

How to Ready your Well for the Next Flood: Preparation, Evacuation and Return Home

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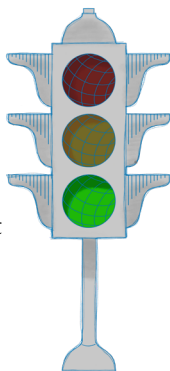
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You can take action to better prepare your well for a flood even as you are making plans to evacuate. Complete the following during your evacuation planning.

PREPARE

- ❑ Case the wellhead to above any previous flood level. You will likely need assistance from a licensed well driller. Also, verify that water cannot seep into the well through the top of the wellhead or well cap.
- ❑ Inspect your well to make sure it is properly sealed. If there is a pad, check for any cracks and repair them with bentonite or cement. There may be cracks in the casing below the surface that you would not be able to see. Testing the well water for fecal coliform or *E. coli* bacteria is one way to determine if there are subsurface cracks as the presence of these bacteria indicate that surface water has entered the well. A licensed well driller can be hired to check for these issues.
- ❑ Locate a nearby water testing lab to obtain sample collection bottles and instructions for testing your water when you return. Frequently, the health department can test your water for bacterial contamination. Your county Extension agent or local groundwater conservation district (GCD) can also put you in touch with laboratories that test water quality. Another source is the [National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program](#), which is

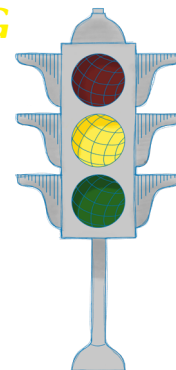


a national accreditation agency for potable water labs.

- ❑ Locate the log/well report completed when the well was established and store a copy of it in a safe place that will be accessible if you evacuate. If you don't have a copy of the well log, check with your local GCD or the [Texas Water Development Board Groundwater Data Viewer](#).
- ❑ Locate contact information for [licensed well drillers](#) in the area. Contact them before evacuating if you think your well will need service immediately after the flood.

WHEN EXPECTING TO EVACUATE

- ❑ Store adequate bottled water as you should not drink, brush teeth, or cook with the well water if your well is submerged even temporarily.
- ❑ If you plan to attempt to disinfect your well yourself upon your return, learn how to bypass water softeners and household water filters if any are attached to your water system. Read and have the manufacturer's instructions easily available on how to disinfect bypassed water softeners and household water filters.

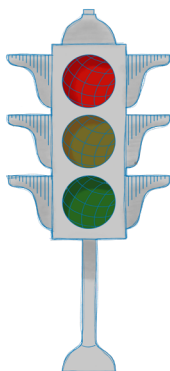


Also, have these basic shock chlorination materials available before the flood because these supplies may be difficult or time-consuming to acquire following a flood:

- » A copy of the “[Shock chlorination of wells](#)” publication
- » Unscented, household liquid bleach
- » Clean 5-gallon bucket
- » 5 gallons of uncontaminated water
- » Garden hose that reaches from an outdoor faucet to the well
- » Protective goggles and gloves
- » Wrench for well access
- » Funnel
- » Hose
- » Sample collection bottles from local water testing laboratory

BEFORE EVACUATING

- ❑ If your water well system is in an exposed area, cover and secure components to help protect them from flying debris or inundation.
- ❑ Fill up the pressure tank as much as possible.
- ❑ Turn off electricity to the well.
- ❑ If you have an aerobic septic system, turn off the electricity for the system. No special preparations are recommended for conventional septic systems.



AFTER RETURNING

- ❑ Have your well water tested and found suitable before using it again.
- ❑ It is strongly recommended to hire a licensed water well driller to shock chlorinate the well if it has been flooded. A water well driller will have access to more effective products and will have equipment and experience that a typical well owner would not.
- ❑ If you plan to attempt to disinfect your well yourself, carefully follow the instructions in the fact sheet “[Shock chlorination of wells](#)” (ESC-059).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program

https://www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/certified_labs

How to disinfect a water well through shock chlorination.

By D. E. Boellstorff, D. M. Gholson, and M. C. Dozier. 2019. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service ESC-059, 3 pp. Available: <http://twon.tamu.edu/media/385857/esc059.pdf>

Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (provides list of licensed well drillers)

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/LicenseSearch/>

Texas Groundwater Protection Committee

<https://tgpc.texas.gov/>

Texas Water Development Board Groundwater

Data Viewer <https://www2.twdb.texas.gov/apps/WaterDataInteractive/GroundwaterDataViewer/?map=sdr>

Texas Well Owner Network

<http://twon.tamu.edu/>

Acknowledgment

Support for this publication is provided through Clean Water Act§319(h)
Nonpoint Source funding from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Agreement No. 17-10.

Photo by Kristine Uhlman, former Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Program Specialist–Water Resources

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

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