

PROTECTING YOUR WELLHEAD

The most visible portion of your drinking water system is the wellhead, the structure built over your well to protect its various parts. By protecting your wellhead, you will help ensure the quality of your drinking water supply.

Maintaining Your Wellhead

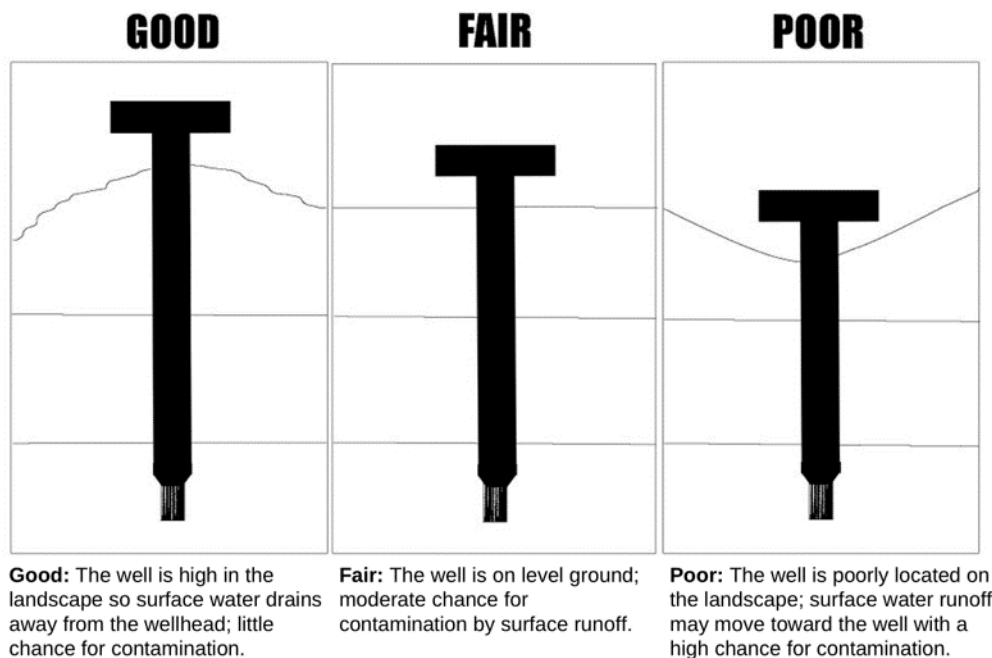
The wellhead protects the well casing, which is the lining of the well, and the well cap, which provides a tight-fitting seal at the top of the well. The wellhead is your first line of defense to prevent pollutants from penetrating your drinking water system. Inspect your wellhead regularly to make sure these components are in good condition.

To keep your well safe, hire a licensed well contractor to perform any new well construction or modification, or to close an old well.

Take care when working or mowing around your well. It is easy to damage the wellhead with heavy equipment, which will jeopardize the sanitary protection of your well, permitting contaminants to enter the water supply. Don't pile snow, leaves or other materials around the well, where they can carry pollutants into the system. Consider adding a fiberglass marker to help with locating the well during fall and winter months.

When landscaping around your well or siting a new well, make sure the top of the well sits at least one foot above the ground. Slope the ground down and away from your well for proper drainage (see image below).

Well Location & Surface Drainage



Ensure Clean Drinking Water

Some common household activities can actually threaten the quality of your drinking water. Even small spills of pesticides, fertilizers or fuels near your well can seep into the ground and contaminate the water. Use these tips to help ensure clean drinking water:

- Avoid mixing or using pesticides, fertilizers, herbicides, degreasers, fuels or other pollutants within 100 feet of your well. When siphoning water for these tasks, be careful to avoid back-flow back into the well system.
- Conduct a quick visual check for activities that might threaten to enter your drinking water system at or near the wellhead which may include the following: septic tanks, lateral fields, cesspools, pit privy; chemical storage areas, machinery maintenance areas, waste piles, lagoons, sewers; underground storage tanks for chemicals, fertilizers, or petroleum products, above-ground tanks for chemicals, fertilizers or petroleum products; animal pens or feedlots and manure storage areas.
- If your existing well is located near these activities, you may need to test your water quality more often than once a year. Try to move the risky activities away from your well. Check that your well is located on your property according to standards set by the state, county or locality. These regulations are designed to protect the integrity of your water supply.
- You should also inspect and pump septic systems on your property as often as recommended by your local health department or septic service, usually every 3-5 years. Failing septic systems can leach contaminants into the water supply.

More Information on Protecting Your Wellhead

For more information on protecting your wellhead, contact the well contractor who installed your well or locate a licensed well contractor in your area using our [interactive map](#). If you need assistance, contact the [wellcare®](#) Hotline at 888-395-1033.



Information to help maintain and protect your water well system:

[wellcare®](#) is a program of the [Water Systems Council \(WSC\)](#). WSC is the only national organization solely focused on protecting the health and water supply of more than 13 million households nationwide who depend on private wells.

This publication is one of more than 100 [wellcare®](#) information sheets available FREE at www.watersystemscouncil.org.

Well owners and others with questions about wells and well water can contact the [wellcare®](#) Hotline at 1-888-395-1033 or visit www.wellcarehotline.org to fill out a contact form or chat with us live!

JOIN THE WELLCARE® WELL OWNERS NETWORK!

By joining the FREE [wellcare®](#) Well Owners Network, you will receive regular information on how to maintain your well and protect your well water.

Contact us at 1-888-395-1033 or visit www.wellcarehotline.org to join!