

Alabama Home *A*Syst

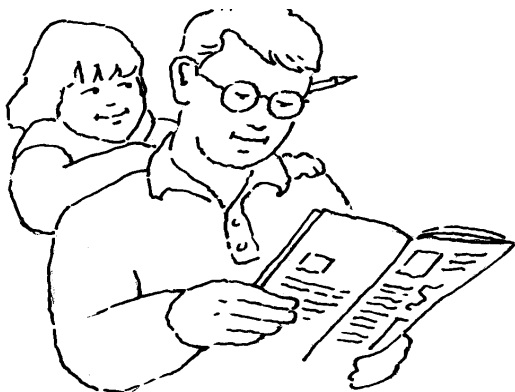
Home Assessment System

Why be concerned? Water is necessary to support life. Water makes up about 70 percent of the liquids found in our body. We must drink fresh water every day, and we depend on water to cook, clean, water our plants, fill swimming pools, flush toilets, and many other things. It is important that our water be safe and clean. The water in our homes comes from either a community supply or a private well or spring.

The information here can help you better understand if your home drinking water is clean and safe to drink. The following topics are covered:

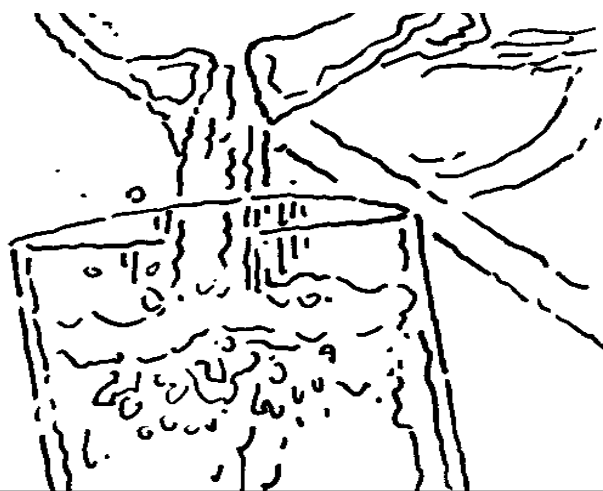
- community water systems
- private water supplies (well water)

Read the information, fill out the checklists, and use the information given to make an action plan to help you keep your drinking water healthy!



Home Drinking Water

CRD-80

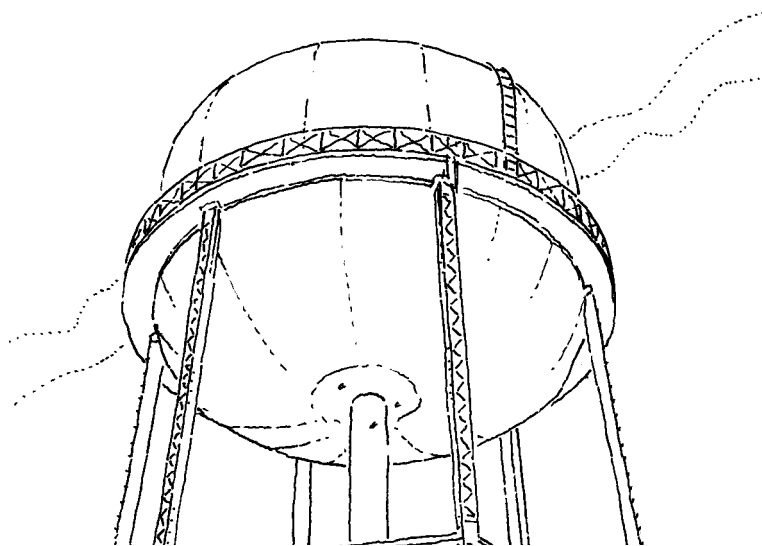


How to Use Alabama Home*A*Syst

Alabama Home*A*Syst is a program you can use to help you protect the health and safety of your home environment. In this series of booklets are do-it-yourself checklists (self-assessments) to help you find out if you have a healthy home. Answer yes or no to the statements on these checklists. After the assessments, there is some information about each statement. Alabama Home*A*Syst is a voluntary and confidential program that is designed to help provide you with useful information so you can take the correct actions around your home. If you need more help with any topic, there is a list of phone numbers and Web sites at the end of each publication.

Community Water Systems

A public utility that provides water on a full-time basis to 25 or more people is called a community water system. In the United States, if you get your water from a community system, you can be almost certain that your water is safe. Water from community systems has been tested for more than 80 different chemicals. Some of these chemicals are unsafe to drink; others are just a nuisance—this means the water may taste bad or be discolored, but it is not unhealthy to drink. Community water is treated (cleaned) to meet drinking water standards. A law called the Safe Drinking Water Act (created in 1974) requires all community water suppliers to test and treat water so that it meets certain safety standards. Since 1999, your water company must also tell you the results of these tests (they are usually mailed each year). To get a copy of your local water tests, call your local water company.



Even though community water is usually safe before it reaches your home, there are ways it can become contaminated inside your home. For example, if you have older pipes, they may be made of lead. Water can pick up lead from pipes and plumbing fixtures. Or, if you have filters on your water supply, these filters can get dirty and contaminate your water if you don't change the filters often enough.

Is there lead in my drinking water?

Lead in Pipes. Lead can enter drinking water from lead pipes or lead solder used to seal copper pipes. You may have lead pipes or lead solder if your home was built before 1988. The U.S. government banned lead in pipes and solder in 1986 and in storage tanks in 1988. Old water mains in your community may contain lead pipes, lead unions, or valves with lead weights. Lead pipes are usually a dull gray color and easily scratched.

There are some simple things you can do to keep lead out of water even if you do have lead pipes. Do not use hot tap water for drinking or cooking. Hot water dissolves out more lead from pipes than does cold water. If your water is soft, it is even more likely to dissolve lead from pipes. If you haven't used the tap water in a long time, run cold water for awhile to flush out the lines.

**Lead is poisonous.
It is especially toxic
to children under the
age of 6.**

To get your child tested for lead, call your family doctor, your county health department, or the Alabama Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Project (ACLPPP) at (334) 206-2966 or www.adph.org/aclppp/.

Where is your home located?

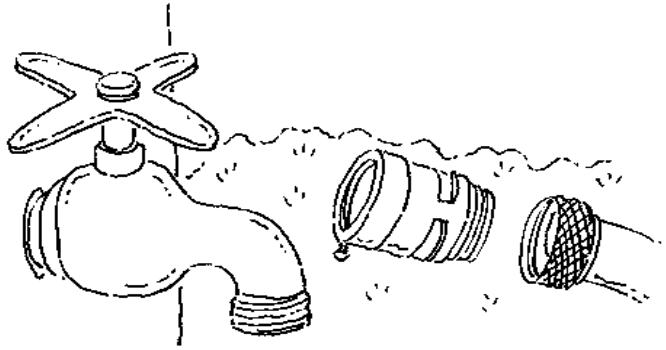
If your home is near the end of a branch line far from the water treatment plant (for example, at the end of a dead-end street), you may have more problems with contaminants in your line. Do you ever notice rust or sediment in your water, or does it sometimes have a bad odor or taste? Community water systems treat water with chlorine to kill bacteria and add other chemicals to help reduce corrosion from pipes. At the end of a water line, these compounds added at the plant may be less concentrated than at the beginning of the line. This would allow odor problems to increase (because of less chlorine), and metals to increase (due to less corrosion-preventing chemicals). Also, sediment can build up in the water lines. Your water company is supposed to occasionally flush out the lines to help keep your drinking water clean.

How do I know if my community drinking water is safe?

Water Reports. More than 90 percent of community water systems meet the Environmental Protection Agency's standards for tap water quality. Beginning in 1999, the EPA required that customers of community water systems be given a report that lists contaminants found in their water supply (the CCR Rule). These reports are called Consumer Confidence Reports (CCRs). Although no drinking water is completely pure and some chemicals are actually added to the water, this report will list chemicals tested and levels found. Public water companies are required by law to inform their customers if the water is unsafe to drink. To view online information about your local drinking water, check the EPA Web site. Contact your water supplier to get a copy or see if your local system is listed online.

How do you protect the drinking water inside your home?

Use Backflow Prevention Devices. To prevent pollution of water lines, most community water systems, especially in larger cities, have installed backflow prevention devices on all water line connections. This is a gadget that prevents water flowing back into the line. For example, if you were using a sprayer on your garden hose that contains pesticides, a sudden decrease in water pressure might cause these contaminants to get sucked back into the line if a device was not on the line to prevent this.



Change Your Water Filters. If you have installed a water filter on your home water supply, make sure to change the filters according to the manufacturer's schedule. Some people don't like the taste of their water even though it may be perfectly safe to drink. Filters can remove colors, chlorine, odors, and other compounds that may taste bad. But, filters can grow bacteria after awhile, so it is important to keep them changed. Make sure NSF International has certified the filter, which means it has been properly tested for reliability. Certain filters may even remove some lead.

Electrical Ground Wires. No electrical ground wires should be connected to household plumbing. If so, this could lead to increased corrosion and a number of problems including leaks and water damage.

Visit EPA's Web site on drinking water: www.epa.gov/safewater
(click on your state for your drinking water quality)

Community Drinking Water

A Self-Assessment

Fill out this self-assessment (a do-it-yourself checklist) to help you find out about your home drinking water if you get your water from a community water system. For each statement or question, check **yes** or **no**. If you answer **yes**, you are doing the best actions to keep your home drinking water safe to drink. If you answer **no**, this does not necessarily mean your drinking water is not safe, but you may need to make some changes to avoid future problems. For each statement or question, more help is given under "Actions and Recommendations." For even more information, there is a list of helpful phone numbers and Web sites at the end of this chapter under "For More Information."

Write your **no** answers on the **Action Checklist**. List any changes you plan to make and pick a date to keep you on schedule. First, choose those actions that are inexpensive, easy to do, and most helpful to your family.



Lead and Your Drinking Water

Yes No

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| ----- | ----- | 1. My home was built after 1988. |
| ----- | ----- | 2. My home was built before 1988; however, my water has been tested for lead and there is no lead problem. |
| ----- | ----- | 3. My home is older than 1988 and has lead pipes or copper pipes with lead-based solder. I take the right actions to clear the pipes from lead. |
| ----- | ----- | 4. My home has lead pipes, but I only use cold water for drinking and cooking. |

Your Water Company

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| ----- | ----- | 5. My home water lines are located far from the water treatment plant, but the water company sometimes flushes out the water lines. |
| ----- | ----- | 6. I read and understand the water quality report I get each year from my water company. |

Taking Care of Your Drinking Water

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| ----- | ----- | 7. I have backflow prevention devices on outdoor faucets. |
| ----- | ----- | 8. I have a filter on my home water supply and I change it when necessary. |
| ----- | ----- | 9. No electrical ground wires are connected to my home plumbing. |

Actions and Recommendations

1. Newer homes do not have lead pipes. The U.S. government banned lead in pipes and solder in 1986 and in storage tanks in 1988.

2. Test your water for lead. A state-certified laboratory can test your water for lead. For information on lead in drinking water, call the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791 or the National Lead Information Center at (800) 424-LEAD.

3. Flush the pipes a couple of minutes before use. If you do have lead pipes or you have copper pipes with lead-based solder, you can reduce the amount of lead in your water. If you haven't used water in the sink for awhile, let the cold water run a minute or two. This helps to clear out any lead that has dissolved in water. Lead from pipes can dissolve into water that has been sitting in the pipes for many hours (especially if the water is slightly acidic).

4. Always use cold water for cooking and drinking. Never use hot water for cooking or drinking if you have lead in your plumbing system.

5. Location of your home. Your home may have more contaminants in the water if it is located far from the water treatment plant. Your water company should flush out the water lines from time to time to help keep your drinking water clean. If you see discolored water or it tastes bad, call your local water company.

6. Water reports available. Your community water supply must give you a report on the water every year. It will tell you what chemicals were found in your water and also tell you where your water comes from (such as a lake or river). Call your water company if you do not have this report.

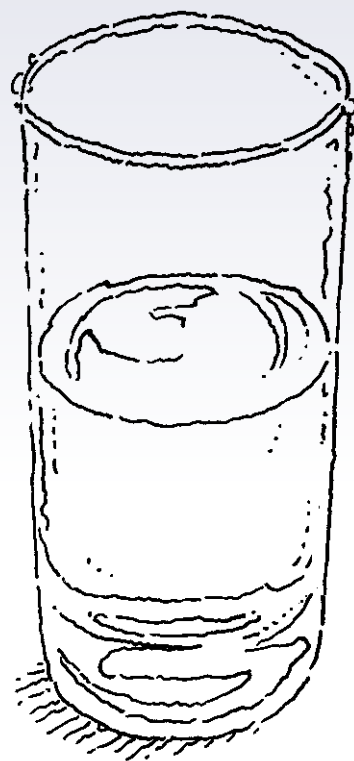
7. Put backflow prevention devices on your outdoor water faucets. These help keep water you use outside from getting sucked back through the hose into your drinking water supply. You can install these backflow prevention devices on your outdoor faucets if they are not present.

8. Replace water filters frequently. Filters may actually cause water problems if they get dirty and are not changed from time to time.

9. Electrical ground wires. Make sure you do not have any wires in your home grounded to water pipes.

Call the following to test your water for lead:

- Your county health department
- Your water company
- Your housing authority
- Your county Extension agent



Action Checklist

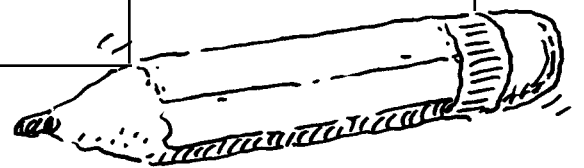
How Am I Doing?

Check over the assessment and make note of changes you might make to keep your drinking water clean and safe to drink. Remember, even though water from community systems is treated before it reaches your home, there are things you can do at your home to keep it safe to drink.

Pick at least one action you can do to take care of your water. Some actions may not cost a lot of money—for example, flushing out your pipes and using cold water if you have lead pipes. After filling out the self-assessment, record your **no** answers on the **Action Checklist**. List any actions or changes you plan to make and write down a date to keep you on schedule.

Drinking Water from a Community Water System

Write all No responses below.	What can you do to change?	Set a date for action
SAMPLE: I DON'T KNOW IF MY WATER HAS LEAD IN IT.	GET WATER TESTED FOR LEAD. CALL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT OR COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT FOR HELP.	SEPTEMBER 1

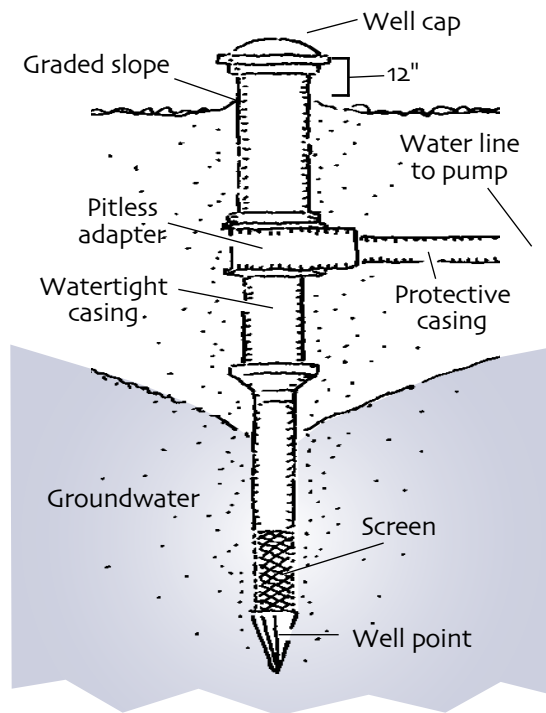


Private Water Supply

If you get your water from a private well or spring, it is your responsibility to take care of your water supply. If the well is built correctly and you take good care of it, well water can be very safe to drink. In fact, wells can provide a safe water supply for many years. However, wells can become contaminated if pollutants (such as pesticides or animal waste) get into the groundwater supply. Contaminants can also flow from your property to a neighbor's well if both wells get water from the same underground water supply. It is hard to clean up well water if it gets contaminated. The only choices are to treat the water after pumping it out, to drill a new well, or to find a new water source for your home.

Are you putting in a new well?

If so, use a licensed well driller to put in a new well. These contractors must follow state and local regulations for installing wells. For a list of licensed well contractors, contact the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (see listing at the end of this publication under “For More Information”), or look under water wells in your telephone book. If you use reputable contractors to install the well and test the water at the beginning, this should save you money in the long run and help you feel confident that your well water is safe to drink.



Well Cap. All wells should have a cap or seal at the well head to keep out surface water and other materials that could pollute the underground water supply.

Well Casing. The casing is a steel or plastic pipe that is installed when drilling a well. It protects the pump transport mechanism to the underground water supply. Cracks or holes at the surface or down the side of the casing are danger signs that could show a pathway for pollutants from the ground above the well to get into the groundwater. The space between the casing and the soil around it should be filled with grout.

If the casing moves when pushed against, chances are the seal has become loose and will need to be regouted to keep contaminants from moving to the water table between the casing and the drilled channel. If you hear water running back down the well when the pump is off, there could be a crack or hole in the casing or your well may not be cased to the water level. Make sure you check your well from time to time to make sure it is working properly. Use a licensed well contractor to check out your well every year.

Do you protect your well with backflow devices?

In some cases, water can flow backward through a hose and possibly carry pollutants down the well and into your water supply. This can happen if a well pump shuts down and creates a vacuum, which sucks the water back through the hose and into the well. This can be serious when a chemical sprayer is attached to the hose or the hose end is underwater (especially contaminated water). Backflow protection devices are available and should be installed on all outdoor faucets.

Where is your well located?

The best place for a well is uphill from any possible contamination sources. Storm water can carry pollutants with it when it runs downhill. If you have livestock, store or mix pesticides, or have a septic tank uphill from a well, pollutants from these areas are more likely to drain down towards the well. If the ground around your well has sunk over the years lower than the surrounding ground, try to build up the soil so that water will run off and not collect in a puddle next to the base of the well.

Location of Well. The location of your well is important. It is best that wells be located at least 200 feet from any possible pollution sources, such as septic systems. The following table lists ADEM recommendations for minimum distances away from structures for well placement.

Table 1

Projections or roofs of adjacent building	2 feet
Secondary electrical services	10 feet
Primary electrical services	75 feet
Cess pool or sewage lagoon	150 feet
Septic tank or field lines	100 feet
Barnyard	150 feet

Seal Unused Wells. Unused large diameter dug wells and cisterns, common on deserted rural property, are a physical hazard for small animals and children. All abandoned wells should be properly sealed or closed and marked to avoid damage from moving equipment and vehicles. Use a licensed well driller for advice since different types of wells require special equipment and sealing materials.

Hazardous Chemicals. Careless storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials (such as pesticides or oil) near the well site can pollute underground water by moving through the soil layers to reach groundwater. Rain water can also carry contaminants toward the well from roofs, animal feeding lots, chemical mixing areas, poorly working septic drain fields, and pesticides or fertilizers on farm fields, lawns, and gardens.

Groundwater is naturally filtered by layers of earth and fractured rock. It usually contains fewer impurities than surface water. However, tests for contaminants in wells have shown that not all of these materials are filtered or neutralized when polluted surface water drains through the soil to underground aquifers.

Never dump motor oil, gasoline, furniture polish, cleaning fluids, paint thinners, or other hazardous chemicals on your property. Refuel equipment over a hard surface so spills will not reach the soil. Caution should also be taken in the use and removal of underground fuel tanks. Take steps to prevent runoff and soil seepage from animal holding areas and manure piles that are sources of bacteria and nitrates that could contaminate your drinking water and the environment.

Test Your Well Water Every Year. Well water for drinking and household use should be tested at least once a year for the most common contaminants that could indicate a water quality problem:

- bacteria
- nitrates
- total dissolved solids (TDS)
- pH

Tests are also available that can provide information on hardness, iron, sodium, and chlorine content. Homesites that depend on wells in agricultural and industrial areas should consider tests for pesticides, petroleum products, industrial solvents, detergents, and other contaminants.

Water testing is by far the best way to monitor water quality and identify health risks. Use the test results to make a good decision on treatment options or other actions that may be necessary to provide your home with a safe water supply. Ask your neighbors about their well water tests to get an idea of the water quality in your area.

Some Contaminants Come From Nature.

Not all contaminants and impurities found in water from underground wells comes from activity at the ground surface. Some, such as calcium and magnesium, come from minerals dissolved from rocks in the earth. These minerals are often the cause of hard water. Underground water movement may also introduce suspended particles of fine sand or grit giving a cloudy appearance also known as turbidity. Water from older wells with lead pipes, soldered joints, or brass parts in the pump may carry impurities due to corrosion of these parts. Groundwater is often acidic and somewhat corrosive.

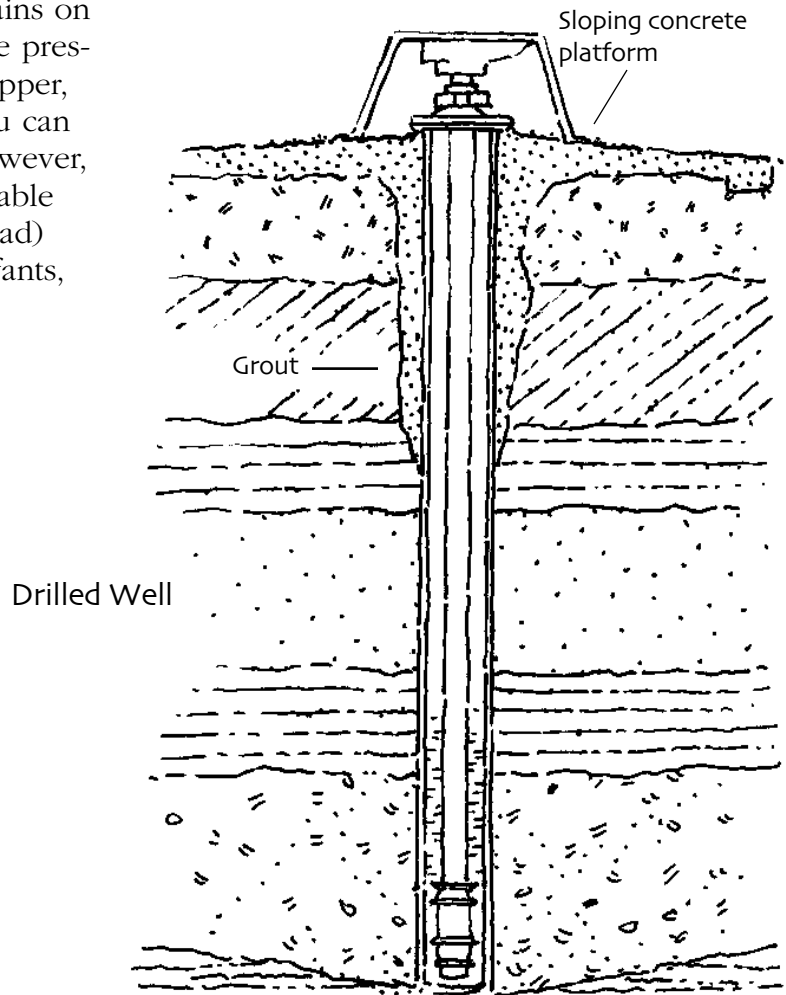
Underground rock that contains iron, manganese, sulfates, and other elements can release some of these into groundwater. A metallic taste is one indicator of the presence of one or more of these impurities. Blue-green stains on sinks and porcelain fixtures suggests the presence of impurities from corrosion of copper, brass, and other metals. Many times you can taste, smell, or see these impurities. However, at low levels they may not leave noticeable signs, and certain impurities (such as lead) may pose health risks, especially for infants, children, and pregnant women.

Keep Good Records About Everything

Concerning Your Well. Make a timetable and put down dates when professional inspections and routine maintenance checks should be scheduled. Indicate dates water samples should be taken and sent to a certified lab for analysis. Make sure you keep proper containers for taking water samples. Ask your health department for proper ways to collect water samples.

Do you have wells on your land not used for home drinking water?

Many farmsteads have a number of wells that are used only for watering livestock, irrigation, or other agricultural purposes. These require the same attention and maintenance as ones used for household water since all open wells provide a passageway for contaminants to underground water.



Private Well Water

A Self-Assessment

Fill out this self-assessment (a do-it-yourself checklist) to help you find out about your home drinking water if you get your water from a private well. For each statement or question, check **yes** or **no**. If you answer **yes**, you are doing the best actions to keep your home drinking water safe. If you answer **no**, this does not necessarily mean your drinking water is not safe, but you may need to make some changes to avoid future problems. For each statement or question, more help is given under “Actions and Recommendations.” For even more information, there is a list of helpful phone numbers and Web sites at the end of this chapter under “For More Information.”

Write your **no** answers on the **Action Checklist**. List any changes you plan to make and pick a date to keep you on schedule. First, choose those actions that are inexpensive, easy to do, and most helpful to your family.

Taking Care of Your Well

Yes No

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| ----- | ----- | 1. I check the well head from time to time to make sure the cap fits tightly. The well cap and casing are at least 12 inches above the highest surface water level. |
| ----- | ----- | 2. I do not see any holes or cracks inside the casing. The casing is firmly grouted to prevent contaminants on the ground from getting into the water table. |

Yes No

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| ----- | ----- | 3. Measures have been taken to prevent accidental backflow of contaminants through hose connections; antibackflow devices have been installed when necessary and are maintained in good working order. |
|-------|-------|---|

Location of Your Well

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| ----- | ----- | 4. Water runoff uphill to the well head and pumphouse is diverted so that it drains away before it reaches the well. The ground around the base of the well has adequate slope to keep rainwater from puddling near the well. |
| ----- | ----- | 5. The well is located at least 200 feet away from any possible contaminant sources, such as a septic system. |
| ----- | ----- | 6. Abandoned or unused wells on the property have been located and properly sealed. |

Testing Your Well Water

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| ----- | ----- | 7. Well water is tested at least once each year for bacteria, nitrates, pH, and dissolved solids. Tests for pesticides been done if the drinking water well is in an area where these chemicals are widely used. |
| ----- | ----- | 8. No hazardous materials, chemical solvents, fertilizers, petroleum products, pesticides, etc., are used, mixed, or stored around the well head or in the well house. |
| ----- | ----- | 9. Any visual, taste, or odor changes in the water are followed by tests to find out the problem and corrective measures are taken. |

Actions and Recommendations

- 1. Check well cap.** If the well was installed correctly it should work trouble free for many years. This cap should be at least 12 inches above the ground. If you have floods on your land, the cap should be at least 12 inches above the highest water level.
- 2. Check well casing.** When a well is drilled, a steel or plastic pipe is put inside the hole to keep it from collapsing. Grout is poured between the casing and the soil around it. The casing protects the pump and should not have any cracks or holes at the top or down the side. Cracks or holes at the surface or down the side of the casing are danger signs.
- 3. Install backflow devices.** In some cases, water can flow backward through a hose and possibly carry pollutants down the well. Backflow protection devices are available and should be installed on all outdoor faucets.
- 4. Slope of the land around the well.** The best place for a well is uphill from any possible contamination sources. Stormwater can carry pollutants with it when it runs off downhill. If you have livestock, store or mix pesticides, or have a septic tank uphill from a well, pollutants from these areas are more likely to drain down towards the well.
- 5. Locate well away from pollution sources.** It is best that wells be located at least 200 feet from any possible pollution sources, such as septic systems. See Table 1 for minimum distances away from structures for well placement. If your well is downhill from possible pollution sources, make sure rainwater is directed away from reaching the well.
- 6. Seal unused wells.** All abandoned wells should be properly sealed or closed and marked to avoid damage from moving equipment and vehicles. They can be dangerous for small animals and children if not properly marked. They can also be a possible source for pollutants to enter the groundwater.
- 7. Test well water every year.** Call your health department and follow lab instructions on how to properly take a water sample.
- 8. Keep hazardous chemicals away from well.** Careless use or disposal of hazardous materials (such as pesticides or oil) near the well site can pollute underground water by moving through the soil layers to reach groundwater.
- 9. Pay attention to any visual, taste, or odor changes in the water.** Make a timetable and put down dates when professional inspections and routine maintenance checks should be scheduled. Indicate dates water samples should be taken and sent to a certified lab for analysis. Make sure proper containers for taking water samples are on hand.

Action Checklist

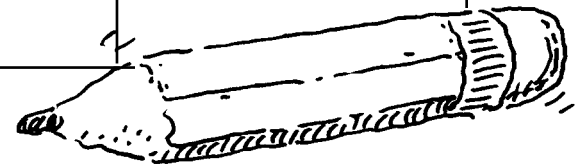
How Am I Doing?

Check over the assessment and make note of changes you might make to keep your drinking water clean and safe to drink. Remember, it is best to prevent poor practices rather than try to clean up afterwards. It is important to take care of groundwater wells. Once installed, there is little that can be done to correct problems due to design or improper location factors, such as closeness to pollution sources, poor drainage around the sites, unsuitable soil types, or a shallow water table. These are important things to consider and are best made before installing new wells. Take action to maintain and protect the units you have in place. Failure to do so can result in a buildup of conditions to the point that it may become necessary to install a new well.

Pick at least one action you can do to take care of your water. Some actions may not cost a lot of money—for example, moving any poisonous materials away from the well. After filling out the self-assessment, record your **no** answers on the **Action Checklist** below. List any actions or changes you plan to make and write down a date to keep you on schedule.

Drinking Water from a Private Well

Write all No responses below.	What can you do to change?	Set a date for action.
SAMPLE: MY WELL WATER HAS NOT BEEN TESTED IN A LONG TIME.	CALL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT OR COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT FOR HELP.	SEPTEMBER 1



Take Action!

At this point you should be more aware of the actions you can take to protect your home drinking water. The following are some action steps you can take to keep your water safe to drink.

Action Steps to Protect Your Drinking Water

- Check your water for lead
- Change your water filters frequently
- Have your private well water tested
- Have your well inspected routinely and be sure to keep all records
- Seal all abandoned wells on your property
- Keep the area around your well free of possible pollution sources

References

*Home*A*Syst: An Environmental Assessment Guide for the Home.* NRAES-87. Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service, New York, 1997.

McGowan, B. and A. McCann. "Drinking Water" in *Help Yourself to a Healthy Home: Protect Your Children's Health.* Healthy Homes Partnership, University of Wisconsin, 2002.

Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia, and Rhode Island Home*A*Syst publications
(links to these publications on <http://www.uwex.edu/homeasyst/>).

50 Ways Farmers Can Protect Their Groundwater. North Central Regional Extension Publication 522, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1994.

57 Ways to Protect Your Home Environment. North Central Regional Extension Publication 583, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1996.

"Plain Talk About Drinking Water," American Water Works Association, Denver, Colorado, 1997.

Drinking Water from Household Wells. EPA 816-K-02-003, 2002.

For More Information

A note about Web site information: If you do not have a computer, contact your local public or college library. Most libraries provide free use of computers connected to the Internet.

Community Water Questions

Call your local water company.

Alabama Cooperative Extension System

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System provides many resources on its Web site: www.aces.edu.

Have a question about your drinking water? Check out the Alabama Cooperative Extension System's water quality Web site: www.aces.edu/waterquality.

Click on FAQs (frequently asked questions) for answers to your drinking water questions. For additional information, call your county Extension agent.

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Drinking Water Branch
(334) 271-7700

<http://www.adem.state.al.us/>

The ADEM Drinking Water Branch works closely with the more than 700 water systems in Alabama that provide safe drinking water to 4 million citizens.

Home*A*Syst National Office

Alabama Home*A*Syst is a partner with the national Farm*A*Syst/Home*A*Syst program, an environmental education package designed to help farmers and homeowners evaluate pollution and health risks around their property. The Home*A*Syst handbook has more information about this and other environmental risk topics. For more information, call (608) 262-0024 or visit the Web site:

<http://www.uwex.edu/homeasyst/>.

Alabama Department of Public Health

<http://www.adph.org/>

Look up the listing of county health departments or check your local telephone book.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Call EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline toll-free at (800) 426-4791.

www.epa.gov/safewater

Drinking water in Alabama

www.epa.gov/safewater/dwinfo/al.htm

The American Water Works Association

(800) 926-7337

<http://www.awwa.org/>

Private Water Supplies

Call your county health department for water quality standards and well water testing.

Check your telephone book for licensed well drillers or pump installers.

Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Water quality Web site

www.aces.edu/waterquality

Click on FAQs (frequently asked questions) for answers to your questions about wells. For additional information, call your county Extension agent.

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Water Supply Program

(334) 271-7700

<http://www.adem.state.al.us/>

For information or assistance in contacting an ADEM-licensed well contractor and certified laboratories for testing drinking water.

National Ground Water Association

<http://www.wellowner.org/>

Information for consumers and private well owners about groundwater, wells, and finding a certified well driller in your area.



Lead and Your Drinking Water

For blood tests, contact your local health department or your family doctor. This test is often free at public health clinics.

Call your local or state health department for lead in drinking water testing.

Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Lead information Web site
www.aces.edu/lead

The Alabama Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Project (ACLPPP)

(334) 206-2966
<http://www.adph.org/aclppp/>

National Lead Information Center

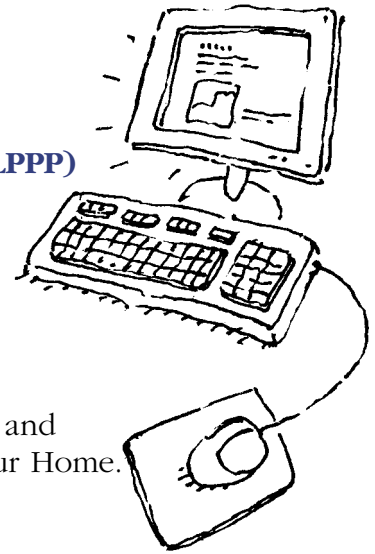
(800) 424-LEAD
www.epa.gov/lead
Recorded message 24 hours a day in English or Spanish for questions and materials about lead. Pamphlet "Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home."

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

(800) 245-2691
www.hud.gov/lead

Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

National Center for Environmental Health provides information about preventing lead poisoning.
(888) 232-6789
www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead



Water Testing

Check the yellow pages of your local telephone book for private testing laboratories. Make sure they are certified by the state health department.

Call your county health department about well water testing for bacteria and lead.

Auburn University Soil Testing Laboratory

This lab, a cooperative effort between the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, tests for 16 elements, nitrate-nitrogen, electrical conductivity, soluble salts, and pH. To obtain supplies or information for services, contact either your county Extension office or Auburn University Soil Testing Laboratory at (334) 844-3958.

Alabama Pesticide Residue Laboratory in Auburn

For pesticide tests in water due to agricultural use, call (334) 844-4705.
For other uses, commercial labs certified by ADEM will do these analyses (see listing under "Private Water Supplies").



CRD-80

Your Experts for Life

Laura B. Booth, *Extension Associate*, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Auburn University.

Special thanks to all who helped with the technical review of the materials and who provided editorial assistance, especially Dr. James E. Hairston, Extension Water Quality Scientist, Professor, Agronomy and Soils, staff at Alabama Department of Environmental Management and James L. Lindsay, student at Auburn University.

We would like to acknowledge the staff of the National Farm*A*Syst/Home*A*Syst Program who developed the original materials at the University of Wisconsin-Extension. This national program has been supported by the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The national office provides guidelines and educational support to each state for the development of Farm*A*Syst/Home*A*Syst programs.

This project was funded by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management through a Clean Water Act Section 319(h) nonpoint source grant provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-Region IV.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audio-tape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work in agriculture and home economics, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, and other related acts, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) offers educational programs, materials, and equal opportunity employment to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability.

5M, **New March 2005**, CRD-80

© 2005 by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. All rights reserved.