

US EPA DRINKING WATER FROM HOUSEHOLD WELLS

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Quick Reference List of Noticeable Problems

Visible

- Scale or scum from calcium or magnesium salts in water
- Unclear/turbid water from dirt, clay salts, silt or rust in water
- Green stains on sinks or faucets caused by high acidity
- Brown-red stains on sinks, dishwasher, or clothes in wash points to dissolved iron in water
- Cloudy water that clears upon standing may have air bubbles from poorly working pump or problem with filters.

Tastes

- Salty or brackish taste from high sodium content in water
- Alkali/soapy taste from dissolved alkaline minerals in water
- Metallic taste from acidity or high iron content in water
- Chemical taste from industrial chemicals or pesticides

Smell

- A rotten egg odor can be from dissolved hydrogen sulfide gas or certain bacteria in your water. If the smell only comes with hot water it is likely from a part in your hot water heater.
- A detergent odor and water that foams when drawn could be seepage from septic tanks into your ground water well.
- A gasoline or oil smell indicates fuel oil or gasoline likely seeping from a tank into the water supply
- Methane gas or musty/earthy smell from decaying organic matter in water
- Chlorine smell from excessive chlorination.

Note: Many serious problems (bacteria, heavy metals, nitrates, radon, and many chemicals) can only be found by laboratory testing of water.