



HOWELL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

180 S. Kentucky
West Plains Missouri 65775
417-256-7078 * Fax: 417-256-1179
<http://www.howellcountyhealthdept.com>



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

PROCEDURE FOR SHOCKING A WELL

SHOCKING AND CLOSING THE BLEACH SOLUTION UP IN THE SYSTEM

- 1) You will need to know how deep the well is.
- 2) For every 200 feet of depth you will want to add a half-gallon of **UNSCENTED HOUSEHOLD BLEACH. DO NOT ADD UNTIL THIS PROCEDURE SAYS TO.**
- 3) Remove as much water (**at your kitchen sink**) as necessary to make coffee or whatever you will need for breakfast, because you will be holding the bleach solution in the system either overnight, or for at least 6-8 hours during the daytime. You will also want to **remove any filters** (paper type, activated carbon, etc.) that are in the system's main water line before starting this procedure and by-pass any softening or reverse osmosis (RO) units. Refer to your owner's manual to perform by-passing of a particular system.
- 4) Once you have determined how much **unscented household liquid bleach** you will need, and have removed enough water for drinking and for your morning's cooking then go to the well head and remove the casing cap. Doing this will allow you to look down into the well's casing.
- 5) With a garden hose close by (**for recirculation purposes**) you should pour the determine amount of bleach into the well. Turn on the water hose and rinse down the interior side of the casing with the water from the hose. You should begin to smell bleach, so do not get any of this water on your cloths. Rinse the inside of the casing really good allowing the water to run down the well's casing and back into the well. Turn the water off at the hose and replace the well casing's cap. The bleach water that runs out of this hose will kill the grass, so direct the hose end to grass that you want killed, or to an area where no grass is growing.
- 6) Go into the house and at each individual sink or faucet and turn the cold water tap on (**one sink at a time**) until you smell bleach and then turn it off. You can flush the toilet until you smell bleach. You should put some cold water into the washing machine until you smell bleach. If you have any garden hose hydrants that come off of the house you will want to turn them on until you smell bleach and then shut them off. **LOCK THIS BLEACH SOLUTION UP IN THE SYSTEM FOR SIX TO EIGHT HOURS!**



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OPENING THE SYSTEM AFTER SHOCKING THE WELL

- 1) Go to the well and turn on the garden hose and direct the water into an area that you do not care if the grass dies, or where there is no grass. Do this until you do not smell any bleach. Shut off the hose.
- 2) Go into the house and open the cold water taps until you do not smell any bleach. Flush the toilets. Fill the washing machine with cold water until you smell no bleach in the water and then dump the water. **The first laundry load should probably be whites, so any bleach trapped in the cold water feed to the water heater would be eliminated from the system.** Open any hose bib(s) on the outside of the house until you smell no bleach. Once all this is done you should have good smelling and tasting water.
- 3) You can repeat this procedure as often as you feel it is needed, however, if the problem persists then you might decide to contact a well driller and discuss your problem with them. **Most people perform this bleach shocking procedure when they change the clocks back or forward. Some people annually shock their well as close to the middle of the year as possible. You can choose what works best for you.** If you have any questions please contact the Howell County Health Department at 417-256-7078

Why it is not recommended to dump all of the bleach water into your septic system. Bleach water can sometimes kill the bacterial action found in your septic tank, so flushing as much of the bleach water as possible onto the ground (**surface area**) helps to limit this upset if any.

NOTE: Before doing this procedure be sure to by-pass the water softening unit and remove any in-line filters. Once the procedure is completed (bleach is flushed from system) you can reinstall or change-out (get a new filter) the in-line filter, and turn the water softener back on.