



FALL 2024

wellcare® Hotline: 888-395-1033

Dear Well Owners Network Member:

Fall is just around the corner! We don't know about you, but we're excited about all the fall activities, watching the leaves change color, pumpkin picking, and s'more! In this newsletter, we will cover some important topics that will help you through the fall and the beginning of winter. So, keep reading so you can be "well" prepared for the coming months! We have also included an autumn-inspired, fun activity for the young'uns to do this season - color-changing flowers!

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®](https://www.wellcare.org) Hotline can help! Contact the [wellcare®](https://www.wellcare.org) Hotline at 888-395-1033 or [wellcarehotline.org](https://www.wellcarehotline.org). Don't forget to like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/wellcare), follow us on [X \(formerly Twitter\)](https://twitter.com/wellcare), and subscribe to our [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/wellcare) for videos, extra tips, industry news, and more!

Best Practices for Your Water Well

Our infographics on, "*Best Practices for Your Water Well*", will help you keep your water well in excellent condition as well as help you to protect groundwater resources. Remember, it's imperative to have your well inspected every 5 years. Practicing water conservation is also critical to elongate your water well's lifespan and your septic system's lifespan (more about that later in this newsletter).

To see the full-size infographic for above-ground pumps, click [here](#). Or maybe you have a submersible pump? If you do, click [here](#)! For more information on best practices, [water conservation](#), and [well maintenance](#) - visit our [wellcare® Info Sheets webpage](#).

The [wellcare®](#) Hotline can also help! Our friendly staff members are available to answer your questions and provide you with any information you need to maintain a safe water supply. Contact us by calling 888-395-1033 or chat with us live at [wellcarehotline.org](#).

Above-ground Pump



Best Practices For Your Water Well

Maintenance

- Visually inspect your wellhead and other well components that are above ground several times a year
- Have your well inspected by a licensed well contractor every 5 years or immediately if you have no record
- Test your well water at least annually. If there are any noticeable changes test right away
- If you have water treatment, have those systems maintained per your water treatment professional or manufacturer's recommendations

Protecting Your Well

- Store any chemicals, fuel, paints, etc. away from your well
- Make sure the ground around your well slopes down away from your wellhead to avoid puddling
- Allow only grass to grow around your well. Other plants can have longer roots that may damage well casing
- Do not pile leaves, snow, or anything around your well. Consider adding a fiberglass marker to help with locating the well
- Keep heavy equipment and vehicles off your lawn to avoid accidental damage to your well
- Inspect and pump septic tanks every 3-5 years or as recommended by your septic service to avoid leaks and potential contamination to your well

Additional Tips

- Have any abandoned wells properly sealed per your state or localities requirements
- Always contact your licensed well contractor for repairs
- Keep records of maintenance, test results, and repairs

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Submersible Pump



Best Practices For Your Water Well

Maintenance

- Visually inspect your wellhead and other well components that are above ground several times a year
- Have your well inspected by a licensed well contractor every 5 years or immediately if you have no record
- Test your well water at least annually. If there are any noticeable changes test right away
- If you have water treatment, have those systems maintained per your water treatment professional or manufacturer's recommendations

Protecting Your Well

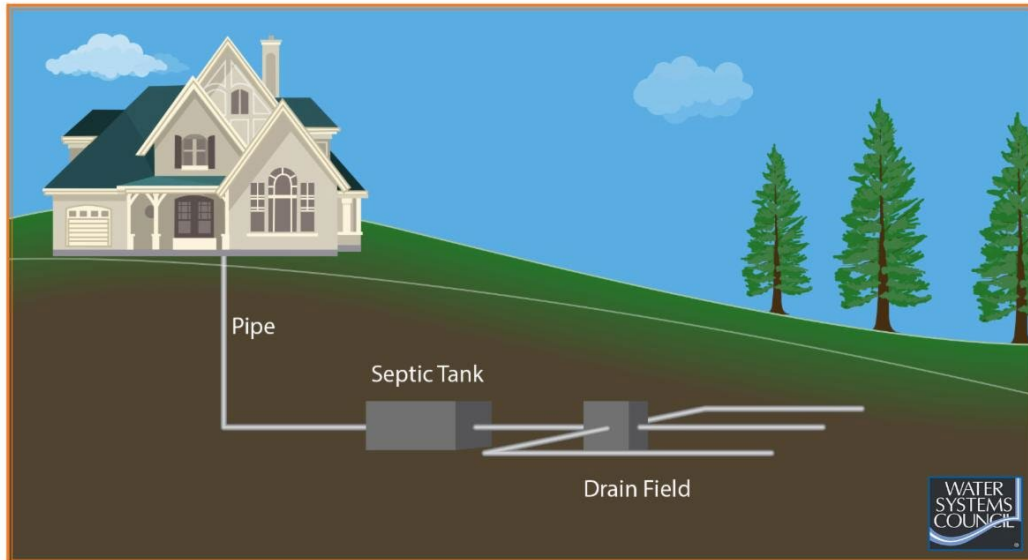
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Septic Smart Week



SepticSmart Week is September 16-20, 2024

SepticSmart Week reminds us of the importance of caring for and maintaining our septic systems. Just like water well systems, septic systems require regularly scheduled maintenance to ensure they are functioning properly.

Septic System Maintenance

It's important to create a septic maintenance log and keep it with your well maintenance log or download a free copy from [NOWRA's website](#).

Proper maintenance of a septic system includes:

- Regular inspection every 1 to 2 years
- Having the system pumped every 3 to 5 years, depending on demand
- Conserving water to reduce the amount of demand placed on the system and prolong its functional life

Demand on a septic system is based on:

- The number of people in your household
- The amount of wastewater generated
- The volume of solids
- The size of your tank

Protecting Your Septic System

Everyone in the household needs to consider what is flushed down the drain into the septic system. Avoid flushing items that can clog the system or chemicals that can contaminate ground and surface water. This courtesy can help reduce damage to the natural function of the septic system.

DO NOT flush grease, fats, oils, bandages, feminine hygiene products, disposable diapers, disposable wipes (even wipes that say "flushable!"), paper towels, kitty litter, cigarette butts, coffee grounds, dental floss, hair, medicines, paint, pesticides, varnish, thinners, waste oil, or other chemicals. Ideally, **ONLY** water and household detergents are flushed into the system.

The septic system's drain field must also be protected. The following strategies are recommended to protect the field and prolong its functional life:

- **DO NOT** drive over the drain field with cars, trucks, or heavy equipment.
- **DO NOT** plant trees or shrubbery in the drain field area as roots can plug or damage the wastewater distribution lines.
- **DO NOT** cover the drain field with hard surfaces such as concrete or asphalt. Grass is the best cover because it will help prevent erosion and help remove excess water.
- Divert surface runoff water from roofs, patios, driveways, and other areas away from the drain field.

A properly maintained septic system poses no threat to the groundwater that supplies a household well. However, wastewater from a failing septic system can carry contaminants such as nitrates, harmful bacteria, and viruses into groundwater and potentially the well.

Contact your septic service professional for assistance and maintenance. Download our [wellcare®](#) information sheet on [Your Septic System](#) for more information.

❄️ Freezing Temperatures On The Way! ❄️



There are some seasonal vacation homes or cabins that are serviced by a water well. These types of homes are typically not designed to be used during the winter. The plumbing systems and structures are not adequately insulated to withstand extreme cold. When preparing to close your vacation home for the season and leaving it vacant and unheated, you must winterize the plumbing to protect it from bursting in freezing temperatures. WSC recommends that you contact a licensed plumber to winterize your home. If you must winterize on your own, [follow these steps and instructions](#).

If you are in an area that is apt to reach or has ever experienced 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 entirely blocked. Water expands as it turns into ice which could result in bursting pipes, as well as ruining your well pump and other exposed well components. This can be an expensive problem to fix and a disastrous occurrence in the 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 allows 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 - 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 driveways, close to a driveway, or close to a road. Consider adding a fiberglass driveway marker to aid in locating the well. If your well gets covered by snow, you will be able to easily locate it and cautiously remove the snow from around it.

Incoming Inclement Weather Limiting You from Making Adjustments?

If your wellhead is exposed to outside elements and freezing temperatures are on the way, there are a few simple things you can do to help prevent damage to your water well. These include wrapping the well with insulation, blankets, towels, or other insulating materials you can find that will not cause damage to the wellhead.

To learn more about protecting your pipes, pump, tank, and for tips if your pipes or well system are already frozen, download our [wellcare®](#) information sheet on [Protecting Your Pipes and Well System From Freezing](#). You can also contact us by calling 888-395-1033 or chat with us live at [wellcarehotline.org](#).

Hotline HOT Topic: Iron Bacteria

Iron bacteria are small living organisms that naturally occur in soil, surface, and groundwater. These nuisance bacteria combine iron or manganese with oxygen to form deposits of "rust", bacterial cells, and slimy materials that stick to well casings, pumps, pipes, plumbing fixtures, and water appliances often damaging them. These bacteria can range in color from orange to brown, or even red in color.

Sometimes it floats in the water like orange algae and sometimes you may notice an orange slime that coats the inside of the toilet tank that can be wiped off with a finger. You may also notice an oily sheen on the water surface. Iron bacteria often produce unpleasant tastes and odors commonly reported as: "swampy", "oily", "cucumber", "sewage", "rotten vegetation", or "musty". The taste or odor may be more noticeable if the water is stagnant for some time. Iron bacteria does not produce hydrogen sulfide (the "rotten egg" smell) but can create an environment where sulfur bacteria can grow and produce hydrogen sulfide.

Although iron bacteria can affect how water tastes and smells, there are no associated health risks. However, iron bacteria can clog filters and screens reducing well yield and


the effectiveness of some water treatment devices. If you suspect contamination or experience illness, stop drinking and cooking with the water immediately, and do not resume use until testing has proven it to be safe to use. Always seek the advice of your medical doctor if you have any health concerns.

If you believe you have iron bacteria in your well water, you should have it tested. You can use our [interactive map](#) to find certified laboratories near you that can test your well water.

Download our [wellcare®](#) Information Sheet on [Iron Bacteria & Well Water](#) for additional tips.

Kidz Korner: Color Changing Flowers



Seeing the leaves  change in the fall is wonderful, isn't it?? Wouldn't it be fun if you could make some color-changing flowers right at home? Read the instructions below to find out how! Take some pictures of your color-changing flowers and post them on our social media pages with [#kidzkorner](#) if you want to show them off!

What you'll need:

- White Carnations (other white flowers work as well, such as daisies, but carnations can produce a faster result)
- Clear cups with water (at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of a cup of water in each)
- Food dye

Instructions:

1. Cut the flowers to a length that will stand in the cups and not tip them over

2. Fill the cups with water
3. Add about 30 drops of food coloring in total to each cup
4. Add 1-2 flowers to each cup
5. Check the flowers every few hours and observe what you can see

Tip: For best results, wait 6-8 hours...24-72 hours is even better!

Did You Know?

You can see the color in the petals of the flowers because water is transported through the stem of the flower, up to the petals and leaves. After the water reaches the petals and leaves, it transpires (evaporates) out, but the dye is left behind. The more time that goes by, the more dye will end up in the petals! Pretty cool, huh?!



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



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