

DOMESTIC WELL CONTAMINATION?

KNOWING YOUR OPTIONS

What happens when you find contaminants in your well? A proactive response to the presence of contamination in your well can help prevent illness, mitigate any liability you may have, and may result in identifying an offsite source of contamination, who may be responsible to pay for actions taken to mitigate contaminant concentrations at your well.

RĒSN can help you understand your rights, obligations, and options to address contamination and assist you in the consideration of all your options: from taking no action, to installing treatment, to connection to new source.



Typical above-ground portion of a domestic potable well.

New Jersey's Private Well Testing Act

In accordance with the Private Well Testing Act (PWTA) and the PWTA rules (N.J.A.C. 7:9E), potable samples from private wells are to be collected and analyzed as part of a real estate transaction or every 5-years by the owner of a leased property. Samples must be analyzed by a certified laboratory; collection of the sample may be done by the laboratory or an authorized representative.

Results of the analysis are compared to the PWTA Standards and reported to the person who requested the test, and the NJDEP. If a parameter exceeds a standard, notification to the local health authority is also required. The health authority may notify nearby owners of potable wells that contaminants may be present in the vicinity.

Contamination in Your Domestic Well

If analytical data reports that one or more testing parameters exceed drinking water standards, the best course of action to take is to (1) get advice regarding your options, (2) learn as much as possible about the contaminants, the regulations, and your rights and responsibilities, and (3) find out if there is a potential source of contamination nearby.

In some cases, the standard exceeded may be a *secondary standard* based on aesthetics and not long-term health effects and may not need direct intervention. In other cases, it may be a good idea to take some action to prevent those using the water source from exposure to the contamination in the water. Actions can include *no action*, *temporary replacement of drinking water*, *installation of a treatment system*, or *connection to a municipal or other community water source*.

If there is any potential source of the contamination at the property, the person responsible for that contamination, or the property owner





Typical residential point of entry treatment system

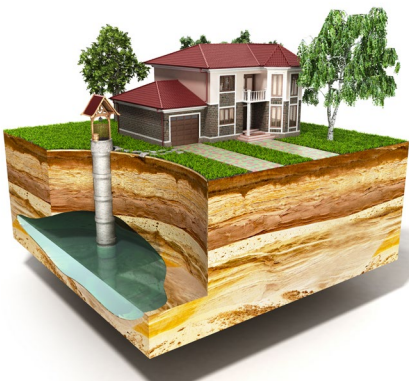
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should take appropriate actions to remove that source of contamination. If there is no source on the property, a review of the area surrounding the property may be reviewed for potential sources. A person responsible for an offsite source, may be responsible for paying for the actions you may take for your well.

Not using your well anymore?

Wells that are no longer used for any purpose are considered *abandoned* and must be properly sealed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:9D - *Well Construction and Maintenance; Sealing of Abandoned Wells*. Typically, this is done by a Licensed Well Driller, who will physically seal the well, and completes the required decommissioning reporting.

Get Smart

Here are some links to resources you can use to help you make decisions.

- NJ's Private Well Testing Act https://www.state.nj.us/dep/watersupply/pw_pwta.html
- List or Required paramters for Private Well Testing https://www.state.nj.us/dep/watersupply/pwta/pwta_list.htm
- PWTA Frequently Asked Qustions https://www.state.nj.us/dep/watersupply/pwta/pwta_faq.htm
- PWTA Standards <https://www.state.nj.us/dep/watersupply/pwta/pdf/mcl-table.pdf>
- N.J.A.C. 7:26D Well Construction and Maintenance; Sealing of Abandoned Wells https://www.nj.gov/dep/rules/rules/njac7_9d.pdf

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