



Small Drinking Water Systems Newsletter

July 2017

Well System Owner/Operator Reference Sheet

SAMPLING

- Timing for sampling is outlined in your directive issued by the Health Unit
- Sample only water from the drinking water system. If you have treatment, only sample after treatment (e.g., UV light)
- Avoid contaminating samples by following sample technique instructions provided in the Small Drinking Water System (SDWS) package
- Keep water samples in a clean, cool area and submit as soon as possible
- Chlorine residual sampling – follow sampling times as outlined in your directive and keep a log with the chlorine levels and sample dates



REPORTING ADVERSE WATER SAMPLES

- Contact the Health Unit at 519-376-9420, choose option 3
- Discuss results and next steps (i.e., corrective actions, re-sampling) with your Public Health Inspector
- Complete Section 2 of '[Corrective Action and Issue Resolution](#)' forms and fax to the Health Unit at 519-376-6310



WATER SYSTEM – GENERAL

- Review and understand owner and operator responsibilities and contact your Public Health Inspector for clarification
- Maintain your system and treatment equipment
- Do not change treatment or alter the system without consulting your Public Health Inspector
- Ensure there is always a designated 'owner' and 'operator' of the system that are responsible for the sampling and maintenance of the system
- More information can be found in reference materials in the SDWS package given to the owner or operator
- Inform your Public Health Inspector of changes in ownership or operator or contact information changes (i.e., phone numbers and addresses)



For more information or to contact us:
visit publichealthgreybruce.on.ca
or call: 519-376-9420



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is it important to have safe drinking water?

Did you know that as of December 1, 2008, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) has oversight of small drinking water systems (SDWS) in Ontario? The MOHLTC has prepared a small drinking water system package to help you become familiar with the changes to Ontario's drinking water legislation. Call the Health Unit to request a package.

How does drinking water become contaminated?

Water can become contaminated with:

- Biological organisms, such as bacteria, parasites and viruses;
- Chemical agents, such as nitrates and lead;
- Toxins created by algae in surface water.

Does the water source affect contamination?

If your drinking water comes from a lake, stream, reservoir or surface water, it can become contaminated in a number of ways. Rain water, melting snow and other drainage carry impurities into surface water sources. Common examples are bacteria and chemicals from farm animal activity, sewage run-off from malfunctioning septic systems or industrial discharges.

Surface water sources are unsafe for drinking, unless the water is filtered and treated to destroy harmful micro-organisms.

If you get your drinking water from a well, contaminants may enter through cracks in the casing, poorly fitted lids or other structural faults. Wells can become contaminated with bacteria, nitrates or other chemicals if they are close to sources of pollution.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I keep my drinking water safe?

PROTECT your drinking water at the source. :

- Identify possible contaminants such as Run-off from farming activities and malfunctioning septic systems;
- Keep these contaminants away from your water source;
- Ensure your well is soundly built to keep out contaminants.

MONITOR your drinking water system regularly.

- Have a professional lab test your water regularly;
- Check your directive to see how often to test drinking water;
- Check treatment equipment, particularly if chlorine is used to disinfect water.

TREAT your water with a disinfection system if lab results show unacceptable levels of contamination. This is especially important for surface water sources.

MAINTAIN your drinking water system.

- Take good care of the pipes, pumps, valves, storage tanks, reservoirs, meters and fittings;
- Check your entire system from the water source to the tap;
- Consider a preventative maintenance program. It is always best to stop the problem before it starts;
- If you use chlorine to disinfect your water, test regularly. Kits that test the water quality are available from local suppliers;
- Check your equipment regularly to make sure it works properly.

NOTIFY the public when you have identified a problem with your SDWS, whether it is a poor water sample test result or equipment that is not working properly.

- Post notices to get the word out;
- Post instructions at all taps;
- Discuss the problem with your Public Health Inspector.

Well water may not require treatment if the well is secure and regular samples show acceptable water quality.

- Consult with professional suppliers to identify and install the appropriate methods for treatment where required.

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