have Questions?

We can help! Call the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033, [complete an online form](#), [send us an email](#), or [chat with us live!](#) Hablamos español también!

STAY CONNECTED:



Water Systems Council, 1101 30th Street, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20007