



**FALL 2021**

**wellcare® Hotline: 888-395-1033**

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Dear Well Owners Network Member:

We know you're just as excited as we are for fall - football, pumpkins, and all the fall activities! In this newsletter, we're taking you from fall to winter with the five W's - wildfires, water treatment, well records, winterizing, and water wells of course. Once you know your water well, you'll want to use it for everything pumpkin spice!

If you have questions regarding these topics, if you cannot find what you're looking for, or if you have any other questions on wells and well water, the [wellcare®](#) Hotline can help! Contact the [wellcare®](#) Hotline at 888-395-1033 or [wellcarehotline.org](http://wellcarehotline.org). Don't forget to like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) for extra tips, industry news, and more!

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## After the Fire: Water Well Safety

Returning home after a wildfire can be overwhelming and dangerous. We gathered some safety tips for re-entering a burned area and how to care for your well.



Tips for re-entering an area that has been affected by wildfires:

- **Avoid** damaged or fallen **power lines**.
- **Be careful of ash pits** (depression filled with hot ashes) and burned trees. **Serious burns or injuries can occur**.
- **Wear protective gear** before sifting through debris to avoid breathing in harmful dust or ash.
- **Hazardous household materials** like automotive fluids, paint, solvents, etc. **should be disposed of properly** to protect people and the environment.
- If you suspect electrical damage or gas leaks, **do not try to use your electricity or anything with a flame**. Instead, **use a flashlight** for your light source and report problems to your local utility. **DO NOT** stay in the home as there is a risk of electrical shock or explosion.
- **If sewage is visible, limit access to the area** and contact your local health department for assistance.
- **Do not turn on the water if you notice damage to your wellhead or well components** above ground. Contact a licensed well contractor to assess and repair damages.

After a wildfire, underground well components like the pump may not be harmed. However, if your home and yard have been burned, it is necessary to complete a visual inspection of your well system and have any damage repaired before turning on the water.

Check the following for damage:

- **Wellhead** – casing, cap or seal, and any other above ground piping
- **Tank** – pressure or storage tanks (cisterns)

- **Electrical** – wires and control box
- **Treatment** – filters/housing, tanks, chemicals

**Contact a licensed well contractor immediately for repairs.** Shock chlorination or disinfection should be performed after repairs are made. Your well contractor will determine if this is required. It is important to note that shock chlorination/disinfection will not remove metals, pesticides, or other types of non-biological contamination. Do not drink or cook with the water until a water test is performed and confirms no harmful contaminants are in your water.

[Download our information sheet on Wildfires & Wells](#) to continue reading about water testing and caring for your water treatment and septic systems after a wildfire.

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## Avoid a freeze, it's a breeze!



**Concerned there may be another Snowmageddon, Snowpocalypse, or Snowzilla? Don't worry, we're here to help protect your pipes and well from freezing again!**

If you are in an area that tends to reach or has ever had freezing temperatures, you should make every effort to prevent your pipes, well, and well components from freezing. When pipes freeze, the flow of water is completely blocked. Since water expands as it turns into ice, the pipes are very likely to burst. It could also ruin your well pump and other exposed well components. This can be an expensive problem to fix and a disastrous occurrence in frigid winter months. If your well or pipes freeze, contact your licensed well contractor or plumber as soon as possible.

### Your Well System

Help keep your well from freezing with a pitless adapter. A pitless adapter attaches to your well casing to provide a sanitary and frost-proof seal between the casing and the water line running to your home. This device protects the water from freezing and permits convenient access to the well and well components without having to dig around the well. The adapter is connected to the well casing below the frost line, which is the depth at which the ground does not freeze. Water from the well is diverted horizontally at the adapter to prevent it from freezing. Contact your licensed well contractor to discuss installing a pitless adapter.

You should also protect your wellhead from getting damaged by snow and heavy equipment like snow blowers and plows. There are existing older wells that are in a driveway, close to the driveway, or close to a road. Consider adding a fiberglass driveway marker to help with locating the well. If your well gets covered by snow, you will easily find it and can carefully remove the snow around it.

**Freezing temps on the way and no time to make adjustments?**

If your wellhead is exposed to outside elements and freezing temperatures are on the way, wrap it with insulation, blankets, towels, or anything else you can find that will not cause damage to the wellhead but can help protect it from the cold.

**[Read on to learn about protecting your pipes, pump, tank, and our tips if your pipes or well system are already frozen.](#)**



## Test before you treat, your system could be incomplete

First and foremost, it is important to note that not all well water needs to be treated. Most well water comes from groundwater and is a safe, reliable drinking water source for you and your family. Before considering any type of water treatment, you should have your water tested by a certified water testing laboratory. If you need help locating a water testing laboratory or determining what to test your water for, contact the wellcare® Hotline at 888-395-1033, or read our [Well Water Testing information sheet](#) and use our [interactive map](#).

If your water tests positive for a contaminant, the important question is whether the contaminant found poses a threat to your health at the level it was found. Many contaminants do not pose a threat to health, but can cause the water to change color, cause staining, have an odor, or have an unpleasant taste. Use our wellcare® information sheet [Understanding Your Well Water Test Results](#) or contact the wellcare® Hotline to help with interpreting your results.

### Selecting Water Treatment

As a private well owner, you are responsible for taking the right steps to keep your water clean. The more you know about the quality of your water and what treatment may be needed, the more likely you will be able to avoid unnecessary, costly, or inappropriate equipment. Only one water treatment – disinfection or shock chlorination – is managed easily at home. Most other treatments require the service of a certified water treatment professional. If you need water treatment, contact your licensed well contractor for recommendations for treating the problem or locate a water treatment professional in your area using the [Water Quality Association's website](#).

Well owners have four primary options for water treatment:

- **Disinfection or shock chlorination** of the well
- **Point-of-Use (POU)** - installed under the kitchen sink to filter contaminants from drinking and cooking water
- **Point-of-Entry (POE)** - installed at the point where well water enters the home plumbing system
- **Multi-stage treatment** - to filter multiple contaminants or improve water quality for all household uses

Before purchasing a water treatment device, ask if it has been approved by NSF International, a non-profit group that develops standards for equipment related to public health. NSF International certifies water treatment devices as effective in removing specific contaminants. You can search for certified water treatment devices on [NSF's website](#).

[Download our Water Treatment information sheet](#) to learn about the different types of treatment options available. Discuss treatments options with your water treatment professional.



**NEW! Prefer a digital version of our Water Treatment information sheet?**

Click on the image or visit our website to use our [Water Treatment learning module](#). This easy-to-use interactive guide shows you possible treatments for specific contaminants.

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## Hotline HOT Topic: For the record...

### **How can I find my well records?**

Well records (also known as the well log, well completion report, or drilling report), usually include a reference number for the well, the date the well was drilled, the well contractor, the well owner at the time of construction, location of the well, and various construction details such as drilling method used, depth of the well, depth and type of casing (lining of your well/visible pipe aboveground), and depth and size of the pump. Most states require well contractors to file these records when a new well is drilled and many states have searchable databases to retrieve this information electronically. Local health departments may also keep a copy of these records. If you need help locating your well records [contact the wellcare® Hotline](#).

If your well is older (20+ years), well records may not be available for your well. Not to worry! You can write down all your well information in our **Well**

**Owner's Manual.** Get your free copy by emailing your name and address to [info@wellcarehotline.org](mailto:info@wellcarehotline.org) or [download it from our website](#).

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## 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!](#)

Connect with us

