



Heartland Health Region

Healthy people, Healthy Communities, and Service Excellence in an Enduring Health System.



Water Treatment for Shallow Wells

Is my well at risk of being contaminated by bacteria and parasites?

If you have a well that is less than 50 feet deep or use a sand-point well, it may become contaminated with bacteria and parasites when it rains and after spring melt. Shallow sand and gravel aquifers are the most likely to have contamination with parasites and bacteria. Large diameter wells in sand/gravel soils are more at risk than drilled wells in clay soils.

Where can I find the well drillers report for my well?

Well drillers are required to submit logs when wells are drilled. Ground water information including well logs is available on the Water Security Agency website <https://www.wsask.ca/Water-Info/Ground-Water/Information-Services/>. Well logs may also be searched online at: <https://gis.wsask.ca/html5A/Index.html>

Does shock chlorinating a shallow well make it safe to drink?

Shock chlorination of your well as part of regular maintenance is recommended but shock chlorination does not offer any on-going health protection to your well. Shock chlorination controls the growth of certain bacteria, and helps reduce the slime build up in your well. If your well is shallow you should install a treatment device to make sure that your water is safe throughout the whole year

How often should I sample my well water at home?

You should sample your well for bacteria and nitrates twice per year, especially in the spring. We recommend that individuals test for minerals in their well every 5 years. General Chemistry and Health and Toxicity testing panels from the water lab will provide test results for minerals and metals within your well water. Since water quality changes over time, a good water result from many years ago does not mean that your water is safe to drink now.

What kind of treatment system should I have for a shallow well?

If you want to remove bacteria and parasites from your well, look for a reverse osmosis (NSF Standard 53 for cysts) or an absolute 1 micron filter (NSF Standard 53 for cysts) with an ultraviolet light (NSF Standard 55 Class A (40,000 uwsec/cm²)) system.

If you want to remove nitrates, bacteria and parasites, look for a reverse osmosis (NSF Standard 58 and/or NSF Standard 53 for cysts) with an ultraviolet light (NSF Standard 55 Class A (40,000 uwsec/cm²))

You may also use a distiller (NSF Standard 62) to remove nitrates, bacteria and parasites.

Make sure you purchase certified equipment. Many reverse osmosis systems are meant to be used for treated municipal (town, city) water, not well water. For more information on Certification visit <http://www.saskh20.ca/PDF-WaterCommittee/CertificationWaterTreatmentDevices%20.pdf>

Community Health Services ❖ P.O. Box 1300, Rosetown, SK S0L 2V0

Tel: (306) 882-2672 Ext. 3, Option 3 ❖ Fax:(306) 882-6474

Visit the Heartland website at www.hrha.sk.ca

What if my well has too much minerals? Where can I purchase a water treatment system?

We recommend that individuals consult with a private contractor/water treatment specialist on treatment options. Treatment devices should be certified by NSF to remove the contaminant of concern. For information on how to choose a treatment system visit:

<http://www.saskh20.ca/PDFWaterCommittee/ChoosingAWaterTreatmentSystem%20.pdf>

What are Point of Use and Point of Entry Water Treatment Systems?

Point of use (POU) and point of entry (POE) systems are used to treat water that may pose a risk to your health. A point of use system fits under the kitchen sink, and provides water to one tap. A point of entry system treats the water for the whole house.

Where can I learn more about ground water?

Websites that include useful information for homeowners includes:

Sask H2O - Water Information for Private and Health Regulated Clients

http://www.saskh20.ca/WaterInformationFactSheet_Drinking_Private_Health.asp

Saskatchewan Health – Water quality and testing.

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/environment-public-health-and-safety/environmental-health/water-quality-and-testing>

Heartland Health Region - General water information and contact information for Public Health Inspectors

<http://hrha.sk.ca/programs-services/population-health-services/public-health-inspection/>

CDC - Private Ground Water Site

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/private/wells/index.html>