



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

State Public Health Laboratories

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IF YOUR WATER SAMPLE IS REPORTED “UNSATISFACTORY FOR DRINKING”:

Discontinue use of the supply for drinking and culinary purposes. Although unsatisfactory results do not conclusively confirm the presence of pathogenic (disease-causing) organisms in the water, these results should alert one to such a possibility.

Provide emergency disinfection. Disinfect all water used for drinking or culinary purposes by:

1. Boiling vigorously for one (1) full minute before use; or
2. Chemical disinfection: add two (2) drops (double the amount for cloudy or colored water) of regular household chlorine bleach (5.25 percent chlorine) to each quart of water used. Mix thoroughly and allow to stand for 30 minutes before use.

Check and correct any above-ground structural defect of the water supply that would allow surface water to enter the supply, such as defective seals, covers, surface drainage toward the well, etc.

Disinfect the water supply and distribution system in accordance with Department of Health and Senior Services form LAB-10D “Disinfection of Contaminated Wells and Cisterns”.

General Procedure:

1. Introduce the prescribed amount of disinfectant (chlorine) into the well.
2. Open all faucets in the distribution system and let the water run until a distinct chlorine odor is noted. Flush toilets also.
3. Turn off all faucets and allow the water to stand in the system for at least four (4) hours or preferably overnight.
4. Open the faucets and allow the water to run until a suitable level of chlorine is reached (approximately 0.5 ppm) or until no chlorine odor is present.

In approximately 5-7 days, resample the supply and submit it to the State Public Health Laboratory. Remember that inaccurate results may arise from an improper sampling point. A mixing-type faucet with an aerator, drain-back yard hydrant or frost-proof faucet may produce a questionable result due to contamination introduced at the point of collection. The sampling point should be a single cold-water faucet with the shutoff valve near the spout opening. Follow closely the directions found in the sampling kit.

Transit time greater than 30 hours from the time of collection may also affect results. Sample should have first-class postage to assure fast delivery. Check with your local public health department for the availability of free courier service to the State Public Health Laboratory.

Initial “Unsatisfactory” results should be followed up with two (2) consecutive “Satisfactory” samples taken on a weekly basis after disinfection of the water supply. “Unsatisfactory” results obtained after proper disinfection may indicate that contamination is entering the supply due to insufficient casing depth, absence of seals or improper seals at the bottom and top of casing, rust holes in the casing, etc., which can only be corrected by reconstructing the well.

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