

**TIPS for HOMEOWNERS #1
COMMON WATER PROBLEMS**

1. **Why do sinks turn blue/green?**
Blue/green stains indicate that acidic/corrosive water is passing through copper pipes and dissolving copper from the pipes and redepositing it as copper sulfate on the plumbing fixtures.
2. **Should the homeowner try to correct this situation?**
Yes, pinpoint leaks can eventually develop in the system as a result of this leaching process. It also increases the possibility of leaching lead from any lead solder joints or lead-containing fixtures. This situation can be corrected by installing an acid neutralizer.
3. **Why does my water produce brown stains?**
Brown stains usually indicate the presence of iron or manganese in the water.
4. **Why is my water cloudy?**
 - a. If problem is worse after rain, it is probably sediment and indicates intrusion of surface water into the well.
 - b. A sudden appearance may indicate the collapse of the well wall.
5. **Why does my water smell like rotten eggs?**
 - a. The smell may indicate a severe bacteria contamination;
 - b. If only the hot water contains the odor, the hot water heater probably has a cathodic protection device to reduce corrosion which under certain conditions can produce a rotten egg (hydrogen sulfide) odor.
 - c. Naturally occurring pockets of hydrogen sulfide may be present in the ground. This may be corrected with a taste and odor filter or through chlorinating.
6. **What tests are recommended if I'm pregnant or if I have small children?**
 - a. Test for bacteria because bacteria contamination is the most common problem with private wells and frequently indicates the intrusion of surface water. This is an undesirable condition.
 - b. Test for nitrates because elevated nitrate levels can interfere with the transport of oxygen in the blood of small infants and the unborn child which can lead to a condition called methemoglobinemia (blue baby syndrome).
 - c. Test for lead because infants are most susceptible to lead toxicity.
7. **What is a normal pH reading?**
Neutral pH is 7. Less than 7 is acidic; more than 7 is alkaline. Examples of pH:
 - a. Vinegar has a pH of 2.
 - b. Pollution free rain has a pH of 5.7. The pH of "acid" rain can be as low as 3.
 - c. Drano has a pH of 12.
 - d. EPA recommends the pH of drinking water between 6.5 and 8.5.