



CRAWFORD COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

PREVENT • PROMOTE • PROTECT

Disinfection of a Cistern or Hauled Water Storage Tank

Since contamination could occur during the construction and/or repair of a water or plumbing system, both should be disinfected before being used and the easiest way to do this is by chlorination.

Step 1: Disinfecting

Fill the tank with potable water and add 1-2 gallons of household bleach for every 1000 gallons of water. Mix as thoroughly as possible. Do not use scented bleach.

Step 2: Circulate the Chlorine throughout the Plumbing System

Open every tap, hot and cold, inside and outside of the house, one at a time until a bleach odor is detected then turn taps off. This will bring the chlorine solution into the plumbing. Make sure all faucets are turned on including rarely used taps such as an outside spigot or yard hydrant. Don't forget to run water into washing machines and toilets. If possible, the chlorinated water should be drawn through the water softener, however please check with your water softener supplier first to ensure the unit can be chlorinated. Once the odor of chlorine is detected in all the water lines, let the water rest in the plumbing for at least 12 hours. It is alright to flush the toilets during this time.

Step 3: Flush the Chlorine from the System

After 12 hours, flush the system by running the chlorinated water through an outside spigot to avoid flooding the septic system until chlorine odor disappears. This may take some time, depending on the volume of water. Run each tap, inside and outside of the home, one at a time to finish clearing the chlorine out of the lines. Turn off each tap once chlorine odor is gone.

Step 4: Testing

Contact Crawford County Public Health at 419-562-5871 to schedule a water sample. The chlorine must be flushed out of the system at least 48 hours before it can be sampled.