

ADDITIONAL LOCAL RESOURCES:

Mason County Department of Health Services (360) 427-9670 ext. 400

- Information on water quality testing
- Information on well construction and decommissioning
- Approves new wells and septic systems

Licensed Well Drillers

Refer to Mason County Yellow Pages

- Specialize in well drilling, pump testing, and equipment sizing
- Provide assistance on well operation, water quality and disinfection

Washington State Department of Ecology

(360) 407-6000

- Licenses well drillers; regulates well construction and decommissioning
- Maintains copies of well logs
- Issues water right permits

Washington Toxics Coalition

(206) 632-1545

- Information and presentations on alternatives to household, and lawn and garden chemicals

Washington State University Extension

(360) 426-9760 ext 680

- Conducts the Home *A* Syst Program self assessment and recommendations on safe practices to protect drinking water



MASON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

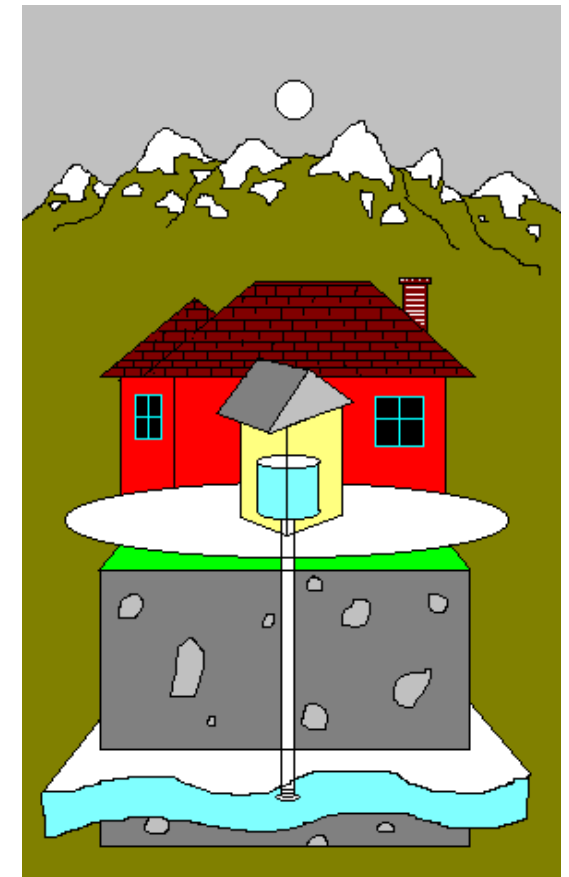
Building, Planning, Environmental Health, Community Health

451 N. 6th St.
SHELTON, WA 98584

SHELTON (360) 427-9670 ext. 400
Fax (360) 427-7787

ELMA (360) 482-5269 ext. 400
BELFAIR (360) 275-4467 ext 400

WHY IS PROTECTING THE AREA AROUND YOUR WELL IMPORTANT?



**MASON COUNTY PUBLIC
HEALTH**



Most of us take the water that comes from the faucet for granted, without considering where it really comes from. If you are a resident of Mason County, the water you drink is most likely groundwater. Whether you are the owner of a public water system or private well, it is important to recognize that your land use practices and well maintenance will affect the quality of your water supply, and that of your neighbors too. Prevention of groundwater contamination is much less costly than clean-up. **Here are nine things a well owner can do to ensure a safe drinking water supply:**

1. LOCATE YOUR WELL.

Your well may be in a different place than your pump or pressure tank.

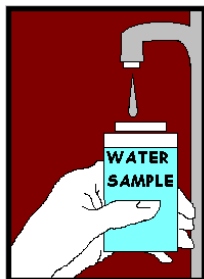
Once located, determine if it is a dug well or a drilled well. Dug wells are shallow and easily contaminated by surface runoff. Drilled wells are better protected from surface contamination because they are constructed through hardpan, silt and clay layers, and are sealed with grouting material between the casing and the surrounding soil.

Note and report abandoned wells to Mason County Public Health.

2. INSPECT THE WELLHEAD.

Examine the well cap, seal and the area around the casing for any leaks and make sure that the access port is plugged. Make sure the well vent, if present, is inverted and screened. The well casing should extend one to two feet above the ground surface (or flood level) and the area around the casing should be mounded with clay to prevent surface water from collecting around it, if necessary. If repairs are needed, call a licensed well driller.

3. HAVE YOUR WATER TESTED.



other contaminants.

Your water should be tested once a year for bacteria and three years for nitrate – more often if you have a shallow or dug well. Consult the Mason County Public Health for information on water testing and to obtain a list of state certified labs to test for

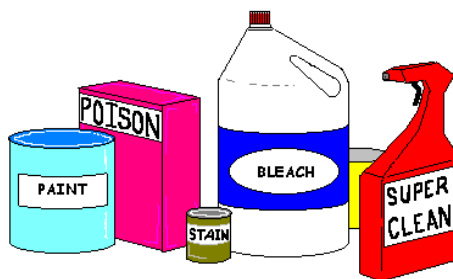
4. KEEP RECORDS OF WELL INSTALLATION, REPAIRS, PUMP TESTS, AND WATER QUALITY TESTS.

Copies of well logs may be available. Refer to the list of local resources in this brochure.

5. KEEP SURFACE WATER RUNOFF AWAY FROM THE WELLHEAD.

The well should be up-slope from potential contamination sources. If necessary, install a curtain drain up-slope of the well to divert surface runoff. Contact Mason County Public Health if you are siting a new or replacement well or septic system.

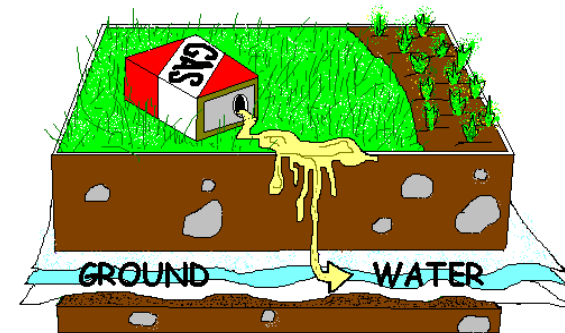
6. MAINTAIN A "NO-POLLUTION" BUFFER AROUND THE WELL HEAD.



Mason County recommends a minimum buffer of 100 feet around a well. Store garden and animal wastes, chemical fertilizers, pesticides and other potential contaminants outside your "no-pollution" buffer. Remove any chemicals stored in your well house.

7. PROTECT THE SOIL FROM CONTAMINATION BY OIL, GASOLINE AND HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS.

Contact Mason County Public Health's Solid Waste specialist for advice on proper disposal of these items.



8. FOLLOW BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR GARDENING AND LANDSCAPING.

Avoid using or mixing fertilizers and pesticides within 100 feet of the well. Explore alternative methods for pest control, such as biodegradable products, physical barriers, beneficial insects and companion planting. If needed, apply chemicals sparingly and follow instructions carefully. Avoid over-watering to slow chemical movement through the soil and into the groundwater.

9. CHECK LIVESTOCK.

Keep active pasture and animal enclosures at least 50 feet from a drilled well and 100 feet from a dug well. Shield animal waste from rain. Fence off animal access to your well.

